Your Question:

You asked about states planning to use an arts and/or social-emotional learning measure as a school quality/student success indicator in the state accountability system.

Our Response:

ESSA Requirements for Non-Academic Indicators

ESSA requires states to include at least one measure of **school quality or student success** (SQSS) in their accountability systems. This indicator is not defined in the law, although ESSA suggests possible measures and provides some examples: student engagement (e.g., chronic absenteeism); educator engagement; student access to and completion of advanced coursework (e.g., high school students enrolled in calculus); postsecondary readiness (e.g., college enrollment following high school graduation); or school climate and safety (e.g., student survey).

The SQSS indicator must be a valid, reliable and comparable measure within each state's accountability system. All accountability system indicators, including the measure of SQSS, must be:
- Measured annually for all students and for each subgroup statewide.
- Able to provide meaningful differentiation between schools.
- Where appropriate, based on the long-term goals in the state plan.
- Included in state and district report cards.

However, the measure of SQSS differs from the other indicators in that the law specifies that it must be given less weight than the other four in aggregate. States will also have the flexibility to use a different SQSS indicator for different grade spans, and grade spans are determined by each state. This flexibility could allow states to tailor the measure to the appropriate age group, such as using student surveys only for older students.

Submitted Plan Approaches

Several states have proposed using arts, student engagement, school climate or well-rounded education indicators as their SQSS indicator. Below are those proposed indicators from the 17 submitted ESSA plans. Details are provided based on state plans, and in some cases states have not fully described the measure and how it will function in the state's accountability system.

While many state ESSA plans make some mention of social-emotional learning, no state plans to use a measure of this specifically in its state accountability system.

Arts access:
- **Connecticut**:
  - **Measures:** the percent of high school students participating in at least one dance, theater, music, or visual arts course in the school year
- **Illinois**:

- o **Measures:** the percent of students enrolled in a fine arts course during the school year
- o **Timeline:** For the next 4 years, data for the fine arts indicator will be given no weight in the state's accountability system and serve as the foundation for exploring if a more nuanced indicator and/or weighted indicator can be developed for inclusion in future accountability system

Student Engagement & School Climate:
- **D.C. – Classroom Interactions**
  - o **Measures:** the quality of classroom interactions to promote children's development and learning in each of the three domain—classroom organization, emotional support, and instructional support—using the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS), a research-based observational tool
  - o **Grades measured:** preschool
- **Delaware – Engagement: reported only (not used in calculating school rating)**
  - o **Measures:** student, teacher, and parent engagement based on a survey
- **Illinois – School Climate**
  - o **Measures:** school culture and climate based on a survey
  - o **Grades measured:** P-12 for parent, teacher, and administration participation; 6-12 for student participation
  - o **Timeline:** initially, participation in survey will be used for accountability; at a later date, when survey data can be disaggregated by student demographics, responses may be used for accountability
- **Nevada – Student Engagement**
  - o **Measures:** varies by grade, may include chronic absenteeism and a measure of school climate
  - o **Grades measured:** elementary, middle, and high school
- **North Dakota – Student Engagement**
  - o **Measures:** student engagement based on a survey using the eProve survey platform in the AdvanceED system
  - o **Grades measured:** 3-12
  - o **Timeline:** survey under development

Well-rounded education:
- **D.C.**:
  - o **Measures:** undecided; multiple options for schools to highlight results in this area
  - o **Timeline:** to be piloted in the 2018-19 school year and used in formal accountability results for the 2019-20 school year
- **Louisiana**:
  - o **Measures:** whether students have access to a well-rounded education that exposes them to diverse areas of learning in which they can develop their skills and talents, including visual and performing arts, foreign language, technology, co-curricular activities, advanced coursework, health/PE, career pathways, etc.
    - ▪ To be measured through a "menu" approach that will allow districts to demonstrate a strong effort in a variety of ways
  - o **Elementary and Middle Schools:** access to quality visual and performing arts, foreign language instruction, technology consistent with current standards, and a variety of co-curricular activities (academic, athletic, and special interest clubs), all of which are supported by research-based evidence.
  - o **High schools:** access to all courses required for receiving TOPS University and TOPS Tech scholarships, a variety of statewide Jump Start training pathways leading to advanced credentials, or an associate's degree aligned to top-demand occupations (opportunities to take courses needed to

successfully transition to postsecondary studies, including courses for college credit and those that lead to a recognized industry credential)
- o **Timeline:** piloted in 2018-19 school year; included in school performance scores in 2019-20
- **Michigan**:
  - o **Measures:** time spent/the amount of exposure students have to courses in fine arts, music and physical education Indicator
  - o **Grades measured:** K-8

