



STATE OF ALABAMA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



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State Superintendent of Education

Alabama
State Board
of Education

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contact: Communication
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Governor Kay Ivey
President

SPECIAL NOTICE

ALSDE Applying for Waiver Options Related to ESEA

Jackie Zeigler
District I
Vice President

Montgomery, Ala. – The Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) intends to apply for waiver options related to section 8401 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), of the following requirements as a result of ongoing challenges related to the novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).

Tracie West
District II

Recognizing that many schools and communities continue to face unprecedented challenges this year, the federal government has provided states with waiver opportunities related to the following:

Stephanie Bell
District III

Accountability and school identification requirements in ESEA sections 1111(c)(4) and 1111(d)(2)(C)-(D): the requirements that a State measure progress toward long-term goals and measurements of interim progress; meaningfully differentiate, on an annual basis, all public schools, including by adjusting the Academic Achievement indicator based on a participation rate below 95 percent; and identify schools for comprehensive, targeted, and additional targeted support and improvement based on data from the 2020-2021 school year.

Yvette M. Richardson, Ed.D.
District IV
President Pro Tem

Report card provisions related to accountability in ESEA section 1111(h) based on data from the 2020-2021 school year. These include:

Tonya S. Chestnut, Ed.D.
District V

- Section 1111(h)(1)(C)(i)(I)-(IV) and (VI) (*Accountability system description, other than the list of comprehensive, targeted, and additional targeted support and improvement schools*).
- Section 1111(h)(1)(C)(iii)(I) (*Other Academic indicator results for schools that are not high schools*).
- Section 1111(h)(1)(C)(v) (*School Quality or Student Success indicator results*).
- Section 1111(h)(1)(C)(vi) (*Progress toward meeting long-terms goals and measurements of interim progress*).
- Section 1111(h)(2)(C) with respect, at the local educational agency (LEA) and school levels, to all waived requirements in section 1111(h)(1)(C).

Cynthia McCarty, Ph.D.
District VI

Belinda McRae
District VII

Wayne Reynolds, Ed.D.
District VIII

Eric G. Mackey, Ed.D.
Secretary and
Executive Officer

The ALSDE intends to apply for a waiver to each of the statutory requirements outlined above as part of our continued efforts to provide schools with as much flexibility as possible. Please note, however, that in order to maintain or improve transparency in reporting to parents and the

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public on student achievement and school performance in school year 2020-2021 Alabama will assure that:

- The State will make publicly available chronic absenteeism data, either as defined in the State's School Quality or Student Success indicator, if applicable, or ED Facts, disaggregated to the extent such data are available by the subgroups in ESEA section 1111(c)(2), on State and local report cards (or in another publicly available location).
- The State will make publicly available data on student and/or teacher access to technology devices and high-speed internet, disaggregated by the subgroups in ESEA section 1111(c)(2), to the extent such data are collected at the state or LEA level.

Alabama is in the process of designing a method for the collection of information on student and teacher access to technology devices and high-speed internet. While these data have been collected at the school level, the state of Alabama has not defined a valid and reliable method for collecting and disaggregating this data by subgroup. Alabama will continue to report College-and-Career Readiness rate information in a disaggregated format by subgroup as a measure of opportunity to learn data. This information will be presented as part of our mandatory reporting for the 2020-2021 school year.

In addition, consistent with requirements of ESEA section 8401(b)(1)(F), Alabama will ensure that schools will continue to be provided assistance to the same populations served by Title I, Part A by assuring that:

- Any school that is identified for comprehensive, targeted, or additional targeted support and improvement in the 2019-2020 school year (i.e., any school that was in that status as of the 2019-2020 school year), except for comprehensive support and improvement schools identified based on low graduation rates that meet the State's exit criteria, will maintain that identification status in the 2021-2022 school year, implement its support and improvement plan, and receive appropriate supports and interventions.

The Alabama State Department of Education's Office of School Improvement (OSI) will continue to support schools identified for CSI, TSI or ATSI status in the 2021-2022 school year. The OSI will continue to ensure that schools implement their support and improvement plan and receive appropriate supports and interventions.

- The State will identify comprehensive, targeted, and additional targeted support and improvement schools using data from the 2021-2022 school year in the fall of 2022 to ensure school identification resumes as quickly as possible.

As part of the statutory requirements for seeking this waiver, the ALSDE must solicit and respond to public comment on its waiver request as well as provide evidence of the available comment period. Public comments regarding this waiver are to be submitted to federalwaivercovid@alsde.edu. This 30-day public comment period shall begin on March 19, 2021 and conclude on April 17, 2021.

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