



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

AUG 21 2014

The Honorable Richard Ross
Superintendent of Public Instruction
Ohio Department of Education
25 South Front Street
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Superintendent Ross:

This letter is in response to Ohio's April 10, 2014, request for a one-year extension of flexibility under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA flexibility), so that Ohio may continue to implement ESEA flexibility through the end of the 2014–2015 school year.

Our team has reviewed Ohio's request and, pursuant to section 9401(d)(2) of the ESEA, I am pleased to extend Ohio's ESEA flexibility request for one year, through the end of the 2014–2015 school year. My decision to extend Ohio's ESEA flexibility request is based on my determination that ESEA flexibility has been effective in enabling Ohio to carry out important reforms to improve student achievement and that this extension is in the public interest. I have also determined that Ohio's monitoring next steps have been adequately addressed. Additionally, this letter provides my approval of Ohio's proposed amendments to Principles 1 and 2 of its ESEA flexibility request. A summary of Ohio's approved amendments is enclosed with this letter, and Ohio's approved request will be posted on the U.S. Department of Education's (ED) website.

This extension is subject to Ohio's commitment to continue working with ED on Ohio's requested changes to its teacher and principal evaluation and support systems, which may require additional flexibility. Ohio's continued work with ED on its requested changes to Principle 3 will inform ED's decision regarding renewal of Ohio's ESEA flexibility beyond the 2014–2015 school year.

Additionally, I understand that recently enacted legislation in Ohio may require changes to Ohio's ESEA flexibility request for the 2015–2016 school year and future school years. If Ohio wishes to make any changes to its ESEA flexibility request, it should work with ED to ensure that any such changes are consistent with the principles of ESEA flexibility and with all unwaived requirements of the ESEA.

Ohio 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.

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<http://www.ed.gov/>

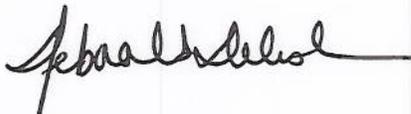
The Department of Education's mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.

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I am confident that Ohio 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 contact Elizabeth Ross at: elizabeth.ross@ed.gov or Robyn Pettiford at: robyn.pettiford@ed.gov.

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Deborah S. Delisle", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Deborah S. Delisle
Assistant Secretary

Enclosure

cc: John Richard, Senior Executive Director, Center for Accountability & Continuous Improvement

Approved Amendments to Ohio's ESEA Flexibility Request

The following is a summary of approved amendments to Ohio's ESEA flexibility request. The U.S. Department of Education (ED) approves these amendments because Ohio'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 Ohio's complete ESEA flexibility request.

- **Develop and Administer Annual, Statewide, Aligned and High-Quality Assessments that Measure Student Growth (Principle 1.C)**

Revision: Ohio updated its request to include its assessment transition plan for the 2014–2015 school year.

- **Develop and Implement a State-Based System of Differentiated Recognition, Accountability and Support (Principle 2.A)**

Revision: Ohio updated its request to include its plan for revising its report cards to comply with all requirements of ED's *State and Local Report Cards Title I, Part A* guidance, issued on February 8, 2013.

- **Set Ambitious But Achievable Annual Measurable Objectives (Principle 2.B)**

Revision: Ohio removed attendance rate as a demotion criteria in its Annual Measurable Objectives calculation, but will continue to report attendance rate data on its State and local report cards.