



## School Redesign LEA Guidance 2017-18

### Table of Contents

- Vision for Schools in Louisiana
- The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)
- Struggling Schools in Louisiana
- Louisiana’s Approach to Improving Struggling Schools
- Purpose of the School Redesign Grant
- Application Process Overview
- Steps to Complete the School Redesign Grant Application
- Steps to Complete a Planning Grant
- Opportunity to Form a Consortium
- Evidence-Based Interventions
- Partner Organizations
- Grant Application Scoring
- Granting Funds
- Monitoring & Support
- APPENDIX A: Resources

### Vision for Schools in Louisiana

To enable Louisiana’s students to thrive in tomorrow’s competitive job market and global economy, it is incumbent upon us to ensure every Louisiana student is on track to a college degree or a professional career.

Louisiana Believes is built on the premise that Louisiana students are just as capable as any students in America, and that those closest to children – parents and teachers – are best positioned to help students achieve those expectations. This plan focuses on raising expectations and educational outcomes for students in five major focus areas:

- **Unification of child care, Head Start and Pre-Kindergarten** to ensure that all students are ready for Kindergarten
- **Alignment of standards, curriculum, assessments, and professional development** to provide students and teachers with the tools they need to meet new standards
- **Preparation of every aspiring educator** under the guidance of an effective mentor, in the classroom, on the job
- **Creation of opportunities for every graduate** through Jump Start career education and college-level Advanced Placement or dual enrollment coursework
- **Focus on students in persistently struggling schools** by transforming those schools and creating new options for their families

Talented leaders– supervisors, school leaders, and classroom teachers – have worked tirelessly to improve teaching and learning in classrooms across the state. As a result, Louisiana students have achieved record gains on national and local indicators, proving that they are just as capable as their peers across the country.

- **Grade 3-8 Achievement:** The percentage of students scoring "Mastery" and above on the 3-8 LEAP ELA and math assessments has increased 13 percentage points since 2013. Louisiana fourth-grade students achieved the highest growth among students in all states on the 2015 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in reading and the second highest growth in math.
- **ACT:** Since 2014, Louisiana students have made more progress on the ACT than has been made in any other state using the ACT as its high school assessment. The Class of 2016 was no exception, earning a record-high average composite for Louisiana-19.5--making Louisiana the most improved among states that assess all students. Louisiana also ranked third of seven Southern states in 2016.
- **Graduation Rate:** In 2016 Louisiana's graduation rate reached an all-time high of 77.5 percent. Louisiana raised its graduation rate 10.3 percent in the past five years, outpacing the nation's growth of 4.6 percent.
- **Strength of Diploma:** Louisiana high school students have more college and career opportunities in high school than ever before. Forty-three percent of the Class of 2016 earned early college credit or a statewide industry-based credential, valued in high-wage industries, a 6 percent increase since 2013. The percentage of students earning particularly advanced credentials-such as

passing an AP or CLEP test, or earning an National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER) level-two credential in a craft trade-increased to 10 percent, up from 4 percent in 2013.

Even with these important gains, Louisiana will continue to raise the bar for students so that by 2025, an A-rated school is one where the average student has fully mastered core content, is ready for the next level of study, and is given access to the same opportunities as their peers across the country. Reaching this bar must include directing additional resources and support to those schools who most struggle to ensure that all of their students are ready for college and fulfilling careers.

### **The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)**

The federal [Every Student Succeeds Act \(ESSA\)](#) was signed into law December 10, 2015, reauthorizing the 50-year-old Elementary and Secondary Education Act and revising many provisions of what was known as No Child Left Behind (NCLB). The Elementary and Secondary Education Act is the United States' national education law and longstanding commitment to equal opportunity for all students. Among the law's requirements, is the requirement that both school systems and the state build plans to improve the state's most chronically underperforming schools.

As a part of this law, the state is required to:

- Identify a list of struggling schools;
- Evaluate school system level plans to improve each school on the list;
- Award school improvement set aside dollars to school systems that have strong evidence-based plans for improving struggling schools; and
- Intervene in schools that do not improve over time.

