

RESOLUTION

Authorizing the Committee on Education and the Committee on the Disabled and Persons with Special Needs to hold joint hearings regarding the Every Student Succeeds Act.

WHEREAS, On December 10, 2015, President Barack Obama signed the Every Student Succeeds Act (“ESSA”), a reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, which is the nation’s general education law; and

WHEREAS, ESSA replaces the No Child Left Behind (“NCLB”) Act of 2001, and corrects the overreliance on uniform federal regulations and educator performance metrics that failed to provide sufficient consideration for the unique situations faced by state and local education authorities, which many considered to be its biggest flaw; and

WHEREAS, In contrast to NCLB, ESSA allows State and Local Education Authorities (“SEAs” and “LEAs,” respectively) to design their own educational systems and the standards by which those systems will be evaluated; and

WHEREAS, Under ESSA, SEAs, in consultation with officials and stakeholders, must submit accountability plans, which will go into effect at the start of the 2017-18 school year, to the federal Department of Education; and

WHEREAS, Each state’s plan must provide assurances that the state has adopted challenging academic content standards for math, reading/language arts, science, and any additional subject they wish to include, in accordance with previously established goals for college- and career-readiness; and

WHEREAS, While states are still required to regularly implement statewide uniform student academic assessments, ESSA contains provisions for alternative assessments for certain students, including economically disadvantaged students, children with disabilities, English learners and children of migrants, and in addition, it does not preempt state law regarding the decision of a family to opt-out of participation in the assessments; and

WHEREAS, ESSA’s shift away from federal control and toward local and state control, along with its encouragement of data transparency and evidence-based action, could lead to improved educational outcomes for the nearly 200,000 students currently attending public and charter schools in the City of Philadelphia, especially our most vulnerable. Now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That council does hereby authorize the Committee on Education and the Committee on the Disabled and Persons with Special Needs to hold joint hearings regarding the Every Student Succeeds Act.

Introduced by:

Councilman Derek S. Green

Councilwoman Jannie Blackwell

Councilwoman Helen Gym

September 22, 2016