Suggested Resources
- **ESSA: Quick guides on top issues**
- **Innovative Approaches And Measurement Considerations For The Selection Of The School Quality And Student Success Indicator Under ESSA**
- **Key Considerations for Inclusion of School Quality/Student Success Indicators in State Accountability Systems as Required by the Every Student Succeeds Act**

Research on Arts Education and Social-Emotional Learning

Voices from the field: Teachers' views on the relevance of arts integration
Bellisario, K. & Donovan, L. (2012). Voices from the field: Teachers' views on the relevance of arts integration. Cambridge, MA: Lesley University.

Abstract:
This two-year study undertaken by researchers at Lesley University (LU), funded by the Ford Foundation, examined the relevance of arts integration in today's educational climate from the perspectives of teachers who completed a graduate program in arts integration at LU. The study gathered data from 204 teachers in 19 states through a survey, focus groups, interviews, and classroom observations. The study documents benefits of arts integrated instruction identified by the teachers, including renewing their commitment to the teaching profession and giving them resilience to face the growing demands in today's schools. It also examines teachers' observations of the impacts of arts integration on student learning. **Teachers report that arts integration stimulates deep learning, creates increased student engagement, and cultivates students' investment in learning.**

How the arts help children to create healthy social scripts: Exploring the perceptions of elementary teachers
Brouillette, L. (2010). How the arts help children to create healthy social scripts: Exploring the perceptions of elementary teachers. *Arts Education Policy Review*, 111(1), 16-24.

Abstract:
The researcher collected data in the form of interviews from twelve first through fourth grade inner-city teachers who had participated in arts integrated lessons with their classes, to describe the impact arts learning had on developing students' social scripts (culturally developed mental cues for how to act or respond in certain situations). **Overall, the teachers expressed that students benefitted in multiple ways that informed the development of healthy social scripts as a result of their involvement in discrete arts and arts integrated experiences.**

Arts Education in Secondary Schools: Effects and Effectiveness.
Harland, J., Kinder, K., Lord, P., Stott, A., Schagen, I., Haynes, J., ... Paola, R. (2000). *Arts Education in Secondary Schools: Effects and Effectiveness.* National Foundation for Educational Research: The Mere, Upton Park, Slough, Berkshire, UK.
Abstract:

The purpose of this large-scale study was to examine the effects of secondary school arts education (in visual arts, drama, dance, or music) in England and Wales. The data were derived from four sources: (1) case studies of five secondary schools, (2) a secondary data analysis of information from the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER)'s Quantitative Analysis for Self-Evaluation (QUASE) project, (3) a survey of Year 11 students and schools, and (4) interviews with employers and employees in the work sector. **Results demonstrated positive effects of arts education in several areas including students' intrinsic enjoyment, art form knowledge and skills, social and cultural knowledge, creativity and thinking skills, communication and expressive skills, personal and social development, effects that transfer to other contexts (e.g., learning in other subjects, work-related benefits such as teamwork), culture of the school, and benefits to the local community.** However, arts education coursework was not predictive of general academic performance as measured by scores on standardized national exams.

Learning through the Arts: Lessons of Engagement

Smithrim, K., & Upitis, R. (2005). Learning through the Arts: Lessons of Engagement. *Canadian Journal of Education*, 28(1/2), 109-127.

