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## MEMORANDUM

TO: Education Stakeholders  
FROM: Heather A. Bouchey, Ph.D., Interim Secretary of Education  
SUBJECT: Amendments to Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) State Plan 2024  
DATE: January 12, 2024

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### Background

The US Department of Education requires that all States who receive federal funding for education programs must comply with the requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The last iteration of Vermont's ESSA State Plan was completed in 2017. Since then, required statewide assessments and the feasibility of carrying out certain non-required state plan activities have changed. As a result, the Agency is preparing an amendment to the plan to align these changes with state plan content.

### Purpose

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) was passed in 1965 as part of President Lyndon Johnson's "War on Poverty." The Act emphasizes equal access to education and establishes high standards and accountability. The law authorized federally funded education programs that are administered by the States. In 2015, Congress amended ESEA and reauthorized it as the Every Student Succeeds Act.

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Public Law PL 114-95, passed in 2015, reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The purpose of the Act is to provide all children significant opportunity to receive a fair, equitable, and high-quality education, and to close the achievement gap. ESSA supports standards-based education based on the belief that setting high standards and goals can improve an individual student's educational achievement.

### Summary of Changes

A detailed description of newly proposed plan language and a rationale for these changes is included in the proposed amendment. Briefly, AOE's proposed amendment includes:

- Reconciliation of currently deployed statewide assessments with those identified in the written plan.



- Updates to the annual timing of assessments.
- Removal of (non-required) metrics (e.g., ASVAB scores, employment data) that Vermont was unable to secure without additional federal action.
- Changes to English Language (“EL”) Proficiency Exit Scores, aligned with new alternate assessment.
- Removal of an elective fifth indicator, Physical Education assessment, given implementation and psychometric challenges identified during the pilot exercise (2018) and one-year implementation (2019).
- Changes to student growth metric calculation to match implementation.
- Updates to the Equity 2 calculation to align implementation with content of the state plan.
- Adoption of an overall “minimum-N” size calculation of 25 for all students and student groups consistently.

## **Public Comment Period**

We invite comments and feedback on these proposed changes. Please submit your comments by January 29, 2024, via email to AOE Operations Manager Courtney O’Brien, at [Courtney.Obrien@vermont.gov](mailto:Courtney.Obrien@vermont.gov).

If you require any accommodations to provide public comment, please email [Courtney.Obrien@vermont.gov](mailto:Courtney.Obrien@vermont.gov). Efforts will be made to support translation needs and other reasonable accommodations to promote the public’s ability to participate in providing comment.