

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT:** [Sue Dorfman](#)

## **Designing New Accountability: Leveraging the Promise of ESSA**

(Palo Alto, CA and Washington, DC – April 21, 2016) The passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) provides states with the flexibility and responsibility to design and implement new systems of accountability, support, and intervention. **Two new reports**, published jointly by the Learning Policy Institute ([LPI](#)) and the Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education ([SCOPE](#)), provide timely research and evidence-based examples for educators and policy makers looking to leverage ESSA to improve educational opportunities and outcomes for all children.

The reports, [Redesigning School Accountability and Support: Progress in Pioneering States](#) and [Pathways to New Accountability Through the Every Student Succeeds Act](#) offer valuable guidance for schools, districts and states looking to re-imagine their systems of support, improvement, opportunity, and accountability.

“Accountability is not a side issue. In recent years, for good or for ill, it has become *the* framework shaping how we think about the improvement of schools,” notes LPI President [Linda Darling-Hammond](#). “The challenge before us,” she adds, “is how we can develop more productive approaches to accountability that support student and system learning and continuous improvement.”

A group of forward-thinking state leaders, researchers, educators, and policymakers came together to address this challenge, under the auspices of the [Innovation Lab Network](#) of the Council of Chief State School Officers. [Redesigning School Accountability and Support](#) documents the work that ten states have undertaken to transform their accountability systems and highlights specific examples of policy changes and capacity-building efforts. The report illustrates how more authentic assessments of learning and more productive approaches to school improvement are being pursued in such diverse geographic, political, and community contexts as California, Colorado, Iowa, Kentucky, New Hampshire, Oregon, South Carolina, Vermont, Virginia, and West Virginia.

The second report, [Pathways to New Accountability](#), looks at how states, districts, and schools can capitalize on the new education law to develop more balanced systems of support and accountability, citing promising models in California, Connecticut, Kentucky, New York, Vermont, and Alberta, Canada. In addition to detailing how states can assess authentic student learning and other outcomes, the report describes strategies for identifying schools in need of assistance and developing diagnostic systems to support continuous improvement. A companion brief, [Evidence-Based Interventions: A Guide for States](#), analyzes the research base and identifies interventions to consider as part of a comprehensive system of accountability and support.

“Educators and policy makers alike are seeking better ways to support the college, career, and life readiness of each and every one of our children,” says [Jon Snyder](#), Executive Director of SCOPE. “Together, these reports provide evidence-based guidance and useful examples to all those who are navigating the perils and potentials of the new terrain of ESSA.”

**Pathways to New Accountability** was authored by [Linda Darling-Hammond](#), [Soung Bae](#), [Channa M. Cook-Harvey](#), [Livia Lam](#), [Charmaine Mercer](#), [Anne Podolsky](#), and [Elizabeth Leisy Stosich](#). Channa M. Cook-Harvey and Elizabeth Leisy Stosich wrote the **Redesigning School Accountability and Support** report. The latter was developed in the course of a series of discussions of the ILN’s “51st State Working Group” about the design of a new accountability system, with generous support from the Hewlett Foundation and the Sandler Foundation.

**FOR INTERVIEWS:** To reach the authors of these reports or to contact a representative from a state involved in these studies, please contact Sue Dorfman at [sdorfman@learningpolicyinsitute.org](mailto:sdorfman@learningpolicyinsitute.org) or 202-798-5595.

###

**The Learning Policy Institute** conducts and communicates independent high-quality research to improve education. Working with policymakers, researchers, educators, community groups, and others, the Institute seeks to advance evidence-based policies that support empowering and equitable learning for each and every child. For more information, visit [learningpolicyinstitute.org](http://learningpolicyinstitute.org).

**The Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education** fosters research, policy, and practice to advance high quality, equitable education systems in the United States and internationally. SCOPE engages faculty from across Stanford and from other universities to work on a shared agenda of research, policy analysis, educational practice, and dissemination of ideas. For more information, visit [edpolicy.stanford.edu](http://edpolicy.stanford.edu).