

Great news for School Psychologists!

The “Every Student Succeeds Act” (ESSA), a federal law recently passed, will go into effect in September 2017. This law gives states more power as to how they spend their money; this flexibility offers unprecedented opportunities for schools and practitioners.

What is exciting is that this new law specifically mentions school psychologists as part of “specialized instructional support personnel” as well as, “school-based mental health service providers.” ESSA recognizes the need to provide comprehensive school psychological services to *all* students.

ESSA provides a clear pathway for school psychologists to go beyond their responsibilities as members of the Child Study Team and fulfill their roles as providers of comprehensive services throughout the school.

The New Jersey Association of School Psychologists (NJASP) serves and supports school psychologists across the state. NJASP will work closely with NJDOE in how ESSA is implemented.

We need your help. We are looking for input and ideas on how ESSA can empower you as a practitioner and improve your school. Based on surveys of NJASP members, we have initially targeted seven areas in which you can become involved and take a leadership role:

1. *Prevention and early intervention.* This will require experts who understand child development, conduct a wide range of assessments and implement innovative interventions.
2. *Multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS).* This is a focus on the whole child. Examples include expansion of social-emotional and character development, physical health, group-based and creative learning projects as part of academic instruction, and family and community partnerships. NJASP and NJDOE are already collaborating on the NJTSS* initiative.
3. *Consultation and supports* for teachers in the classroom.
4. *Collaboration and learning communities* with other practitioners in resolving academic and mental health challenges, initiating intervention strategies, and designing and implementing new programs.
5. *Mental health services* through individual and group counseling, consultation with teachers and other practitioners, and school-wide psychoeducational curriculums.
6. *School climate, safety and HIB issues.* A focus on areas one through five should greatly help in improving school climate.

* New Jersey Tiered Systems of Support (NJTSS)

7. *Administrative support.* Collaborate with administrators to lead on the implementation of programs inspired by ESSA.

One of NJASP's roles will be to educate practitioners and school staff by giving talks and discussions throughout the state on the new law and how your particular school can benefit. We will also discuss how you can take a leadership role within your school.

Let us know if you are interested in attending a talk at your school or in your local area.

For more information visit:

- <http://cecblog.typepad.com/files/cecs-summary-of-selected-issues-in-every-student-succeeds-act-essa-1.pdf>
- <http://www.casel.org/federal-policy-and-legislation/>
- <https://www.nasponline.org/research-and-policy/policy-matters/the-every-student-succeeds-act-and-school-psychologists>
- <http://www.nasponline.org/research-and-policy/current-law-and-policy-priorities/policy-priorities/essa-implementation-resources/details-of-essa>

You can provide input via our Discussion Forum on the website or email barryeva@comcast.net