

ESSA

What does this mean for arts education?

On December 10, 2015, President Obama signed the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) into law. ESSA continues the focus on equity and access in education across the nation since the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act was enacted. At that time, this law provided the largest federal aid to K-12 schooling. Here is a brief overview of this bipartisan work. Additional details and links to more in-depth analysis are offered below.



"With this bill, we reaffirm that fundamentally American ideal- that every child, regardless of race, income, background, the zip code where they live, deserves the chance to make of their lives what they will."—President Barack Obama

After 51 years since the implementation of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the idea of equity and access to quality educational resources and programming continues to be a part of our conversations. The resulting federal programs in each of the Title areas provide varying types of support to foster opportunities for all. Today's retooling of the initial idea for access and equity now seen in the Every Student Succeeds Act 2015 offers opportunities for more content areas than initially mentioned in past legislation (No Child Left Behind Act, 2001). There is a common thread for each of these laws, that thread being accountability. ESSA continues the pursuit of offering all students a quality education through methods of holding schools accountable for greater access and equity. The new law defines a well-rounded education for students that include the arts, offering potential opportunities not available in prior legislation. Much of the new law will go into effect in the 2017-18 school year.

WELL-ROUNDED EDUCATION – *"The term 'well-rounded education' means courses, activities, and programming in subjects such as English, reading or language arts, writing, science, technology, engineering, mathematics, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, geography, computer science, music, career and technical education, health, physical education, and any other subject, as determined by the State or local educational agency, with the purpose of providing all students access to an enriched curriculum and educational experience."-- Every Student Succeeds Act, page 807.*

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

Visit these links of organizations who offer analysis of the implications for arts education from the Every Student Succeeds Act law. This act was signed into law in December 2015 by President Obama, based on bipartisan work.



PA Department of Education

<https://www.education.pa.gov/K-12/ESSA/Pages/default.aspx>



National Art Education Association

<https://www.arteducators.org/advocacy-policy/essa-every-student-succeeds-act>



US Department of Education

<http://www.ed.gov/ESSA>



Educational Theatre Association

<https://schooltheatre.org/guide-to-essa/>



Americans for the Arts

<https://www.americansforthearts.org/news-room/americans-for-the-arts-news/in-essa-arts-are-part-of-well-rounded-education>



National Education Association

<http://www.nea.org/essabegins>



National Association for Music Education

<https://nafme.org/tag/essa/>