



**National
Urban League**

State: South 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.



State: South Carolina

Plan Approved: May 3, 2018; Link to full text can be found [here](#).

Equity Indicators	NUL Score
<p>1. Goals and Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Carolina’s long-term goal is 70% of students in each subgroup proficient in reading and math by 2035 and to reduce by half the percentage of students in each subgroup not proficient by 2026. • For its School Quality and Student Success (SQSS) indicator, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) chose: preparing for success (performance on science and social studies assessments) and school climate survey (measuring student engagement) for all schools; college and career readiness (including receiving benchmark ACT® or SAT scores; passing Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), or career readiness exams; or completing dual-credit course work, career and technical education (CTE) pathways, or work experience programs) for high schools. 	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Sufficient</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Poor</p>
<p>2. Subgroup Performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Carolina has an n-size of 20, which reflects input from the Urban League to reduce its prior n-size of 30 to ensure more groups of students count in the accountability system. • However, subgroups have no independent effect on all school ratings. Ratings for elementary and middle schools include growth of the lowest-performing 20% of students. 	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Excellent</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Sufficient</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Poor</p>
<p>3. Supports & Interventions for Struggling Schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The definition of consistently underperforming identifies schools with any student subgroup performing at or below the bottom 10% of schools across all indicators for three consecutive years. 	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Excellent</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sufficient</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Poor</p>
<p>4. Resource Equity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Carolina includes a college and career readiness indicator as part of their SQSS which is an accountability indicator which measures resource equity such as access post-secondary opportunities including AP/IB courses, and dual enrollment. • It also describes how it will report resource inequities on its report card and how it will support districts and schools identified for support and improvement to identify and address resource inequities, including through the use of set-asides. 	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Sufficient</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Poor</p>
<p>5. Educator Equity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SCDE provides clear definitions of the terms "ineffective teacher," "out-of-field," and "inexperienced teacher" in ways aligned with the best research and includes a plan improving equitable access to effective teachers. • The SCDE’s plan prioritizes evidenced based strategies to increase pipeline diversity or placed based efforts, including a principal induction and common standards for traditional and non-traditional routes to teacher certification. • The SCDE uses the allowable up to three percent set aside under Title II to enhance equitable access to effective teachers by increasing leadership opportunities for excellent educators without removing them entirely from the classroom. • Thee SCDE can strengthen these efforts through a more direct focus on improving the pipeline of culturally competent, diverse and effective teachers. 	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Excellent</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sufficient</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Poor</p>



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<p>6. Stakeholder Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The SCDE’s plan describes robust consultation with a diverse set of stakeholders including parents, teachers, community organizations (including the Urban League) and representatives of Indian tribes located in the State.• It also describes several examples where stakeholder feedback was incorporated in the plan as it was during its deliberation on n-size, where it incorporated the Urban League’s feedback.• The SCDE’s plan also describes a commitment to ongoing consultation with diverse stakeholders in implementation of its state plan.	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Sufficient <input type="checkbox"/> Poor</p>
<p>7. Breaking the School to Prison Pipeline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The SCDE’s response to reducing incidence of exclusionary discipline as described in its plan is the proliferation of alternative schools for students who exhibit behavioral problems. Also, much of the training and interventions are aimed at School Resource Officers whose very presence suggest escalation, rather than de-escalation.• However, at the recommendation of the School Safety Taskforce, the SCDE will develop new discipline regulations, including positive intervention and frameworks. The Taskforce recommended that these frameworks be included in teacher and principal training.• A taskforce also developed a behavioral matrix that includes emphasis on developing more interventions and restorative practices to avoid suspensions for low-level offenses.• To reduce the overuse of discipline practices that remove students from the classroom, the SCDE should consider the following: including a measure of discipline in its accountability system, implementing statewide teacher certification and professional development programs on trauma-informed practices, and cultural competency training and providing statewide resources to support the use of positive behavioral supports and interventions restorative justice practices.	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sufficient <input type="checkbox"/> Poor</p>
<p>8. Equitable Access to Early Childhood Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The SCDE prioritizes the use of Title 1 and Title II dollars for early learning.• Partnerships between LEAs and Head Start or First Steps blend funding to provide early childhood programs and services for young children with the common goal of preparing students for transitioning into 5K with the readiness skills and aptitudes needed to be successful.• The SCDE funds readiness assessments for all 4K and 5K students in publicly funded programs to start early with the building of the bridge for a Pre-K to 3rd grade continuum and to support the transition from Pre-K to 5K and 5K to first grade.• The SCDE’s plan describes how its State Report Cards will address preschool.	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Sufficient <input type="checkbox"/> Poor</p>
<p>9. Equitable Implementation of College and Career Standards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• By grade 12, a student may demonstrate “college readiness” on indicators: ACT composite score of 20; SAT benchmark of 1020; AP exams of 3 or higher in any College Board Advanced Placement course; IB exams of 4 or higher in any International Baccalaureate Higher Level course; or no credit for untested students.• Schools that do not meet the 95% participation rate cannot receive highest rating (out of 5 levels) overall or on the academic achievement indicator, may have Title I funds reduced, and must develop plan to increase participation.• The SCDE’s early learning team will improve the skills of teachers, principals, and other school leaders in identifying and providing instruction based on needs for students with	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Sufficient <input type="checkbox"/> Poor</p>



