



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

ASSISTANT SECRETARY

OCT 2 2009

The Honorable Patricia I. Wright
Superintendent of Public Instruction
Virginia Department of Elementary
P.O. Box 2120
Richmond, Virginia 23218-2120

Dear Superintendent Wright:

I am writing in response to Virginia's requests to waive certain statutory and regulatory requirements of Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA). After reviewing Virginia's requests, I am pleased to grant the following waivers:

- Calculation of "set-asides" for Title I, Part A funds. I am granting a one-year waiver to permit an LEA in Virginia to exclude all or part of the Title I, Part A funds it receives through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) when calculating:
 - An LEA's obligation to spend an amount equal to at least 20 percent of its fiscal year (FY) 2009 Title I, Part A funds for public school choice-related transportation and supplemental educational services (SES) (ESEA section 1116(b)(10); 34 C.F.R. § 200.48(a)(2)).
 - An LEA's obligation, if identified for improvement, to spend 10 percent of its FY 2009 Title I, Part A funds for professional development (ESEA section 1116(c)(7)(A)(iii); 34 C.F.R. § 200.52(a)(3)(iii)).
- Calculation of per-pupil amount for SES. I am granting a one-year waiver of ESEA section 1116(e)(6) and 34 C.F.R. § 200.48(c)(1) to permit an LEA in Virginia to exclude some or all of the Title I, Part A funds it receives through the ARRA in calculating the per-pupil amount for SES.
- Ability to grant LEAs a waiver of the carryover limitation. I am granting Virginia a two-year waiver of section 1127(b) of the ESEA to allow it to waive the carryover limitation in section 1127(a) of the ESEA more than once every three years for an LEA that needs the additional waiver because of the supplemental Title I, Part A appropriation provided through the ARRA.

These waivers are granted on the condition that Virginia will satisfy the conditions detailed in the enclosure to this letter, including the requirement to report certain information about the use of each of the waivers to the Department by September 30, 2010. Please be sure to review the enclosure carefully.

I am aware that, in addition to these waiver requests, you requested to continue your participation in the Department's pilot to offer SES in lieu of, or in addition to, public school choice to students attending Title I schools in the first year of school improvement. I am working with my staff to provide you a decision regarding that request as soon as feasible. In the meantime, I wanted to ensure that you received my decisions regarding the waivers set forth above as I know these matters are time sensitive.

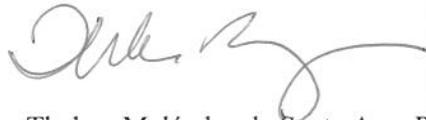
400 MARYLAND AVE., S.W. WASHINGTON, D.C. 20202
www.ed.gov

Our mission is to ensure equal access to education and to promote educational excellence throughout the Nation.

Page 2 ~ The Honorable Patricia I. Wright

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 Zollie Stevenson, Director of Student Achievement and School Accountability Programs (SASA) at (202) 260-0826.

Sincerely,

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

Thelma Meléndez de Santa Ana, Ph.D.

Enclosure

cc: Governor Tim Kaine
Roberta Schlicher

CONDITIONS ON TITLE I, PART A WAIVERS

“Set-aside” calculations — Excluding Title I, Part A ARRA funds from an LEA’s 20 percent obligation and from an LEA’s professional development obligation (ESEA sections 1116(b)(10), 1116(c)(7)(A)(iii); 34 C.F.R. §§ 200.48(a)(2), 200.52(a)(3)(iii))

Each of these waivers is granted on the condition that Virginia will:

- Only implement the waiver for an LEA that provides assurances to Virginia that:
 - The LEA will comply with its statutory and regulatory obligations for the set-aside with respect to its regular Title I, Part A allocation;
 - The LEA will use the funds freed up by the waiver to address needs identified based on data;
 - The LEA will comply with all of its other Title I, Part A statutory and regulatory obligations, including the obligations in sections 1114 and 1115 to have schoolwide and targeted assistance programs that “use effective methods and instructional strategies that are based on scientifically based research”;
 - The LEA will submit an application for Title I, Part A funds (LEA application) or, if necessary, an amendment to its existing LEA application that describes the data on which it relied to identify needs that will be addressed using the funds freed up by the waiver and the evidence that supports the strategies it intends to use to address those needs;
- Not approve an LEA’s application or amendment to an LEA’s application unless or until it determines, based on the LEA’s description, that the LEA has satisfied its obligation to identify needs based on data and address those needs using evidence-based strategies;
- Not approve an LEA to implement the waiver unless or until the LEA has an approved application (or amended application) that includes the required description of the data and evidence;
- If necessary, require an LEA seeking to implement the waiver to amend its application in accordance with the SEA’s usual process for changing an LEA’s application;
- Comply with its obligation under 34 C.F.R. § 200.47(a)(1)(ii)(B)(1) to post on its website the 20 percent obligation for each LEA and ensure that this information accurately reflects each LEA’s implementation of the waiver; and
- Submit to the Department, by September 30, 2010, a report that provides:
 - The name and NCES District Identification Number for each LEA implementing each of the waivers; and
 - The name and NCES District Identification Number for each LEA that requested but was denied permission to implement each of the waivers.

Calculation of per-pupil amount for SES (ESEA section 1116(e)(6); 34 C.F.R. § 200.48(c)(1))

This waiver is granted on the condition that Virginia will:

- Only implement the waiver for an LEA that provides assurances to Virginia that:
 - The LEA will comply with all of the statutory and regulatory requirements regarding the provision of SES with respect to its regular FY 2009 Title I, Part A allocation; and
 - The LEA will comply with all of its other Title I, Part A statutory and regulatory obligations, including the obligations in sections 1114 and 1115 to have schoolwide and targeted assistance programs that “use effective methods and instructional strategies that are based on scientifically based research”;
- Comply with its obligation under 34 C.F.R. § 200.47(a)(1)(ii)(B)(2) to post on its website the per-pupil amount for SES for each LEA and ensure that this information accurately reflects each LEA’s implementation of the waiver; and
- Submit to the Department, by September 30, 2010, a report that provides the name and NCES District Identification Number for each LEA implementing the waiver.

Waiving the carryover limitation more than once every three years (ESEA section 1127(b))

This waiver is granted on the condition that Virginia will use its authority granted by this waiver to waive the carryover limitation in section 1127(a) more than once within three years only for an LEA that needs a second (or third) waiver because of its Title I, Part A ARRA funds.