



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

August 8, 2022

The Honorable Heidi Teshner
Acting Commissioner of Education
Alaska Department of Education and Early Development
801 West 10th Street, Suite 200
Juneau, AK 99811-0500

Dear Acting Commissioner Teshner:

I am writing in response to Alaska's request on July 12, 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). Alaska 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 Alaska 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, Alaska requested the amendments to:

- Shift forward long-term goals for academic achievement, graduation rate, and progress in achieving English language proficiency by two years.
- Modify how the State determines whether a school has met the minimum n size for the Academic Achievement and Progress in Achieving English Language Proficiency indicators to determine if a school meets the minimum n-size of 10 at the school-level rather than by grade span.
- Replace student growth with grade 3 reading/language arts proficiency, previously a School Quality or Student Success indicator, as its Other Academic indicator for elementary and secondary schools that are not high schools and omit student growth for high schools in its Academic Achievement indicator.
- Only use one year of data (rather than three) to calculate its Graduation Rate indicator.
- Modify the weighting of its indicators for its system of annual meaningful differentiation to account for its use of grade 3 reading/language arts proficiency as the Other Academic indicator in lieu of academic growth.
- Not include the 2019-2020 or 2020-2021 school years towards the number of years in which a school must meet criteria in order to exit comprehensive support and improvement (CSI) or additional targeted support and improvement (ATSI) status.

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

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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.

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), 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 Alaska’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 Alaska’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 Jones, DEED
Deborah Riddle, DEED
Susan McKenzie, DEED