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Abstract

Forty-two states and e school accountability requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). As the prospects for reauthorizing the Act in the near term are dim, these new accountability systems will be law for at least several years. Drawing on a four-part framework from the measurement literature, we describe and critique the approved waiver accountability plans, comparing them to the NCLB accountability rules. We find a mixed bag—some states have made large improvements and others have not. Overall we conclude that states missed opportunities to design more effective school accountability systems that might minimize negative unintended consequences of these policies. The article concludes with suggestions for state and federal policy in light of the available literature.

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