



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

May 26, 2022

The Honorable Richard Woods
State School Superintendent
Georgia Department of Education
205 Jesse Hill Jr. Drive SE
Atlanta GA 30334

Dear Superintendant Woods:

I am writing in response to Georgia's request on March 3, 2022, and revised on April 26, 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). Georgia requested these amendments to account for short-term changes to its system of annual meaningful differentiation for the 2021-2022 school year due to extraordinary circumstances related to the COVID-19 pandemic and in response to the waivers the Department granted Georgia 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, Georgia requested the amendments to:

- Exclude the student growth and closing gaps components from the Academic Achievement indicator for high schools and the Other Academic indicator for public elementary schools and secondary schools that are not high schools.
- Use student achievement on the statewide science and social studies assessments for its Other Academic indicator for public elementary schools and secondary schools that are not high schools rather than as School Quality or Student Success (SQSS) indicators.
- Exclude the Closing Gaps, Student Attendance, and College and Career Readiness SQSS indicators.
- Modify the State's system of annual meaningful differentiation to implement a staged filtering process to identify schools for comprehensive support and improvement (CSI) that is based on all indicators using data from school year 2021-2022 in place of a summative rating.
- Exclude school years 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 from the number of years in which a school must meet the exit criteria in order to exit CSI and additional targeted support and improvement (ATSI) status.
- Modify the exit criteria for schools that are eligible to exit CSI status in fall 2022 so a school can exit if it does not meet the entrance criteria and demonstrates improvement in reading/language arts (R/LA) achievement, mathematics achievement, science achievement, or the overall Content Mastery component from the year of identification compared to school year 2021-2022. Schools identified for CSI in fall 2022 will be eligible to exit in fall 2023 if they do not meet the entrance criteria and demonstrate improvement in R/LA achievement, mathematics achievement, science achievement, or the overall Content Mastery component from the 2021-2022 to the 2022-2023

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school year.

I am approving Georgia's short-term changes to its ESEA consolidated State plan. This letter and Georgia's approved Addendum for the 2021-2022 school year will be posted on the Department's website along with the currently approved version of Georgia'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 SY 2021-2022 (e.g., exit criteria methodology), 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 Georgia'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 Georgia'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: Allison Timberlake, Ph.D., Deputy Superintendent, Office of Assessment and Accountability,
Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE)
Matt Jones, Chief of Staff, GaDOE
Paula Swartzberg, Director of Accountability, GaDOE