



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

October 10, 2019

Honorable Jhone Ebert
Superintendent of Public Instruction
Nevada Department of Education
700 East 5th Street
Carson City, NV 89701

Dear Superintendent Ebert:

I am writing in response to Nevada's request to the U.S. Department of Education (Department) on March 1, 2019, to amend its approved consolidated State plan under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act. Under ESEA Section 1111(A)(6)(B)(i), if a State makes any significant changes to its plan at any time, such information shall be submitted to the Secretary in the form of revisions and amendments to the State plan.

I have determined that the amended request meets the requirements in the ESEA and, for this reason, I am approving Nevada's amended State plan. A summary of the Nevada amendment is enclosed. This letter, as well as Nevada's revised ESEA consolidated State plan, will be posted on the Department's website. Any further requests to amend Nevada's ESEA consolidated State plan must be submitted to the Department for review and approval.

Please note the submission of the approved amendment regarding how low-income and minority students in Title I, Part A schools are not served at a disproportionate rate by inexperienced teachers to the consolidated State plan also fulfills the requirement on Nevada's Title I, Part A grant associated with State plan approval.

Please be aware that approval of this amendment to Nevada's consolidated State plan is not a determination that all the information and data included in the amended State plan comply with Federal civil rights requirements, including 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, and requirements under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. It is Nevada's responsibility to comply with these civil rights requirements.

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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.

Thank you for all of the work that the Nevada Department of Education has put into its consolidated State plan under the ESEA. If you have questions or need any assistance regarding the implementation of your ESEA consolidated State plan, please contact the Office of School Support and Accountability at: OESE.Title-i-a@ed.gov.

Sincerely,

/s/

Frank T. Brogan
Assistant Secretary for
Elementary and Secondary Education

Enclosure

cc: Dr. Jonathan P. Moore, Deputy Superintendent of Student Achievement

Amendment to the Nevada’s Consolidated State Plan

The following is a summary of Nevada’s amendment request. Please refer to the Department’s website <https://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/stateplan17/map/nv.html> for Nevada’s complete consolidated State plan.

Approved Amendments

The following amendments are aligned with the statute and regulations:

Title I, Part A: Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Educational Agencies (LEAs)

- *Eighth Grade Math Exception:*
Because the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) is no longer administering an end-of-course mathematics assessment in high school, the State is not eligible for this flexibility. The State updated its plan to reflect this change in practice.
- *Minimum N-Size for Accountability:*
NDE clarified that its n-size of 25 applies to identification of additional targeted support schools.
- *Annual Measurement of Achievement:*
In addition to factoring the 95 percent participation requirement into the calculation of the Academic Achievement indicator consistent with ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(E), NDE included participation rate in the State’s accountability system by giving a school with a participation rate (or a subgroup with a participation rate) below 95 percent a “participation warning” (a warning to the school) or “participation penalty” (a deduction of points from the academic achievement indicator), depending on the number of years the participation rate has fallen below 95 percent.
- *Academic Achievement Long Term Goals:*
NDE revised the baseline year and data and reset its academic achievement long-term goals and measurements of interim progress for reading/language arts and mathematics in high school to the 2016-2017 school year to reflect the transition from end-of-course examinations to the ACT.
- *Graduation Rate Long Term Goals:*
NDE revised the baseline year and data and reset its long-term goals and measurement of interim progress for the 4-year and 5-year adjusted cohort graduation rates in high school to the 2016-2017 school year.
- *Academic Achievement Indicator:*
NDE incorporated two changes to the Academic Achievement indicator:
 1. Removed references to the end-of-course assessments and added ACT as the high school assessment for calculating the Academic Achievement indicator.
 2. Added that proficiency rates for middle schools will be determined through pooled averaging, in which the number of students participating in each assessment

contributes proportionately to the school's indicator, and that pooled averaging will no longer be used for high schools.

- *Graduation Rate Indicator:*

NDE added that students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who take the Nevada Alternate Assessment are eligible to receive the Nevada Alternative Diploma, the State's version of a State-defined alternate diploma, consistent with the requirements in ESEA sections 8101(23) and (25). These students are included in the adjusted cohort graduation rate when they receive the alternate diploma, which is available to students who are 22 and younger, consistent with the availability of a free appropriate public education.