As a part of this law, school systems are required to:

- Develop and implement an evidence-based school improvement plan for each struggling school within their system, and
- Make adjustments to the plan based on student results.

### **Struggling Schools in Louisiana**

In recent years, Louisiana's efforts to reduce the number of students concentrated in struggling schools are yielding results. In 2016, more than 15,800 fewer students attended D and F schools than did in 2013.

Schools that meet any of the criteria below are included in Louisiana's [School Redesign List](#)<sup>1</sup>:

- Received a D, F, or T-rating (where the "T" SPS score was equivalent to a D or F SPS score) for each of the past three consecutive school years
- Earned a graduation rate less than 67 percent in the most recent school year
- New schools (assigned a new site code in fall 2014) that received a D, F, or T-rating (where the "T" SPS score was equivalent to a D or F SPS score) for each of their first two years of operation

The round 1 [School Redesign List](#) is based on 2014, 2015, and 2016 letter grades, the 2016 graduation rate, and 2016-2017 Title I status. The list will next be updated after the 2017 letter grades have been released and the 2017-2018 list of Title I schools is available.

Given these criteria, a sizable number of schools continually struggle to provide an excellent education to students.

- 240 schools (18% of all schools), spanning 61 school systems, received a letter grade of D or F in each of the 2014, 2015, and 2016 school years and/or had a 2015 cohort graduation rate below 67%.
- 14% of all Louisiana students, nearly 102,000 students, attend persistently struggling schools. These students are more likely to be low income (90%, compared to 71% state average) and minority (85%, compared to 55% state average)

Moreover, statewide results show that though the academic performance of historically disadvantaged students is improving in ELA, math, and science, their overall performance and rate of improvement remain lower than that of their peers – revealing a persistent and widening gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students in Louisiana. For example, while 35 percent of students without disabilities scored mastery and above on the 2018 LEAP assessment, only 11 percent of students with disabilities scored at that level. Between 2015 and 2017, the number of white students scoring mastery or above on the LEAP assessment grew by 3 percent, while the number of African-American students scoring mastery or above only grew by 2 percent.

### Louisiana's Approach to Improving Struggling Schools

To address the continued need for school improvement statewide, the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) will continue to use each of the following three strategies:

1. **School System-Driven School Redesign Planning:** The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires every local school system design a plan for improving student performance in their struggling schools. School systems will develop multi-year plans to address these challenges that may

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<sup>1</sup> Though school systems are required to create a School Redesign plan for *all* schools on the [School Redesign list](#), funds secured through the School Redesign Grant application can only be spent on Title I schools and schools with a graduation rate less than 67%.

include external partner organizations, and the LDOE will competitively award funds to those with the strongest evidence-based plans.

2. **Zone Strategies:** In our state’s largest cities, there exist large concentrations of struggling schools. The LDOE recommends that school systems with five or more identified schools create a zone focused on setting ambitious goals, building community-based accountability, recruiting top educators, providing intensive supports for teachers, and broadening decision-making authority for principals. Caddo recently launched the [Transformation Next Zone](#) in partnership with the LDOE.
3. **Recovery School District Intervention:** In New Orleans and Baton Rouge, intervention by the Recovery School District (RSD) has yielded results for students. The RSD will continue to exist as an option for schools that continue to struggle despite plans for redesign. Involvement by the RSD can include mergers, closures, or transformation by a charter operator.

### Purpose of the School Redesign Grant

The three-year School Redesign Grant is intended to support school systems as they build and execute plans to improve their struggling schools. Under the federal ESSA law, every school system that has a school identified as a persistently struggling school is required to develop a plan for improvement. The submission of this grant application will serve as that plan, and every school system with a school on the [list](#) must submit a plan in one of two grant cycles in the 2017-2018 school year.