Abstract:

The Learning Through the Arts (LTTA) program aims to revitalize elementary education by increasing engagement of students through arts integrated curricula developed by professional teaching artists in collaboration with classroom teachers. Researchers used a quasi-experimental research design spanning three years to investigate if students benefited from participation in the LTTA program as evidenced by positive gains in mathematics and language arts achievement and positive attitudes towards the arts and learning. The researchers also investigated whether students' school achievement is linked to out-of-school activities and views of school subjects. Researchers gathered pre- and post-test quantitative and qualitative data, and found no significant differences between control and treatment groups in the baseline data. However, after three years LTTA students scored higher on tests of computation than their control counterparts. **The LTTA students also showed multiple signs of greater engagement, a prerequisite for learning and achievement in any subject.**

Research on Social-Emotional Learning and Student Outcomes

In our research review, we found that while many studies document the benefits of social and emotional learning and link interventions to future success, results of rigorous academic research can be ambiguous or vary between programs. Below are some key research studies of social and emotional learning interventions on student outcomes.

The Impact of Enhancing Students' Social and Emotional Learning: A Meta-Analysis of School-Based Universal Interventions

(Child Development, 2011). Through an analysis of 213 school-based, universal social and emotional learning programs, researchers found social and emotional learning program participants demonstrated significantly improved social and emotional skills, attitudes, behavior and academic performance that reflected an **11-percentile-point** gain in achievement. They also conclude that school teachers and staff implemented these social and emotional learning programs effectively using four recommended practices associated with skill development: **sequenced, active, focused and explicit (SAFE)**.

Promoting Positive Youth Development Through School-Based Social and Emotional Learning Interventions: A Meta-Analysis of Follow-Up Effects

(Child Development, 2017). By collecting follow-up information from 6 months to 18 years after participation, researchers found enhanced social and emotional skills, attitudes and indicators of wellbeing in those who participated in universal social and emotional learning interventions compared to those who did not. Significant positive effects of these interventions were found in seven outcomes categories – including **greater academic performance, fewer conduct problems and fewer instances of drug use**. However, other follow-up outcomes measured, such as greater attendance and income, were not significantly impacted by the interventions.

[The Economic Value of Social and Emotional Learning](#) (Columbia University, 2015). Through a review of six frequently used social and emotional learning interventions, researchers found the measurable benefits of implementing the programs outweighed its costs in each case. Specifically, they found an **$11 return on each $1 invested**.

[Efficacy of Schoolwide Programs to Promote Social and Character Development and Reduce Problem Behavior in Elementary School Children](#) (US Department of Education, 2010). Researchers concluded, through an analysis of seven social and character development programs measuring multiple student outcomes, that the programs **did not have significant effects on student growth outcomes**. There was also a **lack of significant impacts on student perception of school climate**.

[Improving Social Emotional Skills in Childhood Enhances Long-Term Well-Being and Economic Outcomes](#) (Pennsylvania State University & Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2017). These issue brief provides an overview of numerous studies conducted related to social and emotional learning outcomes. Among the findings, they determine research shows that strong social and emotional skills:

- Help students do better in schools.
- Give students a better chance graduate from college and get a well-paying job.
- Support healthy functioning and help people avoid problems.

The following are additional research papers and policy briefs on social and emotional learning, including implementation strategies for school and district leaders:

- A series of four reports from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) on SEL: 1) [Characteristics of effective social and emotional learning programs](#), 2) [Implementation strategies and state and district support policies](#), 3) [Teacher and classroom strategies](#), and 4) [Outcomes for different student populations and settings](#).
- [Expanding the Definition of Student Success Under ESSA: Opportunities to Advance Social-Emotional Mindsets, Skills, and Habits for Today's Students](#) (2017)
- [Key Features of High-Quality Policies and Guidelines to Support Social and Emotional Learning: Recommendations and Examples for the Collaborating States Initiative (CSI)](#) (2017)
- [When Districts Support and Integrate Social and Emotional Learning (SEL): Findings From an Ongoing Evaluation of Districtwide Implementation of SEL](#) (2016)
- [Social and Emotional Learning: Opportunities for Massachusetts, Lessons for the Nation](#) (2015) – Includes a blueprint for district leaders
- [Hard Thinking on Soft Skills](#) (2016) – includes practical steps for school and district administrators
- [State Standards to Advance Social and Emotional Learning: Findings from CASEL's State Scan of Social and Emotional Learning Standards, Preschool through High School, 2014](#)
- [Compendium of Preschool Through Elementary School Social-Emotional Learning and Associated Assessment Measures](#)
- Aspen Institute's [National Commission on Social, Emotional, and Academic Development](#)