



## UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

March 20, 2018

The Honorable Roger Dorson  
Interim Commissioner of Education  
Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education  
P.O. Box 480  
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0480

Dear Interim Commissioner Dorson:

I am writing in response to the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (DESE) request on November 20, 2017, for a waiver of the requirements that a State assess all students at least once annually in high school in reading/language arts and mathematics, as required under section 1111(b)(3)(C)(v)(I)(cc) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), and to publicly report data under section 1111(h) of the ESEA, as amended by NCLB. DESE is requesting the waiver due to technical challenges the State experienced administering its Algebra I and English II end-of-course (EOC) assessments in spring 2017, resulting in year-to-year comparability flaws in the affected assessments.

After careful review of DESE's request and responses to the U.S. Department of Education's inquiries, I am approving DESE's request and waiving the following statutory requirements for the 2016-2017 school year and the corresponding regulations:

- Sections 1111(b)(3)(C)(xii) and (b)(3)(C)(xv) of the ESEA, as amended by NCLB, which require, respectively, a State to produce individual student interpretive, descriptive, and diagnostic reports for parents, teachers, and principals and to produce itemized score analyses for local educational agencies (LEAs) and schools.
- Sections 1111(h)(1)(C)(i) and (h)(1)(C)(iv) of the ESEA, as amended by NCLB, and the corresponding requirements in 1111(h)(2)(B), which require a State and each LEA to report on their respective report card student achievement data by achievement level, participation rate, and the most recent two-year trend in student achievement.

Please note that this waiver is a one-time waiver and applicable only for the assessments administered in the 2016-2017 school year, based on Missouri's evidence of technical challenges in the administration of the spring 2017 Algebra I and English II EOC assessments.

I know that you agree that it is critically important to measure student achievement and to hold all students to the same high expectations. The assessment requirements in the ESEA are focused on

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ensuring that parents and educators have the information they need to help every student be successful and protecting equity for all students.

Missouri continues to have an affirmative responsibility to ensure that all students in grades three through eight and once in high school are assessed annually in reading/language arts and mathematics, and once in each of three grade spans in science as required in the ESEA. We appreciate our continued relationship with DESE and remain committed to working with you. If you have any questions, please contact Joseph Lee Suh of my staff at [OSS.Missouri@ed.gov](mailto:OSS.Missouri@ed.gov). Thank you for your ongoing commitment to ensuring that all students have access to a high-quality education.

Sincerely,

/s/

Jason Botel  
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary  
Delegated the authority to perform the functions  
and duties of the position of Assistant Secretary for  
Elementary and Secondary Education

cc: Stacey Preis, Deputy Commissioner, Division of Learning Services  
Chris Neale, Assistant Commissioner, Office of Quality Schools  
Craig Rector, Coordinator, Grants and Resources  
Jocelyn Strand, Coordinator, School Improvement