

Four Tiers of ESSA

Tier	ESSA Definition	What does it mean?
Tier 1 Strong	Strong evidence from at least one well-designed and well-implemented experimental study.	Experimental studies have demonstrated that the intervention improves a relevant student outcome (e.g., reading scores; attendance rates).
Tier 2 Moderate	Moderate evidence from at least one well-designed and well-implemented quasi-experimental study.	Well-designed and well-implemented quasi-experimental studies meet the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) evidence standards with reservations.
Tier 3 Promising	Promising evidence from at least one well-designed and well-implemented correlational study.	Correlational studies (e.g., studies that can show a relationship between the intervention and outcome but cannot show causation) have found that the intervention likely improves a relevant student outcome (e.g., reading scores, attendance rates).
Tier 4 Demonstrates a Rationale	Practices based on high-quality research or positive evaluation that such activity, strategy, or intervention is likely to improve student outcomes	Ideas that do not yet have an evidence base qualifying for the top 3 levels above or could be under evaluation.