



**STATE OF CONNECTICUT**  
**STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**



**TO:** Superintendents of Schools  
Connecticut Students, Parents, Education Stakeholders, and Community Organizations

**FROM:** Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell, Interim Commissioner of Education *DW*

**DATE:** March 6, 2015

**SUBJECT:** ESEA Flexibility Renewal and Stakeholder Feedback

In 2012, the U.S. Department of Education (USED) granted the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) a three-year flexibility request from certain requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), also known as the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. The waiver provided Connecticut educators with the ability to advance state and local efforts for school improvement and utilize federal resources to support learning for all students. As part the flexibility request, CSDE developed a state plan designed to ensure that all students are prepared to succeed in college and careers, to close achievement gaps through proven and impactful interventions in low performing schools and districts, and to support educators in reaching high professional standards and receiving meaningful development opportunities in order to ensure all students have access to effective instruction. The USED has invited the state to renew our request for an additional three years in order to sustain our progress towards these goals.

The flexibility renewal submission continues many of the major initiatives outlined in Connecticut's approved plan and seeks to strengthen and evolve others. Many of the proposed modifications have been presented and discussed at various stages with some educational stakeholders. At this time, the CSDE is soliciting public comment from all interested parties and persons regarding the proposed ESEA flexibility request. The Department invites you to provide feedback on the proposed renewal request which addresses the USED's three prescribed principles. Please find documents for your review posted on the CSDE website at <http://www.ct.gov/sde/commentsESEA>, which includes:

- An overview of Connecticut's progress made to date in the implementation of the existing, approved ESEA flexibility request;
- A listing of the USED's required components that must be addressed in the ESEA flexibility waiver renewal application; and
- An overview of the key initiatives to be continued or modified that address the required components in the renewal application.

Please submit all comments to: [ESEAFlexRequest.SDE@ct.gov](mailto:ESEAFlexRequest.SDE@ct.gov), by March 20, 2015. This will allow time to synthesize and consider the comments prior to the renewal submission.

DW:gp

cc: Charlene Russell-Tucker, Chief Operating Officer, CSDE  
Sarah Barzee, Chief Talent Officer, CSDE  
Ellen Cohn, Interim Chief Academic Officer, CSDE  
Ajit Gopalakrishnan, Interim Chief Performance Officer, CSDE  
Glen J. Peterson, Director, Sheff Office & RSCO, CSDE