The plan developed by each school system should focus on the areas listed below. The [grant application](#) and the [scoring rubric](#) mirror these categories:

- **Core Academics:** To see improvement, struggling schools must have a strong and coherent academic foundation including a plan for curriculum, assessment, and teacher professional development across all grade levels and core content areas, including for birth to 4 year olds. This must include a plan for ensuring students have access to advanced coursework, career education, and strong academic counselling.
- **Special Populations:** Schools need plans to address the unique needs of English language learners (ELL), special education students, and other struggling student groups. This should include a plan for early and accurate identification and aligned intervention, and instructional plans that ensure meaningful student growth and program exit, as appropriate.
- **Talent:** School systems with struggling schools face the challenge of recruiting, hiring, supporting and retaining top talent that can meet the needs of students. Building processes to ensure all schools, but particularly those that are chronically failing, identify workforce needs, retain, coach, and compensate teachers so that all students can achieve excellence.

- **LEA Systems:** School systems need to organize themselves in a manner that supports struggling schools to improve. Districts with five or more struggling schools should consider creating an improvement zone led by a single district-level leader that concentrates resources and capacity in this network of schools. School systems also have the opportunity to expand the choices that families in struggling schools have by ensuring fair access the highest quality schools and programs across PK-12th grade. This can be accomplished by a unified enrollment system and/or a shifting of attendance zones. In addition, systems can offer additional choices for families in the form of specialized programs, additional programs or charter schools.

**Application Process Overview**

During the 2017-2018 school year, the LDOE will run two cycles of the School Redesign Grant. For the first cycle of the grants, school systems have two options:

- **School Redesign Grant:** This three-year grant is an opportunity for school systems with strong plans to apply for ESSA funds.
- **Planning Grant:** This is an opportunity for school systems seeking to take more time to develop a strong plan to partner with an organization to help with the planning process and receive financial support for that planning process.

All school systems with a school identified as being in need of comprehensive support *must* complete a full School Redesign Grant application in one of the two cycles. However, school systems may choose to submit a planning grant in round 1 or not submit at all in round 1 and then submit a School Redesign Grant in round 2.

**School Redesign Grant Application Timeline**

	Application Released	Application Due	Interviews	Funds Awarded
<b>Round 1</b>	August 2017	September 29, 2017	Week of November 27, 2017	January 23, 2018
<b>Round 2</b>	February 2018	March 2018	April 2018	Summer 2018

**Planning Grant Application Timeline**

	Application Released	Application Due	Funds Awarded
<b>Planning Grant</b>	August 2017	September 15, 2017	October 17, 2017

Steps to Complete the School Redesign Grant Application



**Step 1: Select an application round and application type**

School systems should select the application window that best meets their needs. School systems who would like additional time and support to create a strong plan should consider submitting a planning grant in round 1 and a School Redesign application in round 2.

School systems with more than one school eligible for School Redesign Funds will submit one plan for all schools. If the school system intends to differentiate its approach to different schools please indicate that in the plan.

**Step 2: Conduct a needs assessment**

School systems must create a plan that is tailored to the specific needs of the students in their schools and communities. To this end, all school systems must conduct a needs assessment as part of their grant application. School systems should take the following steps as part of their needs assessment:

1. *Analyze progress and gaps in all datasets:* student achievement and growth data, workforce reports, graduate data, post-secondary data, state report cards, and early childhood performance profiles. These are all datasets published by the Department.
2. *Establish areas of greatest need and the reasons behind these needs.*
3. *Set school system- and school-level improvement goals for the areas of greatest need and interim goals that indicate progress.*

School systems should reference the [rubric](#) as they conduct their needs assessment to ensure they are completing each step of the needs assessment.



### Step 3: Build a plan to address your biggest needs

After conducting a thorough needs assessment, school systems should build a plan that reflects the evidence-based strategies and will lead to the most significant positive changes in student achievement. The LDOE has [organized](#) possible interventions into four categories:

- Core Academics
- Special Populations
- Talent
- LEA Systems

All school systems are required to include information in their plans around the following three components of their core academics plans.<sup>2</sup>

- High quality curricula across core academic areas in PK-12
- High quality assessments across core academic areas in PK-12
- High quality teacher professional development in core academic areas in PK-12

Outside of this requirement, school systems are not required to build a plan that addresses all four categories or every indicator within the rubric but instead should focus on solutions that will address their areas of biggest need.

