



**National  
Urban League**

**State:** North Carolina

## **ESSA State Plan Equity Report Card**

As part of our Equity & Excellence Project (EEP), the National Urban League has reviewed the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Consolidated State Plans for 36 states and the District of Columbia where we have Urban League affiliates. Under ESSA, the U.S. Department of Education tasked each state with developing a consolidated, streamlined set of requirements for states to address in their plans and submit for federal approval. All plans were approved as of September 2018. These plans provide a preliminary indicator of how states intend to implement the new law and represent a blueprint for state- and district-level decisions that will work to move each state from promise to practice during implementation.

During our analysis, we assessed how well states incorporated equity into their plans and developed a series of report cards that use a green-yellow-red highlight system to rate the plans on 12 Equity Indicators including: early childhood learning, supports for struggling schools, and resource equity. These indicators were selected based on the evidence demonstrating their effectiveness for advancing equity and excellence for vulnerable students in our nation's public schools.

These report cards do not constitute an assessment or analysis of a state's school system. Rather, they identify the extent to which states have included the 12 equity indicators in their ESSA plans. Each state's ranking was determined based on its weighted average performances across each of our 12 equity indicators. Extra weight was placed on those areas that the National Urban League believes are especially critical to advancing equity—subgroup performance, supports, and interventions for struggling schools and for resource equity.

We believe these Consolidated State Plans are a reflection of each state's priorities and represent a road map that will guide a state's investments in districts, schools and communities. We hope that the absence of information in a state's plan is not an indication of its commitment to these education equity priorities and we remain optimistic that states and districts will continue to adopt these 12 equity levers into their plans as they move into implementation.

For more information on our findings, please read our executive summary and full report on [naturbanleague.org](http://naturbanleague.org).



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**Plan Approved:** May 29, 2018; Link to full text can be found [here](#)

Equity Indicators	NUL Score
<p><b>1. Goals and Indicators</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>North Carolina’s long-term goal is to have 71.3% of high school student proficient in reading and 73.3% of high school students proficient in math by 2027.</li> <li>The state’s chosen School Quality and Student Success (SQSS) indicator for elementary and middle schools is “growth.” Measured by EVAAS (Education Value-Added Assessment System), it is a value-added growth model that includes student performance on the English language arts/reading (ELA), mathematics, and science assessments, which results in a composite growth value.</li> <li>For high schools, the state’s SQSS indicators are (1) performance on the biology end-of-course assessment, (2) math course rigor: the percent of students passing the NC Math 3 course, (3) ACT: the percent of students meeting the University of North Carolina (UNC) minimum admission requirement of a composite score of 17, and (4) ACT WorkKeys: the percent of students who achieve a silver or higher designation.</li> <li>North Carolina should ensure that whether a school meets goals and interim targets factors into its overall ratings and identification for support.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sufficient <input type="checkbox"/> Poor
<p><b>2. Subgroup Performance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>North Carolina’s A-F rating system does not depend on subgroup performance. Grade determinations are based on the performance of all students.</li> <li>The state is using an n-size of 30.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Sufficient <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Poor
<p><b>3. Supports &amp; Interventions for Struggling Schools</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>North Carolina is identifying the bottom 5% of Title I schools only.</li> <li>North Carolina’s definition of “consistently underperforming” identifies schools with student subgroups that receive an “F” on all indicators in statewide rating system for three consecutive years.</li> <li>Subgroup performance must be low on all indicators to trigger intervention.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Sufficient <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Poor
<p><b>4. Resource Equity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In addition to describing how it will help districts align their spending with local needs assessments to address inequities, the state cites mechanisms to target funds to support improvement at schools identified under its accountability system.</li> <li>The plan also discusses how the state formula grants prioritize districts with identified schools and how they plan to use part of the state set aside to give additional grants to identified schools.</li> </ul>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Sufficient <input type="checkbox"/> Poor
<p><b>5. Educator Equity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The state plan lacks timelines or interim targets for educator equity plan implementation, only saying they will be reviewed annually.</li> <li>North Carolina also leaves data collection up to the LEA rather than centralizing and standardizing it at the state level.</li> <li>North Carolina's plan takes advantage of the flexibility to reserve Title II funds at the state level, acknowledges the importance of professional development (PD) in ensuring equitable access, and pledges to use state PD funds for equitable distribution efforts.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sufficient <input type="checkbox"/> Poor



