



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

MAR 06 2014

The Honorable Kevin S. Huffman  
Commissioner  
Tennessee Department of Education  
6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Andrew Johnson Tower  
710 James Robertson Parkway  
Nashville, Tennessee 37243

Dear Commissioner Huffman:

On September 23 and 24, 2013, a team from the U.S. Department of Education's (ED) Office of Elementary and Secondary Education conducted Part B monitoring of the Tennessee's implementation of its approved Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA) flexibility request. Part B monitoring aims to continue the collaborative relationship that began during the request approval process, provide ED with a deeper understanding of each State educational agency's (SEA) goals and approaches to implementing ESEA flexibility, and ensure that the SEA has the critical elements of ESEA flexibility in place to continue implementation of its plan.

The review focused on the following ESEA flexibility elements:

- SEA Systems and Processes, including Monitoring, Technical Assistance, Data Collection and Use, and Family & Community Engagement and Outreach
- Transitioning to and Implementing College-and Career-Ready Standards
- Adopting English Language Proficiency Standards
- Developing and Administering High-Quality Assessments
- Developing and Administering Alternate Assessments
- Developing and Administering English Language Proficiency Assessments
- Annually Reporting College-going and College-credit Accumulation Rates
- Developing and Implementing a State-Based System of Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support
- Reward, Priority, Focus, and Other Title I Schools
- State and Local Report Cards, and
- Teacher and Principal Evaluation and Support Systems.

Enclosed is a summary report based upon this review. The report includes highlights of Tennessee's implementation of ESEA flexibility and, for each indicator, a snapshot of Tennessee's progress in implementing ESEA flexibility. If appropriate, the report also includes "next steps" that were discussed with the SEA during an exit conference conducted on

400 MARYLAND AVE., SW, WASHINGTON, DC 20202  
<http://www.ed.gov/>

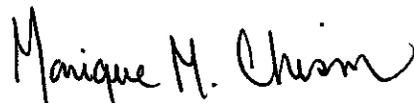
November 5, 2013 to ensure that Tennessee implements flexibility consistent with its approved request and the timelines and principles of ESEA flexibility. Please note, that the Part B monitoring examines the systems and processes an SEA has put in place to support monitoring, technical assistance, data collection and use, and family and community engagement and outreach. ED views the creation and sustainability of these systems as fundamental to supporting and strengthening implementation across the principles of ESEA flexibility at the SEA, local educational agency (LEA), and school level. The *SEA Systems and Processes* elements interconnect with the three Principles of ESEA flexibility for which ED monitors all other elements in the monitoring protocol. A next step identified in the systems section of the report can often be addressed with one that corresponds to a specific element.

The report and the next steps acknowledge Tennessee's theory of action, described in its approved request for ESEA flexibility that the State holds its LEAs accountable for ensuring that focus and other Title I schools identify and address the needs of all students and student subgroups. To that end, any next steps related to these schools indicate that the State must have in place processes to hold its LEAs accountable for the progress of their individual schools. Tennessee should respond to any "next steps" through the ESEA extension process. This report will be posted on the ESEA flexibility website. Additionally, in the coming months ED will issue a comprehensive summary of each SEA's implementation of ESEA flexibility that includes information gathered through the Part B monitoring process and provides more detail about the innovative practices and common challenges that States are facing as they engage in the effective implementation of ESEA flexibility.

I want to thank you and your staff for the hard work you have undertaken to implement ESEA flexibility. If you have any questions or there are ways that ED staff can provide you additional support as you move forward in implementing your ESEA flexibility request, please feel free to reach out to your SEA's ESEA flexibility contact.

I look forward to continuing our work with you as you implement your ESEA flexibility request. Thank you for your commitment to Tennessee's children.

Sincerely,



Monique M. Chism, Ph.D.  
Director  
Student Achievement and  
School Accountability Programs

Enclosure

cc: Erin O'Hara, Assistant Commissioner, Data and Research