

January 23, 2012

Dear Colleague:

I am writing today to share with you a draft of Wisconsin's proposed waiver from certain elements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), also known as No Child Left Behind (NCLB). With this posting, the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) opens the public comment period. Attached to this letter you will find:

- A summary of the key elements in the proposal (<http://dpi.wi.gov/esea/pdf/summary.pdf>);
- The initial full draft waiver proposal (<http://dpi.wi.gov/esea/pdf/waiver.pdf>);
- A survey through which you can submit your comments by February 3, 2012. (<https://forms.dpi.wi.gov/se.ashx?s=56301B2D5BE3EF8D>)

For the past decade, NCLB has forced one-size-fits-all mandates and labels on our schools and districts. Through this waiver process, the USED has offered states the opportunity to apply for flexibility on certain provisions of ESEA. Specifically, all state proposals must demonstrate how they will use this flexibility to implement the following principles:

- College- and career-ready expectations for all students;
- State-developed differentiated recognition, accountability, and support;
- Supporting effective instruction and leadership;
- Reducing duplication and unnecessary burden.

DPI's proposal is, in part, based on the work of the statewide School and District Accountability Design Team that met over the last several months to design a fair and accurate accountability system that measures growth and attainment for all students. In addition, the proposal reflects the robust education investment agenda we've advanced together over the past two-and-a-half years, focused on improving student achievement and graduating students prepared for future success.

The DPI intends to submit its waiver application to the United States Department of Education (USED) by February 21, 2012. Through this comment period, we hope to further engage the citizens of Wisconsin in this discussion so critical to the future of education. We encourage you to share this draft of Wisconsin's proposed waiver and the associated survey with others. Most importantly, we want broad input to ensure that our proposal best meets the needs of Wisconsin's children.

After we receive feedback from you and other educators, parents, and citizens from across the state, we will be revising and refining this draft proposal. Please remember to provide your comments through the survey no later than February 3.

Sincerely,



Michael J. Thompson, PhD
Deputy State Superintendent

MJT:sjb

Attachments