School systems with five or more struggling schools should consider creating an [improvement zone](#) by naming a leader and concentrating resources to support this network of struggling schools.

School systems may reference the resources in [APPENDIX A](#) as they develop their plans to address these areas.

### Step 4: Align budget to fund prioritized projects and initiatives

As part of their School Redesign Grant application, school systems must submit a single completed [budget template](#) that describes the cost associated with the interventions described in their plans. If the budget draws upon other state or federal funds to support related work at the school site or LEA, indicate that within the budget file on the Braided Funds tab.

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<sup>2</sup> School systems who have not yet made choices across these three indicators that align to the LDOE’s recommendations on quality should focus their application on these indicators. School systems who have already implemented a strong plan for each of these components, and thus do not intend to request funds for them, should indicate that in their application and describe their current approach in their plan.



### Steps to Complete a Planning Grant

Planning grants provide an opportunity for school systems seeking to take more time to develop a strong plan to partner with an organization to help with the planning process and receive financial support for that planning process.

The planning grant application will be released at the same time as the School Redesign Grant application and is due on September 15, 2017. As part of their planning grant application, school systems must describe:

1. The [School Redesign Grant application step\(s\)](#) for which the school system is seeking additional support;
2. The outside organization(s) with which the school system plans to partner and its process for identifying those partners;
3. How the school system will work with the partner to achieve its planning goals; and
4. A [budget](#) outlining how the school system will spend funds received through the planning grant.

Schools systems interested in the planning grant should reference the [planning grant application](#) for more details.

### Opportunity to Form a Consortium

School systems can choose to apply for funds for work with partners in a consortium. School systems applying as a consortium should each submit separate applications but indicate in their application which elements will be implemented with a consortium of other school systems. School systems must also submit a single [consortium form](#), signed by all participating school systems, that identifies the lead consortium partner.

### Evidence-Based Interventions

The federal [ESSA legislation](#) requires that states use designated school improvement funds to support interventions that have a strong evidence base. The law further defines [evidence-based strategies](#) as falling within one of four categories:

- Demonstrate a statistically significant effect on improving student outcomes or other relevant outcomes based on:
  - *Category 1: strong evidence* from at least 1 well-designed and well-implemented experimental study;
  - *Category 2: moderate evidence* from at least 1 well-designed and well-implemented quasi-experimental study; or

- *Category 3: promising evidence* from at least 1 well-designed and well-implemented correlational study with statistical controls for selection bias; or
- Demonstrate a rationale based on:
  - *Category 4: high-quality research findings* or positive evaluation that such activity, strategy, or intervention is likely to improve student outcomes or other relevant outcomes; and
  - includes ongoing efforts to examine the effects of such activity, strategy, or intervention.

Awarded school improvement funding must be used for interventions meeting only the top three tiers of evidence.<sup>3</sup> All interventions proposed by school systems must have an evidence base that falls within Category 1, 2, or 3.

To support schools in accessing research tied to interventions, the LDOE has included a list of education research clearinghouses in [APPENDIX A](#).

### Partner Organizations

School systems are encouraged to engage highly-qualified external partners to support them in conducting needs assessments, developing strong improvement plans, and implementing their plans.

In many cases, the LDOE has reviewed resources from partner organizations to determine the degree to which they are likely to contribute to significant improvements in student outcomes. For a list of these resources, please see [APPENDIX A](#). Contact your Regional Turnaround Support Manager if you require assistance choosing a highly-qualified external partner.

### Grant Application Scoring

The plans submitted by school systems will be scored on a [rubric](#) aligned to the four categories that shape the application:

- Core Academics
- Special Populations
- Talent
- LEA Systems

School systems should reference this [rubric](#) as they create their plans.

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.ccsso.org/Documents/2017/ESSA/EvidenceConsiderationsCCSSOFebruary2017.pdf>

All applications will be evaluated by independent reviewers and LDOE staff. Submissions will be scored on the quality of the plan, the strength of the evidence base, and alignment to the needs assessment.

