

# ESSA Resource Allocation Reviews

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires state education agencies (SEAs) to conduct a periodic resource allocation review (RAR) in districts with a substantial number of low-performing schools. How to conduct the RAR is not prescribed, offering SEAs a rare opportunity to design a thoughtful process that provides meaningful support to districts and schools. The RAR's primary objective is to enable local education agencies (LEAs) and schools to create connections between identified needs, evidence-based strategies, and resource allocation methods used to support program designs that address resource inequities and create equitable opportunities to improve the educational experience of all students.

ESSA Section 1111 (d)(3)(ii).

What the RAR is	What the RAR is not	What the RAR could be
a process to align resources to improve student outcomes	an evaluation or accountability measure; it does not result in punitive action against a school or LEA	an opportunity to design innovative strategies that leverage resources beyond funding

## DESIGN PRINCIPLES FOR RESOURCE ALLOCATION REVIEWS

### Establish a shared vision that builds awareness and recognition that equal does not mean equitable.

- » Create a shared vision of equity in relation to student outcomes and the level of fiscal and human resources provided to LEAs and schools.
- » Consider additional needs of high-poverty and high-need schools, and explore resources beyond funding.
- » Build relationships and capacity that help LEAs and schools implement and sustain high-quality, evidence-based instruction and interventions.

### Ensure that the process minimizes the burden on local education agencies and schools.

- » Involve LEAs and schools in the development of the RAR process to ensure it is meaningful.
- » Create a statewide comprehensive needs assessment process that encompasses state and federal programs, including IDEA, that can produce comparison data that are broad and meaningful.
- » Spotlight connections between student outcomes and resource allocation methods that support a shift in mindset around fiscal allocations from being "our money" to being "our students' money."

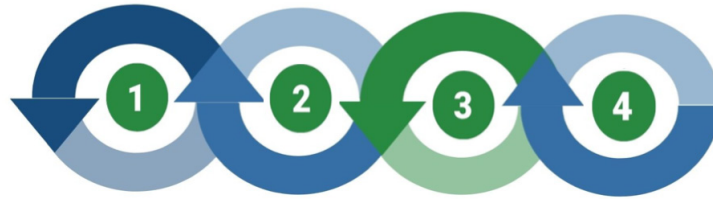
### Elevate inequities identified through the RAR.

- » Assist LEAs and schools in examining ways in which resources are distributed, including how personnel, curricula, and coaching support align to meet individual school needs.
- » Collaborate with cross-department groups across the SEA to design and implement technical assistance opportunities that help LEAs and schools succeed.
- » Provide direct support to LEAs and schools, including developing tools and processes necessary to address operational resource inequities.

### Organize the process into tasks to manage its design and implementation.

- » Develop guiding principles for conducting the RAR that are comprehensive, collaborative, and systemic.
- » Ensure that the process is designed for growth and refinement over time and that the SEA will continuously gather feedback on how the RAR process is working—what is useful, what is not useful, what is missing?
- » Above all, seek feedback from the LEAs and schools throughout the process to ensure that the RAR offers a true means of support.

# Design Considerations for a Meaningful Resource Allocation Review



## Task 1: RAR Review Criteria and Preparation ✨

The SEA establishes review criteria to determine which LEA and school(s) will be included and works in partnership with the LEA to identify when to conduct the RAR to ensure that it is meaningful and aligns with the continuous nature of the LEA and school planning process.

### Considerations:

- What is the overall goal when conducting the RAR?
- How will the RAR process be defined and communicated?
- How will resource inequities be identified and addressed in the RAR process?

## Task 2: Review of LEA and School Data 📄

The SEA summarizes observations of available LEA and school data on the needs assessment process, improvement plans, and revenue and expenditures; this includes comparison data to inform the conversation.

### Considerations:

- What do the data indicate about
  - the greatest strengths/needs for all students and student groups?
  - the greatest strengths/needs for all teachers and educators?
- Do the evidence-based programs included in the improvement plan align with the identified needs?
- How are resources allocated to support the implementation of these programs?

## Task 3: Discussion With LEA and School Leadership Team 💬

The SEA engages in discussion with the LEA and School Leadership Team to learn about planning and resource allocation practices for identifying areas of strength and opportunities to address resource inequities, as well as equitable opportunities to improve student outcomes.

### Considerations:

- Who from the LEA or school needs to participate in the process?
- What opportunities exist to discuss and learn about current resource allocation practices?
  - How will the process include multiple perspectives?
- How will change ideas be generated to address resource inequities?

## Task 4: Summary of RAR Observation and Improvement Efforts 🙋

The SEA summarizes the RAR observations and improvement efforts developed by the LEA and School Leadership Team to address resource inequities as well as equitable opportunities to improve student outcomes. The SEA incorporates those changes into the school improvement plan.

### Considerations:

- How will resource inequities be addressed in the school improvement plan?
- How will the impact of new resource allocation methods be measured?
- How will promising practices be communicated to the field?