



## Choose Your Local's ESSA Priorities

---

VEA has identified four major areas in which local Associations can have an essential and meaningful impact in the early stages of ESSA implementation: educator voice, family and communities, school improvement, and student opportunity. A great starting point is to choose one or two of those areas to focus your local's efforts in and begin working to make a significant difference. As you do, you'll grow your local's capacity for the future and identify issues around which to organize down the road.

Your UniServ Director will be a valuable asset as you make your plans.

Here's some information to help you choose your emphasis:

**Educator voice.** How confident are you that your local Association will be invited into the ESSA implementation process?

- Establish procedures for providing input to your school division's policymakers. This could mean regular "meet and confer" sessions or ensuring appointments on key committees, for example.
- Identify areas in which your local can offer resources, expertise and solutions.
- Push for division funds to be used to enhance collaboration and educator-led professional development aligned with students' learning needs.

**Family and community.** As your schools move forward with ESSA, how can you get the community solidly behind implementing the law successfully?

- Organize a community forum; attend meetings of other organizations.
- Establish relationships with groups such as the PTA, NAACP, Rotary clubs, faith-based organizations, etc.
- Ask questions, identify common issues, ask for involvement, such as attending and speaking at a school board or board of supervisors meeting.

**School improvement.** To move ahead, we must all play a part.

- Work with division leadership on the current school improvement plan; help evaluate what's working and what's not.
- Offer assistance, ask questions. How can the Association help?
- Introduce resources, like NEA Great Public Schools (GPS) framework ([nea.org/home/gpsindicators.html](http://nea.org/home/gpsindicators.html)) to pinpoint areas that need extra attention.

**Student opportunity.** How can we best measure success for our students?

- Work with division leadership, again using a resource like GPS, to address the research, proven resources, and practices shown to narrow gaps. Help organize change around those results.

*Information to help you get started is at [getESSAright.org](http://getESSAright.org).*