

AUDIT GUIDE: PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORKS

1. For frameworks currently in place, ensure measures are flexible enough to be applicable through the transition. This may require broadening language.
2. Make sure you have a clear path to implement the framework—how do you roll up the multitude of data points you’re evaluating the school against?

ESSA Impact

[Title I](#)

Title II & Title III forthcoming

Performance Framework Updates*

Academic

- **New:** Proficiency standards transfer to state to determine bar
- **New:** State report card (multi-measure ratings) requirements at the state and district level
- **New:** Growth now explicit requirement; state to determine bar
- **New:** College- and career-ready learning standards
- **New:** States required to generate comparison data
- **New:** Goals on progress of English learners toward English proficiency; new population subgroups
- **New:** Nonacademic measure of school quality
- Identification, support, and intervention for the state’s lowest-performing schools
- **Keep state academic accountability measures in your framework**, even though accountability plans will be transitioning and minimal performance will be set at the state level. Make sure your measures are flexible during this time of transition (e.g., use percentiles as targets/ratings; do not refer to a specific test, instead label the test as the “state accountability assessment” or something comparable).
- **Maintain indicators for your state’s multi-measure rating (like a state grade)**. With the new ESSA requirements leaving accountability up to the states, it’s more likely that states will develop or expand already developed multi-measure rating systems.
- **Take advantage of new measures**. States now need to establish standards for growth, college and career readiness, and comparative performance. Align any existing measures with new state thresholds, develop new measures for those missing from your current framework, and consider if you want to include new population subgroups.
- **Ensure the comparison measures that are generated by the state (new regulations) are applicable for charters**, and if not, supplement as necessary. Comparison measures, in particular, are critical to inform charter decisions. When closing charter schools, the first question often is, “How strong are the schools these students will end up attending?”
- **Maintain charter-specific measures**, like mission-specific goals as needed. There is no reason to remove measures that the authorizer values but that are not included as an ESSA requirement.
- **Use professional judgment when determining how to incorporate nonacademic measures of school quality**. Consider separating this measure from the academic performance portion of the framework and including either in the organizational performance framework or as a separate section.

Financial and **Organizational**

ESSAs impact on the financial framework and organizational frameworks is likely minimal. See the Contract Audit Guide and make any needed compliance adjustments to your framework, such as teacher quality and changed state reporting requirements.

Implementation Considerations

Weighting and Rolling Up

Don't forget to revisit your method for weighting and rolling up the new and/or modified metrics in your performance framework. When deciding if you need to reweight your performance framework, consider new, modified, and eliminated measures. Also avoid double weighting of measures that are already included in multi-measure systems. Finally, be thoughtful of your weighting methodology during the transition period. Consider how you will weight available measures when other measures are temporarily unavailable (see our guide on Data Gaps for more information).

Accountability and Intervention: Authorizer and State

The state will develop their own school improvement strategies, which could include turnaround districts or other methods of charter-based school improvement. In addition, ESSA statute makes it clear that, while charter schools are to be included in state accountability systems, the accountability for charter schools is to be overseen in accordance with state charter school law. This is meant to preserve charter autonomy and accountability by turning to contractual accountability actions (like closure) instead of a traditional school improvement process. Being thoughtful of the implications of performance levels on the academic framework, and how they relate to state-designed accountability thresholds, can help authorizers think ahead about the intervention and/or accountability strategies they may need to use.

Nonacademic Measure of School Quality

For the first time, ESSA is incorporating nonacademic measures of school quality but leaving it up to the states to determine what is included in this measure. Use caution if you incorporate this measure into your performance framework, and consider maintaining the credibility of the academic framework by separating this measure from other academic performance measures. This may mean including this measure in the organizational framework or creating another category altogether.

Communications

Consider the magnitude of changes to your framework and tailor your communications to schools and other stakeholders appropriately. Consider the steps you need to take to ensure a smooth transition between frameworks including gathering feedback on draft frameworks, revisions to contracts, and implications for upcoming renewals.

* *NACSA Core Resource: Core Performance Framework*