



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

April 12, 2018

The Honorable Richard Woods
Superintendent
Georgia Department of Education
205 Jesse Hill Jr. Drive SE
Atlanta, GA 30334

Dear Superintendent Woods:

I am writing in response to the Georgia Department of Education (GADOE) request on December 12, 2017, for a waiver of the requirements in sections 1111(b)(1)(B) and (b)(2)(B)(i) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which requires a State to hold all students to the same academic standards and administer the same aligned assessments to all students. GADOE requested this waiver to allow any middle school student enrolled in an advanced reading/language arts, mathematics or science course to take the State-administered end-of-course assessment aligned with that course in lieu of the grade-level assessment.

After reviewing GADOE's request, I am pleased to grant, pursuant to my authority under ESEA section 8401(a)(3), a waiver of section 1111(b)(2)(B)(i)(I) of the ESEA, as amended by the ESSA, as well as the corresponding regulation 34 C.F.R 200.2(b)(1)(i). This waiver will permit any middle school student taking high school level courses in reading/language arts, mathematics and science to take the high school assessment for that course. This waiver is in effect from the 2017-2018 school year through the 2020-2021 school year. By granting this waiver, the Department and GADOE have mutually agreed that:

- GADOE will apply the rules established in section 1111(b)(2)(C)(i) through (iii) of the ESEA, as amended by ESSA, and 34 C.F.R 200.5 (b)(1) through (3) to any student who does not take the reading/language arts, mathematics or science assessment typically administered in the grade in which the student is enrolled.
- If a student does not take the reading/language arts, mathematics or science assessment typically administered in the grade in which he or she is enrolled:
 - The student will take the end-of-course reading/language arts, mathematics or science assessment the State administers to high school students to comply with assessment requirements established in section 1111(b)(2)(B)(v)(I)(bb) of the ESEA, as amended by ESSA, or a more advanced assessment;
 - The student's performance and participation on the high school assessment will be used in the year in which the student takes the assessment for the purposes of measuring academic achievement and participation as it pertains to the school-based accountability system required under the ESEA, as amended by ESSA; and

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

- In high school, the student will take a more advanced, State-administered end-of-course assessment or nationally recognized high school assessment (that meets the requirements in 34 C.F.R. 200.3(d)) and the student's performance on and participation in that assessment will be used for the purposes of measuring academic achievement and participation as it pertains to the school-based accountability system required under the ESEA.

I appreciate the work you are doing to improve your schools and provide a high-quality education for your students. If you have any questions, please contact Pat Rattler of my staff at OSS.Georgia@ed.gov.

Sincerely,

/s/

Jason Botel
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Delegated the
Authority to Perform the Functions and Duties of the
Assistant Secretary of Elementary and Secondary
Education

cc: Allison Timberlake, Interim Deputy Superintendent for Assessment and Accountability