



**Arizona Department of Education
Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction John Huppenthal**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ARIZONA RECEIVES EXTENSION ON FEDERAL EDUCATION LAW FLEXIBILITY

PHOENIX, Arizona - Arizona has received a one-year extension for flexibility from certain provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), also known as No Child Left Behind (NCLB), the United States Department of Education (USDOE) announced today. The extension is through the 2014-2015 school year.

Today's approval allows public schools in Arizona to continue operating as they have since Arizona's initial waiver request was approved in July 2012. Under this request, Arizona schools receive relief from certain requirements of NCLB.

In exchange for this relief, Arizona schools are implementing reforms designed to improve and maintain teacher quality, hold schools accountable for growth in student achievement, close achievement gaps, and produce students that are truly prepared for college and career.

"I'm very proud of the work our schools have been doing over the past several years, and this approval is a validation of that work," said Superintendent of Public Instruction John Huppenthal. "Change is never easy, and we've had a lot of it. But Arizona has always been at the forefront of education reform, and our schools' commitment to quality has never wavered."

Arizona has implemented education reforms that go beyond the Elementary and Secondary Education Act's rigid, top-down requirements.

- The Arizona Department of Education (ADE) has established SMART goals and objectives to ensure accountability in implementing the principles of ESEA flexibility.
- Through the Governor's College and Career Ready Program, ADE convened high school teachers and community college faculty to discuss what it means to be college ready to ensure that students are actually college ready and that both groups have the same understanding.
- To support focus schools in targeting interventions to address schools' needs, ADE's Office of Exceptional Student Services (ESS) reviewed focus schools for high concentrations of students with disabilities within the bottom quartile and created a grant program for these schools to target interventions toward supporting students with disabilities.

Arizona joins Massachusetts, Missouri, Oregon, Rhode Island, and Utah in having its request approved today, and is one of 29 states to have its request extended through 2014-2015. Forty-three states, D.C., and Puerto Rico currently have flexibility in place.

More information on Arizona's flexibility request and the approved request is available at www.azed.gov/eseawaiver.

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