



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

OCT 09 2014

The Honorable Joel Coleman
Interim Superintendent of Schools
Utah State Office of Education
P.O. Box 144200
Salt Lake City, UT 84114

Dear Superintendent Coleman:

This letter is in response to Utah's August 22, 2014 request for a one-year extension of flexibility under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA flexibility), so that Utah may continue to implement ESEA flexibility through the end of the 2014–2015 school year.

Our team has reviewed Utah's request and, pursuant to section 9401(d)(2) of the ESEA, I am pleased to extend Utah's ESEA flexibility request for one year, through the end of the 2014–2015 school year. My decision to extend Utah's ESEA flexibility request is based on my determination that ESEA flexibility has been effective in enabling Utah to carry out important reforms to improve student achievement and that this extension is in the public interest. This letter also marks my approval of Utah's proposed amendments to Principle 1 of its ESEA flexibility request. A summary of Utah's approved amendments is enclosed with this letter, and Utah's approved request will be posted on the U.S. Department of Education's (ED) website.

This extension is subject to Utah's commitment to continue working with ED on Utah's requested amendments to its teacher and principal evaluation and support systems, which may require additional flexibility. Utah's continued work with ED on its requested changes to Principle 3 will inform ED's decision regarding renewal of Utah's ESEA flexibility beyond the 2014–2015 school year.

Please note that ED has established a process whereby States may request to amend their approved ESEA flexibility requests. Information regarding that process can be found at: <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/esea-flexibility/index.html>. ED will review and approve those changes that continue to align with the principles of ESEA flexibility.

Utah continues to have an affirmative responsibility to ensure that it and its districts are in compliance with Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, and age in their implementation of ESEA flexibility. These laws include 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, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and requirements under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

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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.

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I am confident that Utah will continue to implement the reforms described in its approved ESEA flexibility request and advance its efforts to hold schools and school districts accountable for the achievement of all students. If you need any additional assistance to implement your ESEA flexibility request, please do not hesitate to contact Victoria Hammer at victoria.hammer@ed.gov or Shevine Holeman at: shevine.holeman@ed.gov.

Thank you for your commitment and continued focus on enhancing education for all of Utah's students.

Sincerely,



Deborah S. Delisle
Assistant Secretary

Enclosure

cc: Judy Park, Associate Superintendent

Approved Amendments to Utah's ESEA Flexibility Request

The following is a summary of approved amendments to Utah's ESEA flexibility request. The U.S. Department of Education (ED) approves these amendments because Utah's ESEA flexibility request, as amended, continues to be aligned with the principles of ESEA flexibility. Please refer to ED's website (<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/esea-flexibility/map/ut.html>) for Utah's complete ESEA flexibility request.

- **Adopt College- and Career-Ready Standards (Element 1.A)**

Revision: Utah changed the way that it will meet the college- and career-ready standards requirement under ESEA flexibility. See page 20 and Attachment 30 of Utah's approved ESEA flexibility request.

- **Develop and Administer Annual, Statewide, Aligned, High-Quality Assessments That Measure Student Growth (Element 1.C)**

Revision: Utah changed the way that it will meet the high-quality assessment requirement under ESEA flexibility by indicating that it has developed and begun annually administering Statewide assessments that measure student growth in RLA and in mathematics in at least grades 3-8 and at least once in high school in all local educational agencies (LEAs) rather than administer the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) assessments. Please note that approval of this amendment does not constitute approval of the assessments that Utah intends to implement. Utah will need to submit the assessments for peer review when the new assessment peer-review process is available.