



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

The Honorable Deborah A. Gist
Commissioner of Education
Rhode Island Department of Education
255 Westminster Street
Providence, RI 02903

APR 20 2015

Dear Superintendent Gist:

On October 20-21, 2014, the Office of State Support (OSS) of the U.S. Department of Education's (ED) conducted a program review in Rhode Island. The OSS team reviewed your State's progress in meeting the highly qualified teacher provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA), and your State's administration of the ESEA Title II, Part A *Improving Teacher Quality State Grants* program.

Enclosed with this letter is a monitoring report that is based on information that the OSS team collected during the review. I would like to note that in general, the OSS team was pleased with the Rhode Island Department of Education's (RIDE) efforts to ensure that Federal funds are being used effectively to ensure that all teachers of core academic classes will be highly qualified.

Among other things, the monitoring report commends RIDE for its data collection systems that appear to accurately identify highly qualified teachers. But the report also identifies certain areas in which further action is required. In particular, the State must do the following:

- Submit to ED a plan and a timeline detailing how, with Title II, Part A State-level activity funds, it will conduct timely and meaningful consultation with representatives of nonpublic schools on the provision of equitable services to educators working in nonpublic schools; and
- Submit to ED a plan to ensure that the SAHE regularly and systematically monitors all grantees through an onsite or desk monitoring process.

If RIDE believes the monitoring report contains factual errors, ED would appreciate receiving suggested corrections within 10 business days from the date of this letter so that we can appropriately incorporate them into the final version of the report, which will be posted on the Department's web site. For areas in which the Department has required further action, please send a written response within 30 business days from the date of this report. Please send any comments on the content of the report and RIDE's response to the needed corrective action to Ashlee Schmidt of my staff at: OSS.RhodeIsland@ed.gov.

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 Deborah A. Gist

Thank you again for hosting a productive site visit. I look forward to working further with you and your staff in any follow-up activities, and in assisting in any way we can to ensure that all Rhode Island local educational agencies are meeting the highly qualified teacher requirements and to help improve the delivery of Title II, Part A services in the State.

Sincerely,

A black rectangular redaction box covers the signature of Monique M. Chism. There are some faint blue ink marks around the box, possibly from the original signature or a stamp.

Monique M. Chism, Ph.D.
Director
Office of State Support

Enclosure