



State of Wisconsin
Department of Public Instruction

Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent

September 28, 2007

Janelle Leonard
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Room 3E309
Washington, DC 20202-6400

Dear Ms. Leonard:

Enclosed find the Amendment to the Wisconsin DPI Consolidated State Application Supplemental Information: Title III English Language Acquisition Program and accompanying documentation previously submitted to OELA on August 10, 2007.

Prior to 2005, Wisconsin utilized four English language proficiency (ELP) tests and relied upon aggregate student data to set ELP student performance targets. Using these data, Wisconsin set interim Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAO) in 2003, which are outlined in the supplemental documentation of the *Wisconsin Consolidated State Application for Title III ESEA: English Language Proficiency Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives*.

These AMAOs functioned as interim objectives while Wisconsin developed a standards-based English language proficiency assessment test, *ACCESS for ELLs*® and adopted an individual student enrollment system (ISES), which allows for objective data collection and tracking of English language learner (ELL) performance. *ACCESS for ELLs*® and ISES were implemented during the 2005-06 school year, and in 2007 Wisconsin initiated a study using two years of *ACCESS for ELLs*® results (n = 32,662 students) to document the observed average annual ELP progress and to evaluate the accuracy of the initial interim AMAOs.

Results of the Wisconsin study show that annual ELP progress was not equally distributed across cohorts, but rather younger students and those with lower initial ELP levels made greater progress towards proficiency than older students and those with higher initial ELP levels. Based on these findings, Wisconsin has amended AMAO targets and submitted cohort definitions that recognize the roles of both student grade level and initial ELP level in student language acquisition, and annual ELP growth expectations based on averages calculated from two years of empirical data. As amended, growth expectations for AMAO 1 are based on average growth by cohort. At least half (50%) of all ELL students within a district or consortium must meet these cohort growth expectations for AMAO 1 – Progressing.

Janelle Leonard
Page 2
September 28, 2007

AMAO 2 – Exiting is based on all (100%) of the ELL students eligible to achieve Level 6 (fully English language proficient or formerly ELL). Based on the experience in Wisconsin, 20% of this cohort of ELL students must attain level 6 for the district or consortium to meet the criterion.

Through development and implementation of a comprehensive and rigorous test, *ACCESS for ELLs*®, Wisconsin is a leader in the nation in setting high expectations for ELL students in terms of English proficiency standards and the high exiting standard (level 6) used to measure English language proficiency. In addition, Wisconsin's AMAO amendments are consistent with guidance recently issued by the WIDA Consortium.

Using the criteria as amended, Wisconsin has calculated AMAOs for 2006-07 and estimated AMAOs for each of the years since the base year, 2002-03. We will continue to study the progress and attainment performance of Wisconsin's English Language Learners and engage stakeholders in the evaluation of our accountability targets pending the issuance of official non-regulatory guidance.

Amendments to AMAO 1 and AMAO 2 were submitted to Kathleen Leos on August 10, 2007, discussed with OELA, and are included with the enclosed amendment.

If you have questions or concerns about the enclosed amendment, please contact:

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Sincerely,



Michael J. Thompson, Ph.D.
Executive Assistant
Office of the State Superintendent

MT/mjp

Enclosures

c: Lorena Dickerson, Program Specialist
Office of English Language Acquisition, USED

Michael George, Director, Content and Learning Team
Division for Academic Excellence, WDPI