School systems’ plans are only scored on the required indicators and any additional indicators that have been chosen to be addressed based on their unique needs assessment. The needs assessment and each applicable indicator will receive a score of 0, 1, 2, or 3 as described in the table below.

Score	Needs Assessment <sup>4</sup> and Budget <sup>5</sup>	Required and Optional Indicators
3	<p>Needs assessment uses all relevant data sources to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Accurately identify the area(s) of greatest need and their causes</li> <li>● Effectively prioritize the area(s) of need most likely to lead to significant improvement in school performance</li> <li>● Set clear, ambitious, measurable, and achievable 3-year goals for areas of greatest need and describe how progress will be measured over time</li> </ul> <p>School system’s redesign financial plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Maximizes all school system funds available to support school redesign</li> <li>● Aligns grant funds requested to interventions in the redesign plan</li> <li>● Includes a budget that fully implements all interventions in the redesign plan</li> </ul>	<p>Plan includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● One or more evidence-based interventions that align to evidence categories 1, 2, or 3 and are aligned to the needs assessment</li> <li>● A clear explanation of the role of the school and the role of the central office in implementing the intervention</li> <li>● An explanation of how this intervention connects to all other interventions creating a coherent plan for improvement across all schools</li> <li>● Implementation plan that includes steps that address all of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Planning for the intervention,</li> <li>○ Building principal and teacher investment in the plan</li> <li>○ Training for principals and teachers around the intervention,</li> <li>○ Monitoring of the success of the intervention</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<sup>4</sup> Given that school systems’ needs assessments will serve as the foundation of the rest of their plan, this element must receive a score of at least 2 to be eligible to receive any funds through the School Redesign Grant.

<sup>5</sup> Scores in the budget section of the rubric will be used to determine funding amounts that school systems selected for funding receive.

<p>2</p>	<p>Needs assessment uses some relevant data sources to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accurately identify some of the greatest area(s) of need and some of their causes</li> <li>• Effectively prioritize some area(s) of need likely to lead to significant improvement in school performance</li> <li>• Set somewhat clear, ambitious, measurable, and achievable 3-year goals and describe how progress will be measured over time</li> </ul> <p>School systems’ redesign financial plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not maximize all school system funds available to support school redesign</li> <li>• Aligns grant funds requested to interventions in the redesign plan</li> <li>• Includes a budget that fully implements all interventions in the redesign plan and includes funds beyond just School Redesign Grant funds</li> </ul>	<p>Plan includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One or more evidence-based interventions that align to evidence categories 1, 2, or 3 and are aligned to the needs assessment</li> <li>• A clear explanation of the role of the school and the role of the central office in implementing the intervention</li> <li>• Interventions that are aligned to the needs assessment</li> <li>• Implementation plan that includes some of these components: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Planning for the intervention,</li> <li>○ Building principal and teacher investment in the plan</li> <li>○ Training for principals and teachers around the intervention;</li> <li>○ Monitoring of the success of the intervention</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>1</p>	<p>Needs assessment uses some relevant data sources to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify area(s) of need and their causes with some inaccuracies</li> <li>• Prioritize area(s) of need that may not lead to significant improved school performance</li> <li>• Set some 3-year goals and describe how progress will be measured over time</li> </ul> <p>School systems’ redesign financial plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not maximize all school system funds available to support school redesign</li> <li>• Aligns grant funds requested to interventions in the redesign plan</li> <li>• Includes a budget that relies only on School Redesign Grant funds to execute the plan</li> </ul>	<p>Plan includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One or more interventions that align to evidence category 4 and/or are misaligned to the needs assessment</li> <li>• Implementation plan that includes some of these components: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Planning for the intervention,</li> <li>○ Building principal and teacher investment in the plan</li> <li>○ Training for principals and teachers around the intervention;</li> <li>○ Monitoring of the success of the intervention</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

0	<p>Needs assessment is absent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial plan does not support interventions included in the redesign plan.</li> </ul>	<p>Plan includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interventions that have no-evidence base or a weak evidence base</li> </ul>
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A school system’s final score on the rubric will be calculated by dividing the total points received by the total number of points possible based on the indicators that school system elected to address in its plan.