- *School Quality or Student Success (SQSS) Indicators:*

NDE modified its SQSS indicators for high schools, which still comprise 35 percent weight in the system of annual meaningful differentiation, by:

- Decreasing the weight of the chronic absenteeism indicator by 3 percent;
- Removing three indicators: ACT performance (10 percent), end-of-course college and career readiness (10 percent), and academic learning plans (2 percent);
- Removing 10th grade from the 9th and 10th Grade credit sufficiency indicator;
- Adding an advanced diploma indicator that measures the percentage of students earning an advanced diploma (with a weight of 5 percent);
- Adding a post-secondary preparation indicator that measures participation and completion in Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), career and technical education, or dual credits (10 percent weight for participation; 10 percent for completion).

NDE also refined its methodology for the chronic absenteeism indicator for all grade spans such that it now measures the percentage of students missing ten percent or more of school days, for any reason. Schools demonstrating improvement of at least ten percent or more over the prior year's performance will earn a maximum of an additional 0.5 (high schools) to 1 point (elementary schools), up to the total possible points. For high schools, NDE lowered the weight from 8 to 5 percent and for middle schools, NDE increased the weight from 5 to 10 percent.

For elementary, middle, and high schools, science proficiency is now measured by the Nevada Science assessment rather than the criterion referenced test in elementary and middle school and the end-of-course in high school. The weight remains the same.

- *State's System of Annual Meaningful Differentiation:*

NDE modified the point attribution tables that are used to assign points to schools for each indicator within the State's system of annual meaningful differentiation.

- *Weighting of Indicators:*

NDE modified the weighting of indicators in the State's system of annual meaningful differentiation. Specifically, for middle schools, NDE changed the weight of the other academic indicator for elementary and middle schools that are not high schools from 55 to 50 percent and increased the weight of the chronic absenteeism indicator from 5 to 10 percent.

For high schools, NDE modified the weights of the 4-year and 5-year adjusted cohort graduation rates, such that the 4-year rate contributes 25 percent and the 5-year rate accounts for 5 percent. NDE also changed the weights for its school quality or student success indicators to reflect the changes to the indicators, as described above.

- *Comprehensive Support and Improvement Schools:*
NDE modified the designation criteria for how the State identifies the lowest performing schools for comprehensive support and improvement (CSI). Specifically, the State no longer will identify, in addition to schools that meet the CSI criteria required under the ESEA, schools that received a two-star rating and had an index score lower than the prior year's index score.

NDE clarified that it will identify both TSI and ATSI schools that have not met the exit criteria for three years as CSI.

- *Targeted Support and Improvement Schools – Consistently Underperforming Subgroups of Students:*
NDE updated its methodology for identifying targeted support and improvement schools due to consistently underperforming subgroups. NDE will identify any school as TSI if the school has one or more underperforming subgroups that misses its measurements of interim progress for two consecutive years on the Academic Achievement indicator and earns the lowest possible points on the point attribution table for at least two other indicators.
- *Targeted Support and Improvement Schools—Additional Targeted Support:*
NDE modified its methodology for identifying additional targeted support and improvement schools. When there are several schools identified for CSI that are tied at the 5th percentile index score, the State educational agency (SEA) will now use the highest (rather than the lowest) performance amongst these schools as the indicator's target for ATSI identification. NDE identifies ATSI schools from among schools identified for TSI based on having one or more consistently underperforming subgroup. Each TSI school's subgroups are evaluated against each indicator's target (based on the highest performing CSI school's performance on the indicator). If the performance of any one subgroup on any one indicator is at or below the target, the school is identified for ATSI.
- *Exit Criteria for Schools Receiving Additional Targeted Support:*
NDE revised its exit criteria for schools identified as ATSI. Previously, NDE required that ATSI and TSI schools could exit after completing a three-year improvement plan if they did not meet any of the designation criteria for which they were identified for two consecutive years. NDE clarified that because ATSI schools are a subset of TSI schools, those schools may exit if they improve from the TSI designation criteria or the criteria that led to ATSI identification during each of the two years prior to the exit evaluation.
- *Disproportionate Rates of Access to Educators:*
NDE provided data on the extent that low-income and minority children in Title I, Part A schools are served by inexperienced teachers.

- *Title II, Part A – Use of Funds:*
NDE refined its description of how the SEA will use Title II, Part A funds for State-level activities described in section 2101(c). Specifically, NDE added that Title II, Part A funds may be used to assist teachers in becoming fully State certified in content areas. Additionally, NDE edited the State’s description of strategies to improve teacher preparation programs as well as the description of the educator growth and development systems.