



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

June 8, 2022

The Honorable Eric G. Mackey
State Superintendent of Education
Alabama State Department of Education
P.O. Box 302101
Montgomery, AL 36104

Dear Superintendent Mackey:

I am writing in response to Alabama's request on May 13, 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). Alabama 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 Alabama 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, Alabama requested the amendments to:

- Shift forward long-term goals for academic achievement, graduation rate, and progress in achieving English language proficiency by two years.
- Omit the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years when determining whether a school has met the statewide exit criteria for comprehensive support and improvement (CSI) and additional targeted support and improvement (ATSI) schools.
- Exit a school identified for CSI in fall 2022 if it performs above the bottom 5 percent of Title I schools and shows improvement as compared to when the school was originally identified.
- Exit a school identified as CSI due to its graduation rate in fall 2022 if it has a graduation rate at or above 67 percent.
- Exit a school identified for ATSI in fall 2022 if it no longer meets the identification criteria (i.e., the school may exit if no subgroup of students, on its own, performs at or below the bottom 5 percent of Title I schools) and demonstrates improvement since identification for the student subgroup for which the school was originally identified.

I am approving Alabama's short-term changes to its ESEA consolidated State plan. This letter and Alabama's approved Addendum for the 2021-2022 school year will be posted on the Department's website along with the currently approved version of Alabama'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 (i.e., shifted long-term goals), the State must submit an updated ESEA consolidated State plan that incorporates those approved changes at a later date.

400 MARYLAND AVE., SW, WASHINGTON, DC 20202
<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.

Please be aware that approval of this amendment to Alabama’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 Alabama’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: Paul Bonner, Accountability Coordinator
Shanthia Washington, Assistant State Superintendent