



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

December 8, 2022

The Honorable Angélica Infante-Green
Commissioner of Education
Rhode Island Department of Education
255 Westminster St.
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Commissioner Infante-Green:

I am writing in response to Rhode Island's August 23, 2022, request, and its October 17, 2022, revised submission, to the U.S. Department of Education (Department) to amend its approved consolidated State plan under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), using the COVID-19 State Plan Addendum (Addendum). Rhode Island requests these amendments to account for one-year changes in the 2021-2022 school year due to extraordinary circumstances related to the COVID-19 pandemic and in response to the waivers the Department granted Rhode Island from the accountability requirements of the ESEA for the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years and the assessment requirements for the 2019-2020 school year.

Specifically, Rhode Island requested short-term amendments to:

- Shift forward long-term goals and measurements of interim progress for academic achievement, graduation rate, and progress in achieving English language proficiency (ELP) by two years.
- Calculate its Academic Achievement indicator using only one year of data from the 2021-2022 school year instead of two years of data.
- Calculate student growth in its Academic Achievement indicator for high schools and Other Academic indicator for elementary and secondary schools that are not high schools using data from the 2021-2022 school year compared to data from the 2018-2019 school year, if available, and the 2020-2021 school year.
- Calculate its Progress in Achieving ELP indicator using data from the 2021-2022 school year compared to data from the 2019-2020 school year.
- Calculate its School Quality or Student Success (SQSS) indicator called "Exceeds Expectations" using only one year of data from the 2021-2022 school year.
- Adjust the cut scores for how schools earn points to account for the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic for its two SQSS indicators, student chronic absenteeism and teacher chronic absenteeism.
- Revise its system of annual meaningful differentiation for schools for early grade schools (i.e., K-1 or K-2 schools) using available data from its Progress in Achieving English Language Proficiency, Student Chronic Absenteeism, Teacher Chronic Absenteeism, and Student Suspension indicators, so long as such schools meet the State's minimum n-size of 20 students (or teachers for Teacher Chronic Absenteeism). In addition, for one year only, Rhode Island will not add an additional year of data for schools that do not meet the minimum n-size for a school or subgroup in the 2021-2022 school year.

400 MARYLAND AVE., SW, WASHINGTON, DC 20202
<http://www.ed.gov/>

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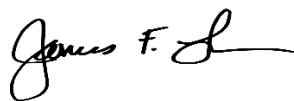
- Revise its methodology for identifying schools for comprehensive support and improvement (CSI) – low performing to first identify schools using two criteria in its approved ESEA consolidated State plan. If fewer than eight percent of schools are identified for CSI – low performing and CSI –low graduation rates, Rhode Island will then identify additional schools using a third criterion to reach eight percent of schools.
- Revise its methodology for identifying schools for additional targeted support and improvement (ATSI) consistent with its methodology for identifying schools for comprehensive support and improvement.
- Omit the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years from the number of years in which a school must meet the statewide exit criteria and adjust the timeline accordingly for CSI and ATSI schools.
- Revise the exit criteria for CSI schools identified in fall 2022 to maintain their identification status for two years. Rather than schools being evaluated to exit CSI status in fall 2023, they will be evaluated for the exit criteria in fall 2024.

I am approving Rhode Island's changes to its ESEA consolidated State plan. This letter and Rhode Island's approved Addendum for the 2021-2022 school year will be posted on the Department's website along with the currently approved version of Rhode Island's ESEA consolidated State plan (available at: <https://oese.ed.gov/offices/office-of-formula-grants/school-support-and-accountability/essa-consolidated-state-plans/>). Because I am approving changes through the Addendum that are not limited to the 2021-2022 school year (e.g., shifted long term goals and modified exit criteria timelines), Rhode Island must submit an updated ESEA consolidated State plan that incorporates those approved changes at a later date.

Please be aware that approval of this amendment to Rhode Island's consolidated State plan is not a determination that all the information and data included in the amended State plan comply with Federal civil rights requirements, including 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, and requirements under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. It is Rhode Island's responsibility to comply with these civil rights requirements.

I know that you are doing all you can to support your schools and ensure the health and well-being of students and educators. Thank you for your dedication to this effort. If you have any questions, please contact my staff at OESE.Title-I-a@ed.gov.

Sincerely,



James F. Lane, Ed.D.
Senior Advisor, Office of the Secretary
Delegated the Authority to Perform the
Functions and Duties of the Assistant Secretary
Office of Elementary and Secondary Education

cc: Kelvin Roldán, Deputy Commissioner for System Transformation, RIDE
Scott Gausland, Director of Data and Technology Services, RIDE