

Providing a well-rounded education

ESSA replaces the term “core academic subjects” with the term “well-rounded education.” It is used more than 20 times in the language of ESSA and lists 17 courses for a well-rounded education, including writing, engineering, music, health, technology, computer science, career and technical education, and physical education. The intent of ESSA is to provide all students access to an enriched curriculum and educational experience.

For additional information, review this Education Commission of the State Special Report.

<http://www.ecs.org/ec-content/uploads/ESSAs-Well-Rounded-Education-1.pdf>

To make sure that Ohio students receive the well-rounded education intended by ESSA, we need to advocate for the following:

- Funding for all the areas included to define a well-rounded education.
- The requirement that students have access to these well-rounded education opportunities in every school.
- An accountability system that reflects all components of a well-rounded education and does not overly rely on tested subjects.
- A licensed library media specialist in every school.
- Increased opportunities for career tech courses.

Questions to ask state and district decision makers concerning a well-rounded education:

- Does the state report card reflect whether a school is providing a well-rounded education or does it primarily focus on test results?
- Does the school day allow for students to have exposure to classes outside of the tested subjects?
- What priority does the state/district plan place on non-tested subjects? Are there requirements that schools provide art, music, physical education, career tech classes and properly-staffed libraries?
- Does the state/district plan lead to an engaging learning environment or does it produce more test prep?

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