



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

April 28, 2022

The Honorable Catherine Truitt
Superintendent of Public Instruction
North Carolina Department of Public Instruction
6307 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-6307

Dear Superintendent Truitt:

I am writing in response to North Carolina's request on March 7, 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). North Carolina requested the amendments to account for short-term changes in school year 2021-2022 due to extraordinary circumstances related to the COVID-19 pandemic and in response to the waivers the Department granted North Carolina 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, North Carolina requested the amendments to:

- Shift forward long-term goals for academic achievement, graduation rate, and progress in achieving English language proficiency by two years.
- Use end-of-course assessment data from currently enrolled high school students in NC Math 1, NC Math 3, and English II to calculate its Academic Achievement indicator (rather than calculate the indicator based on a cohort of data, e.g., all 11th-graders).
- Modify its School Quality or Student Success indicator by raising the ACT benchmark score from 17 to 19.
- Modify its methodology to identify schools for targeted support and improvement by specifying that the three years of data it will use to determine "consistent underperformance" are school years 2017-2018, 2018-2019, and 2021-2022 rather than the three most recent years (i.e., excluding data from school years 2019-2020 and 2020-2021).
- Exit a school identified for Comprehensive Support and Improvement – Low Performing if it is no longer in the bottom five percent of schools in fall 2022 and has a 2021-2022 growth designation of meets or exceeds, using data from school years 2018-2019 and 2021-2022.
- Exit a school identified for Additional Targeted Support and Improvement in fall 2022 if it either meets growth designation of meets or exceeds using two-years of data from school years 2018-2019 and 2021-2022 or three years of data from school years 2017-2018, 2018-2019, and 2021-2022.

I am approving North Carolina's short-term changes to its ESEA consolidated State plan. This letter and North Carolina's approved Addendum for school year 2021-2022 will be posted on the Department's website along with the currently approved version of North Carolina's ESEA consolidated State plan

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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.

(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 (i.e., shifted long-term goals and measurements of interim progress, shifted school identification timeline, and modified exit criteria), 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 North Carolina’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 North Carolina’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: Tammy Howard, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction