



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

January 5, 2023

The Honorable Stephanie K. Siddens
Interim Superintendent of Public Instruction
Ohio Department of Education
25 South Front Street
Columbus, OH 43215-4183

Dear Interim Superintendent Siddens:

I am writing in response to the Ohio Department of Education's (ODE's) request on November 29, 2022, for a one-year extension of the State's waiver under section 1111(b)(2)(D)(i)(I) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), which stipulates that a State may not assess more than 1.0 percent of all students in the grades assessed using an alternate assessment aligned with alternate academic achievement standards (AA-AAAS). ODE requested this waiver because, based on State data for the 2021-2022 school year, ODE has concluded that it will need to assess more than 1.0 percent of students using an AA-AAAS in reading/language arts (R/LA), mathematics, and science in the 2022-2023 school year.

After reviewing ODE's waiver request, I am granting, pursuant to my authority under section 8401(b) of the ESEA, for school year 2022-2023, a one-year extension of the State's waiver of section 1111(b)(2)(D)(i)(I) of the ESEA so that the State may assess more than 1.0 percent of the total number of students in the State who are assessed in R/LA, mathematics, and science using an AA-AAAS.

As part of this waiver, ODE assured that it:

- Will continue to meet all other requirements of section 1111 of the ESEA and implement regulations with respect to all State-determined academic standards and assessments, including reporting student achievement and school performance, disaggregated by subgroups, to parents and the public.
- Had assessed in 2021-2022 at least 95 percent of all students and 95 percent of students with disabilities who are enrolled in grades for which an assessment is required.
- Will require that a local educational agency (LEA) submit information justifying the need of the LEA to assess more than 1.0 percent of its assessed students in any such subject with an AA-AAAS.
- Will provide appropriate oversight of an LEA that is required to submit such information to the State.
- Will verify that each LEA that is required to submit such information to the State is following all State guidelines in 34 CFR § 200.6(d)—excluding (d)(6)—and will address any subgroup disproportionality in the percentage of students taking an AA-AAAS.

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

The Department of Education's mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.

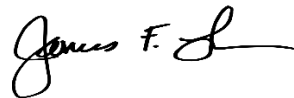
- Will implement, consistent with the plan submitted in ODE’s waiver request, system improvements and will monitor future administrations of the AA-AAAS to avoid exceeding the 1.0 percent cap.

As a reminder, 34 CFR § 200.6(c)(3)(iv) requires a State to make publicly available the information submitted by an LEA justifying the need to assess more than 1.0 percent of its students on the AA-AAAS, provided such information does not reveal personally identifiable information about a student. I also encourage you to make available your State’s plan and timeline, and your progress to date, in reducing the percentage of students taking the AA-AAAS.

Given the workplan submitted by ODE, I expect to continue to see positive results in the 2022-2023 school year. I note that Ohio’s rate of AA-AAAS participation has significantly declined and wish to thank ODE for its efforts in achieving this progress. It appears that Ohio’s AA-AAAS participation rate is now at or slightly below 1.0%. Future requests for an extension of this waiver must include both continued progress implementing your plan and in maintaining the current percentages of students taking the AA-AAAS in all tested subjects.

I appreciate the work you are doing to improve your schools and provide a high-quality education for your students. If you have any questions, please contact my staff at ESEA.Assessment@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: Jo Hanna Ward, Director, Office for Exceptional Children