



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

SEP - 5 2014

The Honorable Jesús Aguirre
State Superintendent of Education
810 1st Street NE, 9th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20002

Dear Superintendent Aguirre:

I am writing in response to the District of Columbia's May 12, 2014 request for a one-year extension of flexibility under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA flexibility), so that the District of Columbia's Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) may continue to implement ESEA flexibility through the end of the 2014–2015 school year.

Our team has reviewed OSSE's request and, pursuant to section 9401(d)(2) of the ESEA, I am pleased to extend OSSE's ESEA flexibility request for one year, through the end of the 2014–2015 school year. My decision to extend OSSE's ESEA flexibility request is based on my determination that ESEA flexibility has been effective in enabling OSSE to carry out important reforms to improve student achievement and that this extension is in the public interest. This letter also provides my approval of OSSE's proposed amendments to Principles 1 and 2 of its ESEA flexibility request. A summary of OSSE's approved amendments is enclosed with this letter, and OSSE's amended request will be posted on the U.S. Department of Education's (ED) website. This extension is subject to OSSE's commitment to continue working with ED on OSSE's requested amendments to its teacher and principal evaluation and support systems, which may require additional flexibility. Additionally, OSSE has submitted high-quality plans to meet certain next steps identified during Part B monitoring, as part of satisfying the requirement that it resolve these next steps. OSSE's continued work with ED on its requested amendments to Principle 3, as well as OSSE's progress in implementing its high-quality plans during the 2014–2015 school year, will inform ED's decision regarding renewal of OSSE's ESEA flexibility after the 2014–2015 school year.

OSSE continues to have an affirmative responsibility to ensure that it and its districts are in compliance with Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, and age in their implementation of ESEA flexibility. These laws include 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, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and requirements under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

I am confident that OSSE will continue to implement the reforms described in its approved ESEA flexibility request and advance its efforts to hold schools and school districts accountable for the achievement of all students. If you need any additional assistance to implement your ESEA flexibility request, please do not hesitate to Eric Larson of my staff at: eric.d.larson@ed.gov.

400 MARYLAND AVE., SW, WASHINGTON, DC 20202
<http://www.ed.gov/>

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Thank you for your commitment and continued focus on enhancing education for all students in the District of Columbia.

Sincerely,



Deborah S. Delisle
Assistant Secretary

Enclosure

cc: Iris Bond-Gill, Interim Assistant Superintendent of Elementary and Secondary Education

Amendments to OSSE's Approved ESEA Flexibility Request

The following is a summary of significant amendments to OSSE's approved ESEA flexibility request. The U.S. Department of Education (ED) approves these amendments because OSSE's ESEA flexibility request, as amended, continues to be aligned with the principles of ESEA flexibility. Please refer to ED's website (www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility) for OSSE's approved ESEA flexibility request.

▪ **Transition to College- and Career-Ready Standards (1.B)**

Revision: Adjusted the timeline for including science assessments in the accountability system. OSSE will administer a new science assessment aligned with the Next Generation Science Standards for the first time in 2016–2017, and will include science assessments in the accountability system at that time.

▪ **Priority Schools (2.D)**

Revision: Revised the monitoring processes for Priority Schools to ensure oversight of interventions in these schools.

Revision: Provided a clear implementation timeline, which identifies each cohort of Priority Schools, matched with the applicable years of planning and implementation.

▪ **Focus Schools (2.E)**

Revision: Revised the monitoring processes for Focus Schools to ensure oversight of interventions in these schools.

Revision: Adjusted the timeline for implementation of interventions in Focus Schools, requiring all focus schools to implement interventions no later than 90 days after the beginning of the school year,

▪ **Provide Incentives and Supports for Other Title I Schools (2.F)**

Revision: Clarified the required interventions for Title I schools that are not otherwise identified as Priority or Focus Schools. When these schools miss AMO targets for two consecutive years, LEAs will develop strategies for increasing achievement in those targeted areas, and describe these strategies in the Consolidated Title I plan. Removed the requirement that LEAs set aside 20 percent of Title I funds to serve these schools, thereby allowing LEAs to devote those funds to Priority and Focus Schools.