



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

April 22, 2022

The Honorable Angelica Allen-McMillan
Commissioner
New Jersey Department of Education
100 Riverview Plaza
Trenton, NJ 08625

Dear Commissioner Allen-McMillan:

I am writing in response to New Jersey's request on March 21, 2022, to the U.S. Department of Education (Department) to amend its approved consolidated State plan under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), using the COVID-19 State Plan Addendum (Addendum). New Jersey requested these amendments to account for short-term changes to its system of annual meaningful differentiation for school year 2021-2022 due to extraordinary circumstances related to the COVID-19 pandemic and in response to the waivers the Department granted New Jersey from the accountability requirements of the ESEA for the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years and the assessment requirements for the 2019-2020 school year.

Specifically, New Jersey requested the amendments to:

- Shift forward long-term goals for academic achievement, graduation rate, and progress in achieving English language proficiency by two years.
- For its Other Academic Indicator for elementary and secondary schools that are not high schools, measure student academic growth from the 2018-2019 school year to the 2021-2022 school year (rather than from the 2020-2021 to 2021-2022 school years).
- For the identification of schools, make a one-time change in the frequency with which New Jersey identifies schools for Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) due to low performance and low graduation rates and Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI). New Jersey will identify schools in fall 2022 and again in fall 2023.
- Revise its methodology for identifying schools for Targeted Support and Improvement due to consistently underperforming subgroups (TSI) to use results from the 2018-2019 and 2021-2022 school years (rather than from the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 school years).
- For CSI and ATSI schools, not count the 2019-2020 or 2020-2021 schools years toward the number of years in which a school must meet the statewide exit criteria.

I am approving New Jersey's short-term changes to its ESEA consolidated State plan. This letter and New Jersey's approved Addendum for the 2021-2022 school year will be posted on the Department's website along with the currently approved version of New Jersey's ESEA consolidated State plan (available at: <https://oese.ed.gov/offices/office-of-formula-grants/school-support-and-accountability/essa-consolidated-state-plans/>). Because I am approving changes through the Addendum that are not limited to the 2021-2022 school year (e.g., shifted long-term goals and school identification

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timeline), the State must submit an updated ESEA consolidated State plan that incorporates those approved changes at a later date.

Please be aware that approval of this amendment to New Jersey’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 New Jersey’s responsibility to comply with these civil rights requirements.

I know that you are doing all in your power to support your districts and schools to ensure the health and well-being of students and educators. Thank you for your dedication to this effort. If you have any questions, please contact my staff at OESE.TitleI-a@ed.gov.

Sincerely,

/s/

James F. Lane, Ed.D.
Senior Advisor, Office of the Secretary
Delegated the Authority to Perform the Functions and
Duties of the Assistant Secretary
Office of Elementary and Secondary Education

cc: John Iko, Accountability Systems Analyst/Planning Associate II,
Office of Performance Management, New Jersey Department of Education