

Florida Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Update

June 2018

For additional information on the status of Florida's ESSA Plan, go to Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) [website](#) ESSA page.

Italic type below indicates language directly from FLDOE ESSA website page.

What is ESSA? *The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was signed into law in December 2015, amending the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and replacing No Child Left Behind provisions.*

What were the steps taken by Florida to develop its ESSA Plan? *With a strong, proven accountability system, Florida is already ahead of most of the nation as it relates to the requirements laid out in ESSA. Student performance has consistently improved since Florida introduced rigorous accountability measures, and the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) is confident that this plan meets the intent of ESSA using current policies and practices. States were required to submit a state plan describing their approach to ESSA compliance by September 18, 2017. Florida was given an extension to October 13, 2017, due to Hurricane Irma, and submitted the state plan on September 20, 2017.*

Did FLDOE request public input? *The department held a first round of public input summer 2016 via online survey, and outreach continued throughout the school year to educator associations and stakeholder groups. The commissioner also convened a superintendents' workgroup to provide input on major decision points. Then, a draft of the state plan was posted for public comment June 30-July 31, 2017. There were 450 respondents (1,295 comments) to the accompanying online survey. The comments were reviewed and further refinements were made. The state plan was submitted to the Governor for review, as required by ESSA.*

Were there statewide efforts to engage arts and arts education stakeholders in the development of Florida's ESSA Plan?

Yes, but not by the FLDOE. Below, see alerts and requests for action and the collaborative letter sent to FLDOE Secretary of Education Pam Stewart.

6/21/2016: Shared [ESSA details related to arts' education for discussion](#) at FAAE 2016 Summit to plan next steps for arts education leaders to collaborate and develop a plan for inclusion of arts education within Florida's ESSA plan.

7/6/2016: [Action Request](#) for you and others to participate in FLDOE public input process regarding what should be included in Florida's ESSA Plan.

7/19/2016: [Action request](#) to Florida's arts and culture field to participate in FLDOE public input survey regarding ESSA before July 22, 2016.

August 2016: All of the statewide arts education service organizations **(1)** met; **(2)** had telephone conference calls; **(3)** discussed the numerous opportunities in the ESSA law for the arts to be incorporated into Florida's ESSA Plan; **(4)** agreed upon key arts education components within the ESSA law that could be considered and included in Florida's ESSA Plan; **(5)** composed and signed a letter to Florida Secretary of Education Pam Stewart outlining those recommendations:

8/24/2016: pages [1 to 3 of collaborative letter](#) to Commissioner Pam Stewart and [page 4](#) with arts education service organizations' logos and signatures of their leadership.

7/13/2017: [Reference to arts education in 17 State ESSA Plans](#) for use in our Florida efforts.

7/20/2017: [Action Request to Florida Local Arts Agencies](#) to meet with local school district leaders about the inclusion of arts education within Florida's ESSA Plan.

7/25/2017: [Action Request to arts field](#) for FLDOE input on Florida DRAFT ESSA Plan. A few arts education Florida leaders had conference calls and cut the original list of 10 recommendations down to 3 for FLDOE's consideration.

7/27/2017: [Action request for second round of public input](#) from FLDOE's DRAFT ESSA plan in which none of the arts education recommendations were included.

What is the status of Florida's ESSA Plan? *In April 2018, Florida submitted a revised ESSA state plan, along with a waiver, in response to feedback from the U.S. Department of Education.*

Where can I read Florida's ESSA Plan and related documents submitted to the U.S. Department of Education?

- [Florida's ESSA State Plan and Waiver – Submitted April 2018](#) (PDF)
- [Governor's Letter of Support for ESSA State Plan and Waiver](#) (PDF)
- [Florida's ESSA State Plan – Submitted September 2017](#) (PDF)

Does Florida’s ESSA Plan include any of the recommendations submitted to Commissioner Stewart from the arts education field? Any mention of fine arts?

None of the recommendations submitted directly to Commissioner Pam Stewart or any of the input from the public regarding arts education issues were incorporated into the Florida ESSA Plan. “Fine arts” is only mentioned once throughout the Florida ESSA Plan:

On page 15: “FDOE staff will use these reporting tools to identify districts that need more support through a Multitiered System of Support and provide support based on the needs identified through data. The goal is to provide schools and districts with a Multitiered System of Support based on analysis of student, school and district data. FDOE staff will examine student achievement data to develop plans for delivering tier 1, tier 2, and tier 3 supports. The Division of Public Schools provides tiered support for schools and districts in the state to reduce the achievement gaps in defined subgroups. Assistance is provided in the content areas of science, technology, mathematics, social studies, ELA and reading, **fine arts**, gifted education, health, and physical education. Assistance is also provided in topics of exceptional education, ELLs, and family and community outreach.”

What is the status of other states’ ESSA Plans and their inclusion of the arts in their plans?

Review this table of [“Music and Arts in State ESSA Plans.”](#)

Will there be opportunities in the future to work to secure some of the initial arts education recommendations in Florida’s ESSA Plan?

"I encourage states to use their plans as a starting point, rather than a finish line, to improve outcomes for all students." Secretary Betsy DeVos.