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<p>low literacy levels, and through professional learning opportunities for early childhood educators across sectors including professional development on readiness assessments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The "College and Career Readiness Indicator" examines the percentage of grade 12 students who demonstrate readiness on 1 of 9 measures. "College ready" measures include: (1) an ACT composite score of 20; (2) an SAT score of 1020; (3) an AP exam score of 4+; (4) an IB exam score of 4+; and (5) 6 hours of dual credit coursework in English, social studies, science, technology, engineering, or math (with transfer credits to 2- or 4-year institution, with a "C" grade or higher). • "Career readiness" metrics include: (1) a Worldwide Interactive Network National Career Readiness Certificate of Silver or better; (2) an Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery test (ASVAB) score of 31+; (3) completion of an approved work-based learning experience with a successful employer exit evaluation; and (4) completion of a Career and Technical Education (CATE) program pathway with a state or nationally-recognized industry credential (or completion of a state credential when no national credential is available) that leads to living wage as certified recommended by business and industry representatives in SC. The credential must also be approved by the Education and Economic Development Coordinating Council, Department of Commerce, Department of Employment and Workforce, SC State Chamber of Commerce, and State Superintendent of Education. Note: SC will report college ready, career ready, and college and career ready students. 	
<p>10. Out of School Time Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SCDE awards grants for high-quality afterschool programs using Title IV, 21st Century Community Learning Center (CCLC) program and should also consider including afterschool as an allowable use of Title I school improvement dollars. 	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sufficient <input type="checkbox"/> Poor
<p>11. Equitable Access to High Quality Curricula</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SCDE's career readiness indicator measures access and success in high quality courses. Specifically: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ By grade 12, a student may demonstrate "Career Readiness" on one or more of the following indicators: Worldwide Interactive Network National Career Readiness Certificate of Silver, Gold, or Platinum; ASVAB score of 31 or higher; completion of a South Carolina approved work-based learning experience with a successful employer exit evaluation; or completion of a Career and Technical Education (CATE) program pathway with a state or nationally-recognized industry credential, or completion of a state credential when no national credential is available, that leads to living wage as certified recommended by business and industry representatives in South Carolina make social and emotional learning available to teachers and administrators as part of professional development. • The SCDE should consider identifying social and emotional learning (SEL) as a substantial component of its teaching and learning approach. 	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sufficient <input type="checkbox"/> Poor
<p>12. Clear Reporting and Transparent Data Systems That Are Easy to Understand</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SCDE uses descriptive ratings ("excellent," "good," "average," and "below average"), based on the cumulative points schools earn in a weighted index across all indicators, to differentiate schools annually and identify schools for support. • The SCDE's plan includes a sample report card that provides a complimentary dashboard of data beyond the law's requirements to provide additional context for parents, 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Sufficient <input type="checkbox"/> Poor



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teachers and the public to understand.	
Overall Rating	Sufficient