

Evidence-Based Interventions Under the ESSA

Information regarding evidence-based interventions as defined in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

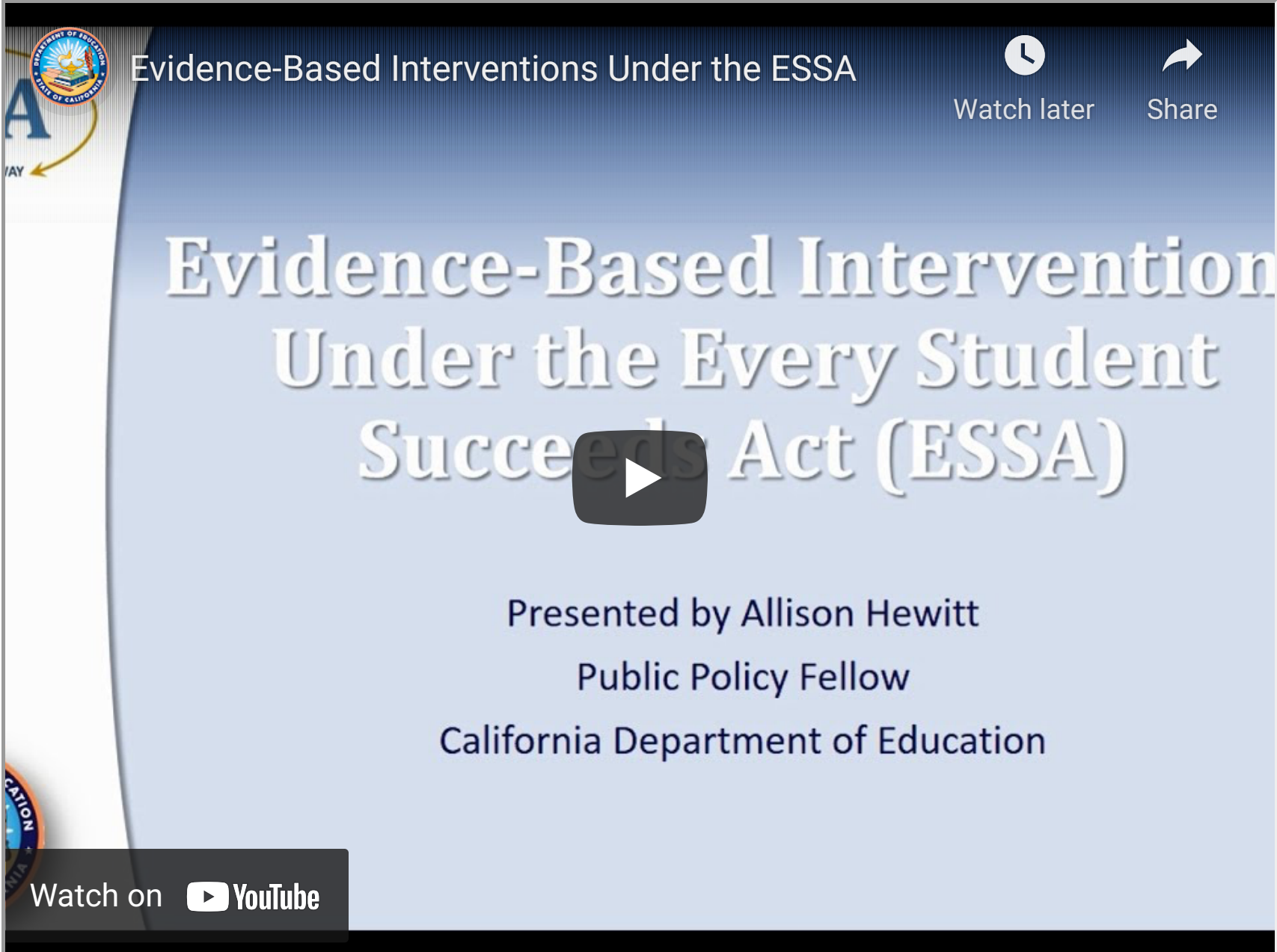
The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) has consistently directed educators to implement interventions grounded in research. Under No Child Left Behind (NCLB), districts and schools were called to use “scientifically-based research” as the foundation for education programs and interventions. This has been replaced by “evidence-based interventions” under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). This shift was designed to help increase the impact of educational investments by ensuring that interventions being implemented have proven to be effective in leading to desired outcomes, namely improving student achievement. Many ESSA programs encourage state educational agencies (SEAs), local educational agencies (LEAs), and schools to prioritize and include evidence-based interventions, strategies, or approaches.

Evidence-based interventions are practices or programs that have **evidence** to show that they are effective at producing results and improving outcomes when implemented. The kind of evidence described in ESSA has generally been produced through formal studies and research. Under ESSA, there are four tiers, or levels, of evidence:

- Tier 1 – Strong Evidence:** supported by one or more well-designed and well-implemented randomized control experimental studies.
- Tier 2 – Moderate Evidence:** supported by one or more well-designed and well-implemented quasi-experimental studies.
- Tier 3 – Promising Evidence:** supported by one or more well-designed and well-implemented correlational studies (with statistical controls for selection bias).
- Tier 4 – Demonstrates a Rationale:** practices that have a well-defined logic model or theory of action, are supported by research, and have some effort underway by an SEA, LEA, or outside research organization to determine their effectiveness.

Interventions applied under Title I, Section 1003 (School Improvement) are required to have strong, moderate, or promising evidence (Tiers 1–3) to support them. All other programs under Titles I–IV can rely on Tiers 1–4.

Please view this presentation for more information regarding evidence-based interventions and the four tiers of evidence under ESSA:








Additional Resources

- [Non-regulatory Guidance: Using ESSA to Strengthen Education Investments](#) (PDF)
- This guidance from the U.S. Department of Education (ED) seeks to help SEAs, LEAs, schools, educators, partner organizations, and other stakeholders understand the four levels of evidence and recommends a step-by-step process for choosing and implementing interventions that improve outcomes for students.
- [What Works Clearinghouse](#)
- The What Works Clearinghouse (WWC), an initiative of ED’s Institute of Education Sciences (IES), is a helpful resource for locating the evidence on various education interventions.
- [ERIC](#)
- ERIC is an online library of education research and information, sponsored by the IES.
- [California Department of Education Quality Schooling Framework](#)
- The Quality Schooling Framework (QSF) is the California educator’s destination for evidence-based tools and practices to guide effective planning, policy, expenditure, and instructional decisions at all schools and districts.
- [Regional Educational Laboratory Program](#) and [Regional Educational Laboratory of the West](#)
- Regional Education Laboratories conduct applied research and development, provide technical assistance, develop multimedia educational materials and other products, and disseminate information in an effort to help others use knowledge from research and practice to improve education.
- [Evidence-Based Improvement: A Guide for States to Strengthen Their Frameworks and Supports Aligned to the Evidence Requirements of ESSA](#)
- This guide from WestEd provides an initial set of tools to help school districts understand and plan for implementing evidence-based improvement strategies.

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