



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

JUL 31 2014

The Honorable Brenda Cassellius
Commissioner of Education
Minnesota Department of Education
1500 Highway 36 West
Roseville, MN 55113

Dear Commissioner Cassellius:

This letter is in response to Minnesota's March 14, 2014 request for a one-year extension of flexibility under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA flexibility), so that Minnesota may continue to implement ESEA flexibility through the end of the 2014–2015 school year.

Our team has reviewed Minnesota's request and, pursuant to section 9401(d)(2) of the ESEA, I am pleased to extend Minnesota's ESEA flexibility request for one year, through the end of the 2014–2015 school year. My decision to extend Minnesota's ESEA flexibility request is based on my determination that ESEA flexibility has been effective in enabling Minnesota to carry out important reforms to improve student achievement and that this extension is in the public interest. Minnesota also had no monitoring next steps in Part A or Part B of ESEA flexibility monitoring. Minnesota's approved request will be posted on the U.S. Department of Education's (ED) website.

ED is extending Minnesota's ESEA flexibility request based on Principles 1 and 2. Minnesota commits to continuing its partnership and work with ED in its implementation of the principles of ESEA flexibility. Minnesota's continued work with ED on its implementation of all three principles will inform ED's decision regarding renewal of Minnesota's ESEA flexibility after the 2014–2015 school year.

Minnesota 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 as well as their implementation of all other Federal education programs. 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 Minnesota 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.

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

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

Page 2 – The Honorable Brenda Cassellius

If you need any additional assistance to implement your ESEA flexibility request, please do not hesitate to contact Elizabeth Witt at (202) 260-5585 and elizabeth.witt@ed.gov or Shevine Holeman at (202) 260-0999 and shevine.holeman@ed.gov.

Thank you for your commitment and continued focus on enhancing education for all of Minnesota's students.

Sincerely,



Deborah S. Delisle
Assistant Secretary

cc: Jessie Montano, Deputy Commissioner
Steve Dibb, Assistant Commissioner