Reviews of written applications will be followed by in-person interviews. The senior leadership of school systems selected for interviews should be prepared to share their plans for school improvement and answer questions about their written application.

**Granting Funds**

The School Redesign Grant is a three-year grant. The amount of funding given to each school system will be based on the quality of its application and information gathered during the interview process. The LDOE may grant the full amount requested or a portion of the requested amount. The LDOE may also choose not to grant funds and instead, to ask school systems to further improve their plans for their struggling schools.

The federal ESSA law requires that the Department use the 7% Title I set-aside for school improvement activities. This amount will fluctuate year-to-year; however, the Department anticipates this amount to be approximately \$20 million per year.

School Redesign Grants will be awarded in January 2018; planning grants will be awarded in October 2017.

**Monitoring & Support**

Per the LDOE’s ESSA application, to exit comprehensive status a school must earn a C-letter grade for two consecutive years. Until that time, the school system governing the school must be pursuing an improvement plan that is state-approved.

Throughout the planning and implementation process, each school system can expect to receive support from their Regional Turnaround Support Managers (RTSMs). The RTSMs will schedule regular time with school systems to review progress on both planning and implementation. If you have any questions about this process please reach out to your RTSM at [delaina.larocque@la.gov](mailto:delaina.larocque@la.gov), [kelly.dimarco@la.gov](mailto:kelly.dimarco@la.gov), or [shavonne.price@la.gov](mailto:shavonne.price@la.gov).

**APPENDIX A: Resources**

- **Standards & Curriculum**
  - [Louisiana Student Standards](#)
  - [Instructional Materials Reviews](#)
- **Assessment**
  - [LEAP 360](#)
  - [LEAP 2025](#)
  - [Instructional Materials Reviews](#)
- **Professional Development**
  - [PD Vendor Guide](#)
  - [School System Support Calendar](#)
  - [Teacher Leaders](#)
  - [Teacher Leader Training Materials](#)
- **Principal Support**
  - [Principal Guidebook](#)
  - [Principal Fellowship](#) and [TAP program](#) details
  - [Compass Training Materials](#)
  - [Principal Goal Setting Support](#)
- **Teacher Preparation & Talent**
  - [Teacher Preparation Transition Guide](#)
  - [Workforce Library](#)
- **Early Childhood**
  - [Practice Performance Profile Results](#)
  - [Practice Performance Profile Site Key](#)
  - [Five Steps for Sites](#)
  - [Guide to Early Childhood Curriculum, Assessments, and Professional Development](#)
  - [Instructional Materials Reviews](#)
  - [Connecting CLASS™ and Tier I Curriculum](#)
  - [Linking Tier I Curriculum to GOLD®](#)
- **High School Opportunities**
  - [High School Student Planning Guidebook: A Path to Prosperity for Every Student](#)
  - [Graduation Requirements](#)
  - [All Things Jump Start web portal](#)
  - [Course Choice Program](#)
  - [Career Compass - Counseling and Student Planning Support](#)
  - [Transitional 9<sup>th</sup> Grade](#)
  - [Financial Aid Planning](#)
- **Building a Zone of Struggling Schools**
  - [Empower Schools](#)
- **Analyzing School System Resource Distribution**
  - [Educational Resource Strategies](#)

- **ESSA**
  - [“Supporting School Reform by Leveraging Federal Funds in a Schoolwide Program”](#) - This document issued by the USDOE describes how to use federal funds to implement a Schoolwide Model of improvement.
  - [“Using Evidence to Strengthen Education Investments”](#) - This non-regulatory guidance issued by the USDOE entitled, is designed to help school systems successfully choose and implement evidence-based interventions that improve outcomes for students. Additional websites which provide access to evidence-based academic interventions:
    - [What Works Clearinghouse](#)
    - [Results First Clearinghouse Database](#)
    - [Best Evidence Encyclopedia](#)
    - [RAND report on school leadership interventions under ESSA](#)
    - [Using Evidence to Create Next Generation High Schools](#)
    - <http://eric.ed.gov>