



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

MAR 13 2009

The Honorable Alice Seagren
Commissioner
Minnesota Department of Education
1500 Highway 36 West
Roseville, Minnesota 55113

Dear Commissioner Seagren:

I am pleased to approve Minnesota's science standards and assessments under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended. I congratulate you on meeting this important NCLB requirement. My decision is based on input from peer reviewers external to the U.S. Department of Education (Department) and Department staff who reviewed and carefully considered the evidence submitted by Minnesota.

As the August 27, 2008 letter from then-Assistant Secretary Kerri L. Briggs indicated, Minnesota's standards and assessments in reading/language arts and mathematics meet all applicable statutory and regulatory requirements of the ESEA. I am pleased to inform you that Minnesota's standards and assessments in science also meet all applicable statutory and regulatory requirements of the ESEA. Accordingly, Minnesota's standards and assessment system warrants Full Approval. This status means that Minnesota's standards and assessment system meets all statutory and regulatory requirements for standards and assessments in reading/language arts, mathematics and science. Specifically, Minnesota's system includes academic content standards in reading/language arts, mathematics, and science; student academic achievement standards in reading/language arts, mathematics, and science; alternate academic achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities in reading/language arts, mathematics, and science; general assessments in reading/language arts and mathematics in grades 3 through 8 and one grade in high school and general science assessments for each of three grade spans (grades 3-5, 6-9, and 10-12); and alternate assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards in the corresponding grades in reading/language arts, mathematics, and science.

Please be aware that approval of Minnesota's standards and assessment system under the ESEA is not a determination that the system complies with Federal civil rights requirements, including Title VI of the *Civil Rights Act of 1964*, Title IX of the *Education Amendments of 1972*, Section 504 of the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973*, Title II of the *Americans with Disabilities Act*, and requirements under the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*. Finally, please remember that if Minnesota makes significant changes to

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its standards and assessment system, the State must submit information about those changes to the Department for review and approval.

We have found it a pleasure working with your staff on this review. Please accept my congratulations for Minnesota's approved standards and assessment system in reading/language arts, mathematics and science under the ESEA. I wish you well in your continued efforts to improve student achievement in Minnesota. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Sue Rigney (sue.rigney@ed.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joseph C. Conaty". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

Joseph C. Conaty
Delegated the Authority to Perform the
Functions and Duties of Assistant Secretary
for Elementary and Secondary Education

cc: Governor Tim Pawlenty
Dirk Mattson
Jessie Montano