Connecticut

1	2	3
Assigns to schools annual ratings that are clear and intuitive	Encourages schools to focus on all students, not just low performers	Measures all schools fairly, including those with high rates of poverty
STRONG	**STRONG**	**MEDIUM**

ESSA grants states more authority over their school accountability systems than did NCLB. Three of the most important improvements states can make are to: (1) assign to schools annual ratings that are clear and intuitive for parents, educators, and the public; (2) encourage schools to focus on all students, not just their low performers; and (3) measure and judge all schools fairly, including those with high rates of poverty.

To determine whether Connecticut's proposed ESSA accountability system accomplishes these three objectives, this analysis evaluates its state plan, as submitted to the U.S. Department of Education on April 21, 2017,[28] as explained below.

1 *Are the labels or ratings for schools clear and intuitive for parents, educators, and the public?*

Connecticut's plan is **strong** on this point because it proposes to use a hundred-point scale for schools' annual ratings. This model immediately conveys to all observers how well a given school is performing.

2 *Does the rating system encourage schools to focus on all students?*

There are two primary ways for state accountability systems to encourage schools to focus on all students: (1) use a performance index and/or scale scores in place of proficiency rates when measuring achievement and (2) measure the growth of all students. Connecticut receives a **strong** rating because those two components constitute 82 percent of schools' annual ratings. Scale scores count for 35 percent, which encourages schools to look beyond those pupils who are near the cutoff for proficiency.[29] And a measure of growth for all students constitutes another 47 percent of schools' summative ratings, which should also lead schools to heed the educational needs of every child.

3 *Is the rating system fair to all schools, including those with high rates of poverty?*

Connecticut earns a **medium** here because academic growth will constitute 47 percent of schools' annual ratings—all of which is a measure of growth for all students. Growth measures gauge changes in pupil achievement over time, independent of prior achievement, and are therefore less correlated with poverty, thus affording high-poverty schools the opportunity to earn positive ratings.