



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

July 25, 2012

Dear Education Stakeholders:

Last September, the U.S. Department of Education announced the opportunity for states to seek relief from specific provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Today, I am announcing the approval of Arizona's application for flexibility.

On ADE's website (www.azed.gov/eseawaiver) you will find a copy of the final application as well as the approval letter from the U. S. Department of Education. In the coming days, we will be developing guidance documents as well as scheduling outreach activities. Below you will find several highlights of the approval:

- Waives the requirement to make determinations of Adequate Yearly Progress for both schools and LEAs.
- Extends the 2014 target for 100% proficiency in reading and mathematics to 2020, but with the intention of developing and adopting a new Student Growth Target initiative.
- Eliminates the requirement to identify for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring both schools and LEAs.
- Defines and identifies schools needing improvement more appropriately, thus allowing efforts to be targeted and determined.
- Eliminates the fiscal consequences of NCLB accountability directing schools or LEAs to spend up to 30% of an LEA's Title I funds and 10% of each school's Title I funds on specified improvement-related activities; providing needed flexibility at the local-level so funds and improvement efforts may be directed and focused.
- Removes the fiscal consequences of Title II-A accountability, as outlined in Section 2141(c), requiring LEAs to spend Title II funds on specific activities related to highly qualified teacher improvement plans.

The waivers are for the 2012-2013 school year and can be extended another year if Arizona submits an amended request with the following changes:

- An increase to the weight of the graduation rate to 20% in the A-F Letter Grade system.
- An amendment to the educator evaluation framework to include the use of student growth as a significant factor.

The Arizona Department of Education believes this new flexibility presents us all with opportunities to increase academic achievement for Arizona's students. Please continue to send any questions or comments to eseawaiver@azed.gov.

Sincerely,

John Huppenthal
Superintendent of Public Instruction

