To what extent do state plans identify for improving and low-performing schools under ESSA align with effective practices of school accountability and improvement?

- Determine the likelihood of effectively reforming low-performing schools under ESSA
- Determine effective practices of school accountability and improvement based on the results of rigorous empirical studies that can be used as a guide when planning future reforms.

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) is the latest reauthorization of the original Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). ESSA was signed into law in December 2015 and requires states (plus Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia) to submit plans describing how they will identify and improve low-performing schools.

**ESSA requirements regarding:***

- **School performance indicators**: states must create accountability systems that include indicators of academic achievement, other academic or high school graduation rates; rating performance (Title 1, Part A, Section 1111(b))
- **State identification**: states must identify the following types of schools for improvement: Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) schools, which have very low school performance or high school graduation rates, and Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) and Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI) schools, which have been identified due to underperforming subgroups of students.
- **State support of CSI schools**: provide technical assistance to and periodically review resource allocation; implement more rigorous interventions (WRT) in CSI schools that fail to improve their performance.

**Pool**ing data across multiple years may help

Researchers separately compared two studies focusing on identification of CSI schools.

**Table 1: Number of years of data used for identification of CSI schools**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Years of Data Used</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State 1</td>
<td>2-3</td>
<td>Years 2013-2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State 2</td>
<td>4+</td>
<td>Years 2010-2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State 3</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>Years 2011-2012</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 2: States using multiple growth indicators**

- **Louisiana’s growth model combines a multiple-model growth with proficiency: averaging individual student performance across two years to calculate a final growth index.**

**Table 4: States identifying more than 50% of their schools as in need of improvement**

- **Interventions under prior school accountability laws that found positive effects focused on improving a maximum of 35 low-performing schools. Under ESSA, states have identified 35 or lower CSI schools.**

**Table 3: Weight distributions of performance index calculation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title 1</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title 2</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title 3</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title 4</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 2: State plans to implement practices that disrupt barriers to effective reform**

- **Tenness plans to implement state and/or federal practices that disrupt barriers to effective reform.**

**RESULTS**

Using value-added as a measure of growth, triangulated with other growth measures, provides the most evidence for determining the effectiveness of student achievement demographics for outside of a student’s control.

**Figure 3: State provided supports for building capacity**

- **Building school capacity can help to mitigate inequalities in low-performing schools. Practices for building school capacity include recruiting, hiring, and retaining effective principals and teachers; increasing capacity for effective instruction; and establishing support from parents and educators.**

**Table 5: States identified by their planned interventions**

- **39% of states (20/52) plan to implement teacher and/or principal coaching in CSI schools.**

**Figure 4: stage two: Second Round of Coding**

The process of combining individual school data into district-level data makes requiring Title I funds or state funds for CSIs to share information, in the final analysis, impossible. In support of this purpose, we identified a limited number of schools that can be adequately served with significant additional funding or mention state-level school plans to implement one or more disruptive practices upon CSI school identification and/or after school failure to exit CSI status. However, most state plans to implement practices that will build school capacity.

**Stage One: Initial Round of Coding**

Coding: We primarily focused on coding Title I, Part A, Section 1111(b) (Statewide Accountability System) and (d) “School Support and Improvement Activities” of the state plans. We used U.S.E. state planning documents to guide coding.

- **Focused on identification of state plans and patterns identified in each state’s plan.**
- **Based on emergent themes, developed a coding system and codes.**
- **Final coding manual and codes were used to complete coding.**

**Stage Two: Second Round of Coding**

- **Two researchers independently coded each plan using the developed coding system and codes.**
- **Final coding was completed by all two-coding discrepancies were resolved.**

**Stage Three: Final Coding**

- **Data were re-coded and compared with the results of the previous stage.**

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