

Nevada Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) State Plan Review & Recommendations

On Tuesday, February 21, 2017, the Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) reviewed the ESSA Public Plan. The ECAC makes the following comments and recommendations to ensure Early Childhood is represented throughout. These recommendations were jointly developed and approved by a quorum of ECAC members.

Page	Recommendation/Comment
7	<p>After the third paragraph, also highlight achievements made in early childhood. The ECAC recommends this addition:</p> <p><i>“Nevada has made great gains in making early childhood education a priority by expanding the number of children participating in high-quality pre-K programs through the Nevada Pre-K Development grant to help expand State Pre-K, Zoom, and Victory schools. Additionally, Nevada is implementing a universal Kindergarten readiness assessment, aligning early childhood data and assessment tools, and has established an Office of Early Learning and Development with the Nevada Department of Education.”</i></p>
7	<p>Last paragraph before <i>Current State of Student Achievement</i> the ECAC recommends adding the following at the end of the last sentence:</p> <p><i>“Nevada recognizes that achievement gaps are evident as early as 18-months of age, and has embedded Pre-K and B-3 alignment throughout this plan as essential components in achieving this goal.”</i></p>
8	<p>First sentence after picture “The achievement gap that exists between Nevada’s student groups is substantial.” The ECAC recommends adding, “and is evident prior to kindergarten.” at the end of this sentence to read as:</p> <p><i>“The achievement gap that exists between Nevada’s student groups is substantial and is evident prior to kindergarten.”</i></p>
12	<p>At the end of the first paragraph under <i>English Language Proficiency Assessment (WIDA)</i>, add the following sentence:</p> <p><i>“Additionally, Nevada is participating in WIDA Early Years to develop an early childhood suite of assessments that aligns Pre-K to K-12.”</i></p>
17	<p>End of the second paragraph, we recommend adding the following sentence:</p> <p><i>“This includes over \$20 million in state investments to expand Pre-K through the Pre-K Development Grant, state Pre-K, and Zoom and Victory Schools Pre-K.”</i></p>



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19	<p>The ECAC recommends adding language that adds context to the goals in both the Early Childhood Program Quality and Special Education and Inclusion in Early Childhood Program tables.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under the Early Childhood Program Quality table, it is recommended to add the number of programs in the state that are targeted or eligible for QRIS as well as a definition of QRIS and the models as the ECAC was not certain if the star-levels were initially NSPF or QRIS stars. The ECAC was also not certain if the data represented was district model programs or center-based programs; however, we assumed the latter. • Under the Special Education Inclusion in Early Childhood Programs table, it is recommended to define inclusion and what programs would need to achieve to be considered “inclusive.” • Question/Clarification needed for both tables: If these are goals, where in the public plan or the technical plan does the state the specific resources and strategies for achieving the annual targets? What is the state’s commitment for achieving both? If increasing access to Pre-K is a goal or strategy, where is this stated? Perhaps this state plan is a good place to highlight this given the recent investments made.
22	<p>The ECAC recommends that the plan address Nevada’s Pre-K Standards after the first paragraph in the <i>Current Nevada Efforts</i> section. Recommended language is taken from the Pre-K Standards document:</p> <p><i>“Nevada has also adopted Pre-K Standards which describe appropriate outcomes for children at the end of their preschool experiences and entering kindergarten. The content standards are used for planning curriculum, assessing growth and development, and for sharing important information with families. This document is a joint effort supported by the Nevada Department of Education’s (NDE) Office of Special Education, Elementary and Secondary Education, and School Improvement Programs, aligning with the Nevada K-12 Content Standards, as well as the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF). The state’s plans for a comprehensive P-3 system will link children’s experiences in preschool with kindergarten and primary grades largely through; alignment of curricula, the development of Pre-K standards and ongoing joint professional development for principals and teachers. Nevada’s Division of Early Childhood Education and other early childhood stakeholders have designated the creation of a P-3 system as a priority.”</i></p>



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23	In the paragraph before <i>Challenging Assessments</i> , change <i>K-12 experience</i> to <i>P-12 experience</i> in the last sentence.
24	All assessment descriptions should indicate whether or not each is available in Spanish.
24	<p>Brigance – remove “<i>and highly accurate</i>” as it was not defined in what the assessment was highly accurate in measuring. The sentence would then read as:</p> <p><i>“The Brigance is a collection of quick, reliable early childhood education assessments...”</i></p> <p>In the second sentence, change ‘<i>assessed</i>’ to ‘<i>screened</i>’, to make it clear that this assessment is a screener.</p>
24	<p>MAP – Nevada’s Pre-K to 12 standards have been aligned; therefore, the last sentence is not accurate as currently written. The ECAC recommends changing the last sentence to:</p> <p><i>“With the implementation of MAP in school year 2017-18, Nevada will, for the first time, have standards, professional development, assessments, and expectations in Kindergarten through Third Grade that are aligned.”</i></p> <p>Again, the standards have been aligned so moving the alignment statement to the end indicates that now the PD, assessments, and expectations will also be aligned.</p>
26	In the first paragraph under <i>Success Indicators</i> , change ‘K-12’ to ‘P-12’, in the second sentence.
26	<p>After the first paragraph under <i>State Role</i>, it is recommended to address B-3. Add the following as the last sentence:</p> <p><i>“Nevada is also developing a Birth-3rd grade strategic plan to support implementation of practices aligned with the research from the recent implementation of science report and developmentally appropriate practices birth through 3rd grade supporting teacher and administrator effectiveness and effective learning environments. This work also supports principal leadership across this continuum and aligns policy and practice.”</i></p>
28	<p>After the second paragraph under <i>Evidence of the Equity Challenge</i>, add the following sentence at the end of the paragraph:</p> <p><i>“Additionally, only 22% of Nevada’s youngest learners ages birth through five have access to formal early education program with these programs having varying levels of quality.”</i></p>



