



Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Briefing Convened by Congresswoman Bonamici  
Beaverton City Hall  
1/19/16

*Summarized Remarks Shared by Acting Chief Education Officer, Lindsey Capps*

We have a tremendous opportunity through ESSA, both at the state and local level, with new flexibility.

But with that new flexibility comes a reaffirmed commitment to high standards, reaffirmed commitment to closing the opportunity gap, and it puts a challenge before all of us to be able to develop a plan that continues to move us forward.

I want to share a few reflections on four components of ESSA that we believe hold the most significant potential to improve outcomes and opportunity for our students:

**Educational Equity:**

- The bill reaffirms our commitment to equity and to closing the opportunity gap in Oregon. It maintains reporting of disaggregated data and reaffirms our commitment to working alongside Oregon communities to develop community and culturally specific solutions to improve access and greater opportunity for our students.
- It provides incentives for our state and local districts to implement policies and practices that improve instruction of students whose first language is other than English. These resources and supports will serve to complement the \$12.5 million dedicated by Governor Brown and the Legislature in the 2015 session to improve outcomes for emerging bilingual students.
- ESSA provides grants to support local development of programs for tribal students. With nine Federally Recognized Tribes in Oregon these resources are critical to augmenting the work underway through our American Indian/Alaska Native State Plan and initiatives to curb high chronic absenteeism rates in our tribal communities.

**Accountability:**

- ESSA sets parameters for our accountability systems but gives us the flexibility to design a system that best meet the needs of students here in Oregon.
- It provides us the flexibility to work with local stakeholders to determine how educators should be evaluated and supported each year.

- Through our waiver process we have laid some important groundwork to consider what an Oregon system of accountability could look like.
- With this bill, we have an opportunity to shape how we approach accountability such that we create high standards of achievement and support for each our students while ensuring that accountability doesn't feel like a four letter word to our educators.

**Assessment:**

- ESSA provides Oregon the flexibility to develop a system of assessment that most effectively improves student outcomes. In fact, it encourages the review and elimination of unnecessary tests.
- Through Nancy Golden's leadership, and that of educators across the state, Oregon began a process last year to imagine a more balanced system of assessment. A system that moved away from over-emphasis on summative assessments and incorporated more formative and interim assessments to improve both teaching and learning.
- Governor Brown is committed to this work moving forward and we believe it holds tremendous potential for our students and educators.

**Educator Preparation, Development, and Support:**

- ESSA provides resources to support effective teachers including high quality programs for new educators, professional development, mentoring and funds to recruit new educators to the profession.
- These resources provide additional streams of support to existing initiatives within the Network for Quality Teaching and Learning, and importantly serve to support our state goals to recruit, and retain more educators who reflect the faces and experiences of our students.
- The bill also eliminates the definition of a *highly qualified teacher*, providing us the opportunity to work with our education partners and families across the state to create an Oregon definition that aligns with our state goals and values.

In addition to these over-arching categories, the focus on STEM/STEAM, and the provision for using K-12 resources to support early learning programs within ESSA, add critical momentum and support for existing priorities in Oregon.

I look forward to working together to leverage this opportunity to improve outcomes for students, and pave the way for the support of exceptional educators through the development of an Oregon-specific plan.