



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

AUG 14 2014

The Honorable Tony Evers  
State Superintendent  
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction  
125 South Webster Street  
Madison, WI 53703

Dear Superintendent Evers:

This letter is in response to Wisconsin's May 08, 2014 request for a one-year extension of flexibility under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA flexibility), so that Wisconsin may continue to implement ESEA flexibility through the end of the 2014–2015 school year.

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

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

Wisconsin 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 Wisconsin 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/>

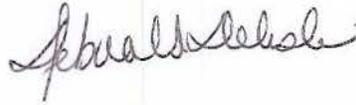
*The Department of Education's mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.*

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If you need any additional assistance to implement your ESEA flexibility request, please do not hesitate to contact Emily Bank at: [emily.bank@ed.gov](mailto:emily.bank@ed.gov) or Matthew Stern at: [matthew.stern@ed.gov](mailto:matthew.stern@ed.gov).

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Deborah S. Delisle". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Deborah S. Delisle  
Assistant Secretary

Enclosure

cc: Lynnette Russell, Assistant State Superintendent, Division for Student and School Success

## **Approved Amendments to Wisconsin's ESEA Flexibility Request**

The following is a summary of amendments to Wisconsin's approved ESEA flexibility request. The Department approves the following amendments because Wisconsin's ESEA flexibility request, as amended, continues to be aligned with the principles of ESEA flexibility. Please refer to the Department's website ([www.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/stateplans03/index.html](http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/stateplans03/index.html)) for Wisconsin's complete ESEA flexibility request.

### **1.C: Develop and Administer Annual, Statewide, Aligned, High-Quality Assessments that Measure Student Growth**

Revision: Change in the assessment plan for grades 9-11. Wisconsin will administer the ACT Aspire Early High School assessments in grades 9 and 10, and the ACT Plus Writing and the ACT WorkKeys assessments in grade 11.

### **2.A: Develop and Implement a State-Based System of Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support**

Revision: Change in calculation methodology for non-tested students. Wisconsin will calculate proficiency-based calculations based on Full Academic Year tested students. Test participation rate calculations remain based on all students enrolled. Please note that the Department expects Wisconsin to maintain similar participation rates as in prior years and ensure that at least 95 percent of all students and all subgroups participate in state assessments.

Revision: Change in calculation methodology for Closing Gaps Priority Area of the accountability index, from comparing growth of target subgroups to the comparison group within the school, to comparing growth of target subgroups within the school to the comparison group at the State level.

### **2.D: Priority Schools**

Revision: Clarification and enhancement of requirements for priority schools to review the performance of Principals and ensure that they have the ability to lead the turnaround effort.