Health Impact Assessment of School-Level Needs Assessment Regulations under ESSA
Dialogue4Health Web Forum

November 30, 2016
The Health Impact Project
A collaboration of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and The Pew Charitable Trusts

A national initiative that aims to reduce health inequities and improve the health of all people by ensuring that health is a valued and routine consideration in decisions affecting them.
“We have forgotten that much of our health is dictated by where we live, what surrounds us all the time” —Richard Jackson
Health Impact Assessment

“A structured process that uses scientific data, professional expertise, and stakeholder input to identify and evaluate public health consequences of proposals and suggests actions that could be taken to minimize adverse health impacts and optimize beneficial ones.”

Source: “Improving Health in the United States: The Role of Health Impact Assessments” by the National Research Council, September 2011
Key Points about HIA

- Conducted to inform a specific decision
- Broad analytic framework
- Collaboration with stakeholders
- Pragmatic and focused on solutions
- Addresses health equity
Policy Context

• The Every Student Succeeds Act:
  - Signed by President Obama in December 2015
  - Places greater flexibility and decision-making with states
  - Accountability remains a strong focus, but the law brings an enhanced focus on devoting resources to the lowest-performing schools and subgroups of students

• Needs assessments are included in several sections
HIA Focus

Local educational agencies will be required to conduct a needs assessment for:

- lowest performing 5% of schools in the state
- high schools failing to graduate 1/3 or more of their students
- schools with consistently underperforming subgroups of students

This HIA assessed how the proposed school-level needs assessment regulations in Title I could affect health and health equity.
Opportunities for Impact

• Strong connections between education and health
• Proposed rule-making provided window of opportunity
• Flexibility allows for opportunities during implementation regardless of final rule language
• These regulations affect students already at risk for poor health and education outcomes
• Findings could be used broadly
HIA Approach

- Used newly developed federal rapid HIA model
- Methods:
  - Systematic review of over 100 peer-reviewed articles and reports
  - 31 stakeholder interviews
  - 8 case studies
- Guided by 10-member Advisory Group
- Submitted public comment letter to the Department of Education on August 1, 2016
- Drafted HIA report
Key Findings

- **Household, community, and societal factors** can be important drivers of education outcomes.

- Schools likely to be identified as needing comprehensive support and improvement **disproportionately serve low-income students and students of color.**

- Needs assessments and resulting school improvement efforts **could be strengthened by identifying and addressing root causes,** with benefits for education and health.

- Partnerships, stakeholder engagement, and efforts to **leverage existing assets** will be key to implementation.
Recommendations

- Federal agencies
- State agencies
- Local educational agencies
- Schools
- Public health and health care stakeholders
Thank You!

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The Pew Charitable Trusts / Research & Analysis / Health Impact Project Offers Recommendations on Education Policy

SPEECHES & TESTIMONY
Health Impact Project Offers Recommendations on Education Policy
August 01, 2016 | Health Impact Project

Studies show a strong correlation between a person’s education level and his or her health over a life span. Because of this linkage, decision-makers should consider the potential health consequences of proposed education policies.