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28	After the first paragraph under <i>Current Nevada Efforts</i> , add the following sentence: <i>Current B-3 planning efforts are working to ensure policies and practices are in place that focus on a stable pathway of high quality early learning opportunities for every child birth through third grade.</i>
30	At the end of the first full paragraph beginning with 'CSI schools' add <i>P-12</i> before students to read as: <i>"...achieve successful outcomes for P-12 students."</i>
30	After the first paragraph under <i>Successful Indicators</i> , consider adding a paragraph to address the different star ratings (QRIS and NSPF).
31	After the first paragraph under <i>District and School Role</i> , the need for school leaders to understand early childhood feeder and mobility patterns of children entering their school should be addressed. Consider adding: <i>"In addition to NSPF, school leaders will identify the early childhood feeder and mobility program of children entering their school and utilize B-3 alignment strategies for school improvement. "</i>
33	Under <i>NDE will create and disseminate federal funds guidance memos</i> , the ECAC strongly recommends the creation of a B-3 guidance document and how districts can support B-3 through blending and braiding of funds. The ECAC would be willing to help create this guidance document in the conjunction with the Office of Early Learning and Development. In addition to a stand-alone B-3 Guidance Document, it is recommended that early childhood be included in all guidance documents where applicable.
38	In the first paragraph under <i>Innovative Programs</i> , add <i>P-12</i> before <i>teacher</i> in the last sentence to read as: <i>"Incentive all provide funding for programs that focus on P-12 teacher and leader preparation, professional development, and retention."</i>
38	In the last sentence under <i>Traditional and Alternative Routes for Educator Preparation</i> , include <i>Pre-K</i> in the last sentence to read as: <i>"...that is aligned with NEPF, NVAC, and Pre-K standards."</i>



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38	<p>In the <i>Regional Professional Development Programs</i> paragraph, add P-12 before educators in the last sentence to read as:</p> <p><i>"...specific professional development for P-12 educators."</i></p>
38	<p>In the first sentence under <i>Success Indicators</i>, add P-12 before <i>students</i> to read as:</p> <p><i>"Nevada's educator workforce initiative will provide P-12 students across the state..."</i></p>
39	<p>In the last paragraph under <i>State Role</i>, this would be an excellent place to put the state's commitment to training administrators on B-3 in an effort to increase the effectiveness of teachers in closing the achievement gap.</p>
39	<p>In the first sentence under <i>Family Role</i>, remove 'have' to read as:</p> <p><i>"It is essential that families have are aware of the extent to which their child has access to effective educators."</i></p>
41	<p>Under <i>Early Childhood Education Scale 2015-16</i>, how Nevada will sustain this participation level is not addressed in the public plan or technical plan. This section also does not address the number of sites and students served in state-funded Pre-K. The ECAC feels both need to be addressed.</p>
41	<p>Under <i>English Language Learners</i>, only the K-12 ELL population is addressed. How many Pre-K students are ELL who are supported through WIDA Early Learning Years?</p>
41	<p>Under <i>Full-Day Kindergarten (FDK)</i>, add <i>developmentally-appropriate</i> before <i>full-day</i> in the first sentence to read as:</p> <p><i>"...underserved students, and English learners who attend developmentally-appropriate, full-day kindergarten have significantly higher long-term math and reading scores..."</i></p> <p>The stated outcomes are highly dependent upon whether or not the kindergarten is developmentally-appropriate for five-year-old children.</p>
43	<p>Under <i>Victory Schools</i>, can the number of school that have Pre-K programs be listed here as well as the number of Pre-K students?</p>
44	<p>Under <i>Weighted Funding (Special Education)</i>, can the number of Early Childhood Special Education students be identified in this section?</p>
44	<p>Under <i>Zoom Schools</i> in both the <i>2014-2015</i> and <i>2015-2016</i> sections, what is the number of Pre-K classrooms and the number of Pre-K children by district?</p>



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45	<p>Under <i>District Role</i>, address engaging early childhood programs and organizations that serve families with young children. It is recommended that the following be added:</p> <p><i>“District and School strategic plans include strategies to engage Early Childhood programs and organizations that serve families with young children—especially those who lack access to high quality early education, to identify opportunities for expanding participation and collaboration. Teachers, administrators, and all staff in schools and programs understand the importance of, and employ strategies for, engaging families and link families to support resources through collaborations with community partners.”</i></p>

In addition to reflect the above Public Plan recommendations to the Technical Plan, the ECAC made the following recommendation to the Technical Plan:

- Page 15 – Add *Early Childhood Advisory Council* as a group from which stakeholder input will be gathered.

The ECAC strongly encourages the Nevada Department of Education to refer to the following when considering whether or not to include the above recommendations for Nevada’s ESSA State Plan:

- *Framework for Planning, Implementing, and Evaluating PreK-3rd Grade Approaches* (http://depts.washington.edu/pthru3/PreK-3rd_Framework_Legal%20paper.pdf) a publication jointly developed by the University of Washington, Center for Evaluation Innovation, and Harvard Graduate School of Education.
- *Developing a Comprehensive State Plan Pursuant to the Every Student Succeeds Act: A Supplemental Tool for Structuring Your Plan for Preschool to Third Grade* (http://ceelo.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/P-3Supplement_DevelopingComprehensiveStatePlanESSA.pdf) from the Center for Early Education Learning Outcomes (CEELO).