

**PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
ESSA WORK GROUPS – APRIL 18, 2016**

ASSESSMENT

Core issues to address: State assessments serve as a barometer of whether or not students are on track to meet Pennsylvania Academic Standards. The current assessment system is time and resource intensive, is implemented relatively early in the school year, and does not provide results in a timely manner. Options for reducing testing time, decreasing turnaround time and administering later in the year – all while maintaining validity – should be explored.

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ACCOUNTABILITY

Core issues: Metrics that determine the lowest five percent of schools should control for mitigating factors such as poverty. Goals must be attainable. The right accountability system ensures that every school, teacher, and parent can envision goal attainment for a given year. The plan needs to address all students and historically underperforming subgroups. The inclusion of student growth should be considered as a way to address some of the aforementioned issues.

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ACCOUNTABILITY, continued

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EDUCATOR CERTIFICATION

Core issues: LEAs should have the autonomy and flexibility to place teachers in roles that allow for more customization and personalization of programs to meet the diverse needs of students. The PDE Certification and Staffing Program Guidance needs to be thoroughly reviewed by practitioners to remove barriers to placing high quality teachers in classrooms. Particular attention should be devoted to special education teachers and content certification, as well as flexibility for those teaching dual enrollment-type courses.

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EDUCATOR EVALUATION

Core issues: Observation and practice models provide LEAs with tools to improve teaching and learning. These indicators should be weighted to reflect their importance within the overall context of teacher evaluations. School-level performance measures provide LEAs with an opportunity to hold all educators accountable for achievement, growth, and holistic indicators. This school wide measure should be a factor in all educators' evaluations and should be weighted accordingly. The complexity inherent in teaching should be considered as it relates to the challenges of coupling individual student performance with individual educator evaluations.

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