



# At-A-Glance: Accountability

Accountability in K-12 education typically refers to the process of holding school districts and schools responsible for student performance.



Federal accountability requirements are described in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), passed by Congress in December 2015 to replace both the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act and states' related NCLB waivers.

The Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE) received approval of its accountability plan under ESSA from the U.S. Department of Education in August 2017. States are required to fully transition to ESSA by the 2017-18 school year.

The new federal education law continues a focus on accountability, while giving states more flexibility in designing their own systems. States must continue the standards-based reform efforts begun under NCLB, including establishing standards, assessments aligned with standards, accountability systems, and systems of support for low-performing schools.

In 2016, the Tennessee General Assembly passed a law requiring an A-F grading system for all schools to be included on the annual State Report Card. Following the 2017-18 school year, TDOE will assign every school an overall letter grade that is aligned to the Tennessee accountability framework developed under ESSA.

