

EAQ Call for Special Issue on ESSA

Educational Administration Quarterly issues a call for a special issue on the recent reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). On Dec. 10, 2015, President Obama signed the Every Student Succeeds Act, a reauthorization of the 50-year-old ESEA. The bill devolves power and authority back to the states to establish college and career ready standards, administer annual statewide assessments, create innovative measures of student and school performance, and develop interventions and supports for struggling schools (understood to be the bottom 5 percent of schools, schools where subgroups do poorly, and high schools with high dropout rates). In addition, the new bill emphasizes teacher and school leader evaluation and support, investments in pre-K and wrap around services, and competitive programs to spur innovation and incentivize high quality educators to work in our most challenged schools.

Historically, ESEA represents the nation's legislative commitment to equal opportunity for all children, regardless of race, background, income, disability, or home language. Although many characterize the policy as a continued commitment to equal opportunity, others problematize this interpretation in light of changes in the legislation. Some have touted the bill as a return to state control of education and, with it, enhanced flexibility for educators to meet the needs of their students; others have questioned the degree of change the bill will likely produce as well as the capacity of states to create more effective models for improvement, particularly for chronically underperforming schools.

As such, the reauthorization brings many questions regarding practice and policy generally and for educational leadership specifically. The current policy shift highlights the need to explore past practices and policies that might inform responses from school leaders, central office administrators, state and local policymakers, and other practitioners. The new policy context also suggests a need for scholars to theorize new directions for the field, as certain values and practices are foregrounded and others are moved to the background.

Therefore, we seek manuscripts that help us better understand the policy, practice, and legal implications for states, districts, and schools under this new law. Manuscripts that enlighten perspectives on educational leadership—within state agencies, central administration of



districts, schools, and classrooms—are of interest, as are manuscripts that consider how the organizational structure of districts and schools impacts leadership related to ESSA.

Example topics and questions include (though are not limited to) the following:

- What is the new relationship between state and federal government with regard to educational reform, accountability, and supports? How do we understand (and potentially problematize) the devolution of power back to the states, as they are entrusted to use the guiding frameworks of ESSA to ensure educational equity?
- What policies levers are states using or planning to use with respect to ESSA? What are their advantages over previous or alternative policy levers and what are the implications of their limitations?
- How will new funding mechanisms (e.g., block grants) and priorities (e.g., preK) affect how money is allocated and used by states, districts, and schools? Who stands to benefit from these shifts – and what might be the unintended consequences?
- How might schools and school leaders respond to new performance indicators? What, if anything, does this change for human capital systems in education?
- In what ways does ESSA influence the manner in which states support and hold accountable the most challenged districts and schools? What do we know from previous policy work that might influence how educational leaders tackle these new accountability contexts?
- Are leaders prepared to bring previously under-prioritized subjects, such as the arts and social studies, to the center of schooling? What do we know about how to support leadership development and school improvement in and through these subject matter?

EAQ welcomes traditional and emergent research paradigms and methods and is strongly committed to promoting social justice through education scholarship.



All manuscripts will be reviewed as a cohort for this Special Issue. Manuscripts must be submitted in the window between Aug. 1, 2016, and Sept. 15, 2016, at eaq.sagepub.com. Please select the option from the special issue drop-down menu on Manuscript Central that identifies your paper as a submission for the “ESSA” Special Issue, and include the words “ESSA Special Issue Submission” on your title page. All submissions will go through the *EAQ* regular double-blind review process and follow the same norms and processes. As manuscripts are accepted for publication, they will be posted in the *EAQ* Advance Online Publication system.

Manuscripts submitted for the ESSA Special Issue that are not selected for the special issue will be considered for publication in other issues of *EAQ*.

For more information about this Call for Papers, please contact the Editor, casey.cobb@uconn.edu.