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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The state could strengthen its educator equity work by targeting its PD spending specifically to develop, support and retain diverse teachers and leaders.</li><li>• North Carolina does not discuss cultural competency or teacher/principal pipeline diversity.</li></ul>	
<p><b>6. Stakeholder Engagement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• North Carolina engaged in a robust plan development process that involved stakeholders at many different levels, in addition to developing a plan for continuous improvement.</li><li>• The state should consider articulating in more detail the strategies and timelines for implementation.</li></ul>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Sufficient <input type="checkbox"/> Poor
<p><b>7. Breaking the School to Prison Pipeline</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• North Carolina has developed the “Disparities in Discipline Task Force” focused on data collection and best practices in the area of discipline.</li><li>• The state should also consider adding an indicator that measures the rates of exclusionary discipline practices to the accountability system.</li></ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sufficient <input type="checkbox"/> Poor
<p><b>8. Equitable Access to Early Childhood Learning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• North Carolina was one of thirty-eight states to articulate their intent to use Title I funds to increase access to equitable early childhood learning opportunities.</li><li>• The state also articulated their intent to use Title II funds for professional development early learning capacity building.</li></ul>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Sufficient <input type="checkbox"/> Poor
<p><b>9. Equitable Implementation of College and Career Standards</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The state’s accountability system includes an SQSS indicator at the high school level that measures access to and performance in (1) biology end-of-course assessment, (2) math course rigor: the percent of students passing the NC Math 3 course, (3) ACT: the percent of students meeting the University of North Carolina (UNC) minimum admission requirement of a composite score of 17, and (4) ACT WorkKeys: the percent of students who achieve a silver or higher designation.</li><li>• The state will report whether a school has less than 95% student participation on assessments. If a school has less than 95 percent of all, or all eligible, students taking assessments, results will not be reported. However, the actual number will be calculated with a denominator.</li></ul>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Sufficient <input type="checkbox"/> Poor
<p><b>10. Out of School Time Learning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• North Carolina discusses the use of Title IV funds for out of school time learning, including for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers. The state should consider ways to devote Title I funds to this purpose as well.</li><li>• The state could move to excellent by aligning extended learning grants with schools receiving Title I funds, describing how they pre-screen community-based partner organizations, and providing examples of allowable uses of funds for expanding learning opportunities.</li></ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sufficient <input type="checkbox"/> Poor
<p><b>11. Equitable Access to High Quality Curricula</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The state’s system of annual meaningful differentiation awards points for students enrolled in career and technical education (CTE) courses who meet the standard when scoring silver, gold, or platinum on a nationally normed test of workplace readiness. In addition, the state’s appendix includes CTE and STEM initiatives.</li><li>• North Carolina intends to adopt multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) and positive</li></ul>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Sufficient <input type="checkbox"/> Poor



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behavior interventions and supports (PBIS) in order to engage the whole student, including social and emotional learning.	
<p><b>12. Clear Reporting and Transparent Data Systems That Are Easy to Understand</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• North Carolina’s data efforts include reporting on teacher qualifications on annual report cards; Home Base, which is available to students, parents and administrators; the North Carolina Educator Effectiveness System, reported at the state level; the State of the Teaching Profession in North Carolina Report, and the Institutes of Higher Education (IHE) Annual Performance Report. The state should consider centralizing some of these indicators on the annual report card.</li><li>• The state will be employing an A-F rating system, but it is unclear how those grades will be contextualized, explained or supplemented by other information and data.</li><li>• The plan should also discuss the calculation and reporting of indicators such as per pupil spending required in the law.</li></ul>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sufficient <input type="checkbox"/> Poor</p>
<b>Overall Rating</b>	<b>Sufficient</b>