



November 20, 2018

The Honorable Russell Begaye
President
Navajo Nation
P.O. Box 670
Window Rock, Arizona 86515

Dear President Begaye:

We are writing in response to the Navajo Nation's request that the Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) and the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education (ED) permit the Navajo Nation to have a one-year extension of its waiver of the Bureau of Indian Education's (BIE) standards, assessments and accountability requirements so that the Navajo Nation may continue to implement the accountability system detailed in the Diné Accountability Workbook, which we approved on September 20, 2016 for school years (SYs) 2015-2016 and 2016-2017, and extended for 2017-2018. After considering this request, we are granting the Navajo Nation a one-year extension to implement through SY 2018-2019.

With this one-year extension, the Navajo Nation will continue to implement the standards, assessments and accountability system provisions previously approved in the Accountability Workbook through SY 2018-2019. Our decision to grant this extension is based on the determination that the Navajo Nation's ability to continue implementing its waiver will promote locally tailored strategies to improve educational outcomes for its students, close achievement gaps and improve instruction. This extension is being granted pursuant to the academic indicator and assessment authority in section 1111(k)(2) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended and the orderly transition authority under section 4(b) of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

We understand that the Navajo Nation has requested technical assistance from our Departments in accordance with section 8204(c)(3) of the ESEA, so that you may develop a new request for a Department of Diné Education (DODE) accountability system to be implemented in SY 2019-2020 and beyond; note that the system described in a new waiver request submitted under section 8204(c)(2) of the ESEA must be consistent with new accountability provisions in section 1111 of the ESEA. We will be happy to provide technical assistance as you prepare an updated request.

We appreciate our continued relationship with the Navajo Nation and remain committed to working with you. Thank you for your commitment and continued focus on improving academic achievement for all of your students. If you need additional assistance please contact Dr. Maureen Lesky, BIE Program Manager, at Maureen.Lesky@bie.edu or Mr. Robert Salley, ED Program Officer, at OSS.BIE@ed.gov.

Sincerely,

/s/

Tara Sweeney
Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs
U.S. Department of the Interior

/s/

Frank Brogan
Assistant Secretary for Elementary and
Secondary Education
U.S. Department of Education

cc: Tommy Lewis, Superintendent, Navajo Nation Diné Department of Education
Jonathan Hale, Chairman Health, Education, and Human Services Committee