



## UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

JAN 23 2015

The Honorable Michael P. Flanagan  
Superintendent of Public Instruction  
Michigan Department of Education  
PO Box 30008  
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Superintendent Flanagan:

I am writing regarding the Michigan Department of Education's (MDE) decision to change how it will meet the ESEA flexibility requirement to develop and administer annual, Statewide, aligned high-quality assessments that measure student growth.

In order to meet the requirements of ESEA flexibility, a State educational agency (SEA) must develop and administer no later than the 2014–2015 school year annual, Statewide, high-quality assessments aligned with college- and career-ready standards, and corresponding academic achievement standards, in reading/language arts and mathematics in grades 3 through 8 and at least once in high school. Among other characteristics, a high-quality assessment must be valid, reliable, and fair for its intended purposes, produce student achievement data and student growth data that can be used to determine whether an individual student is college and career ready or on track to being college and career ready, and provide an accurate measure of student growth over a full academic year or course.

Because MDE has decided to change how it will meet the ESEA flexibility requirement to develop and administer annual, Statewide, aligned high-quality assessments that measure growth, it must provide a description and, as needed, supporting evidence of the steps that it took to determine that its current assessments are high-quality assessments, consistent with the definition in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility* (available at: <http://www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility/documents/esea-flexibility-acc.doc>), including, in particular, a description of the steps that MDE took to obtain an independent evaluation of alignment of the assessments with the State's college- and career-ready standards and any feedback the State may have received from its technical advisory committee indicating that the assessments meet the high-quality assessment criteria. Please note that the submission of this information does not constitute submission for the required peer review. Additional information is forthcoming about the ED's process to review and approve State assessment systems.

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.*

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I request that MDE submit this information no later than 30 calendar days from the date of this letter. MDE must subsequently incorporate this information into the redlined version of its currently approved request that it submits for ESEA flexibility renewal, which is due by March 31, 2015. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Todd Stephenson at (202) 205-1645.

Thank you for your commitment and continued focus on enhancing education for all of Michigan's students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Deborah S. Delisle". The signature is written in a cursive style with a vertical line through the middle of the "D".

Deborah S. Delisle  
Assistant Secretary

cc: Ms. Venessa Keesler