



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

OCT 22 2010

THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

The Honorable June Atkinson  
North Carolina Department of Public Instruction  
301 North Wilmington Street  
Raleigh, North Carolina 27601

Dear Superintendent Atkinson:

I am pleased to approve North Carolina's standards and assessments under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) as amended. This letter applies to changes made in the assessment system after North Carolina's initial approval as documented in the June 2006 letter from Henry Johnson. 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 North Carolina.

North Carolina's standards and assessments in reading/language arts, mathematics and science meet all applicable statutory and regulatory requirements of the ESEA. Accordingly, North Carolina's standards and assessment system warrants Full Approval. Specifically, North Carolina's system includes academic content standards in reading/language arts, mathematics and science as well as end-of-course standards in English I, Algebra I and Biology; student academic achievement standards in reading/language arts, mathematics, science, English I, Algebra I and Biology; alternate academic achievement standards in reading/language arts, mathematics and science for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities; modified academic achievement standards for eligible students with disabilities in reading/language arts and mathematics; general assessments in reading/language arts and mathematics in grades 3 through 8, end-of-course assessments in English I and Algebra I, a writing test (grade 10) and science assessments in grades 5 and 8 and the end-of-course Biology assessment; alternate assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards (the NCEXTEND1) in the corresponding grades in reading/language arts, mathematics and science; and alternate assessments based on modified academic achievement standards (the NCEXTEND2) in reading/language arts and mathematics in grades 3 through 8.

Please be aware that approval of North Carolina'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 North Carolina makes significant changes to its standards and assessment system, the State must submit information about those changes to the Department for review and approval.

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400 MARYLAND AVE., SW, WASHINGTON, DC 20202

*The Department of Education's mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.*

We have found it a pleasure working with your staff during this review process. Please accept my congratulations for North Carolina'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 North Carolina. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Sue Rigney ([sue.rigney@ed.gov](mailto:sue.rigney@ed.gov)) of my staff.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Thelma', with a large, stylized flourish extending to the right.

Thelma Meléndez de Santa Ana, Ph.D.

cc: Governor Bev Perdue  
Lou Fabrizio  
Tammy Howard