



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

April 22, 2022

The Honorable Frank Edelblut
Commissioner of Education
New Hampshire Department of Education
101 Pleasant Street
Concord, NH 03301-3860

Dear Commissioner Edelblut:

I am writing in response to your letter to the U.S. Department of Education (Department) dated March 9, 2022. The Department acknowledges that the New Hampshire Department of Education NHDOE is withdrawing from the Department's innovative assessment demonstration authority (IADA) initiative. NHDOE was first afforded flexibility under the IADA in the 2018-2019 school year to implement its Performance Assessment of Competency Education (PACE) learning, assessment, and accountability system. This followed a waiver granted to NHDOE by the Department to pilot PACE starting in the 2014-2015 school year.

The Department understands that NHDOE made the decision to withdraw from IADA after an extensive review of PACE implementation and careful discussion with partnering districts, New Hampshire's Accountability Task Force, and New Hampshire's assessment technical advisory committee. You noted in your letter concerns with the significant administrative burden on educators and school leaders that detracted from instruction time, the cost to implement PACE, and that PACE fell short of NHDOE's expectations for comparability and assessment quality.

Thank you for NHDOE's work to develop and pilot the PACE assessments. While I understand that PACE will not become the statewide assessment in New Hampshire, I am encouraged NHDOE and its districts to continue to leverage the PACE resources and make them universally available. I also applaud NHDOE's on-going work to support an educator community of practice focused on supporting a student-centered learning and assessment system the helps schools and educators use PACE to meet community and classroom needs. These continued efforts will support growth in competency-based instruction and assessment literacy are sustained throughout the State.

Thank you for your continued commitment to the education of our nation's children. If we can be of any additional assistance, please contact my staff at ESEA.Assessment@ed.gov.

Sincerely

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: Melissa White, NHDOE Administrator for Academics and Assessment

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