



STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

MOLLY M. SPEARMAN
STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION

February 1, 2021

The Honorable Phil Rosenfelt
Acting Secretary of Education
Lyndon Baines Johnson Building
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

Re: Addendum to South Carolina's ESSA State Plan

Dear Mr. Rosenfelt:

Enclosed please find South Carolina's request for an addendum to its ESSA State Plan pursuant to the template instructions provided by the U.S. Department of Education. The agency sent this addendum to Governor Henry McMaster for review, and responded to questions and comments from his staff. In addition, the agency posted requests for public comments on the addendum, asking whether the person supported seeking it, and giving opportunity for comments. We received responses as follows:

Row Labels	Grand	
	No	Yes
District Administrator		1
Parent	7	65
School Administrator		29
Student		4
Taxpayer	2	13
Teacher	3	170
Grand Total	12	282

Most of those responding negatively objected to having any assessment in spring 2021 (which is the subject of a pending waiver request).

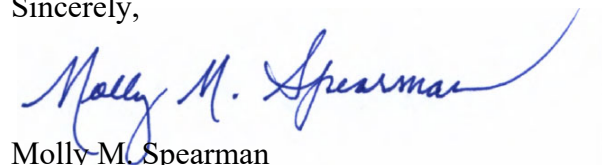
The Hon. Phil Rosenfelt

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If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me, or Mr. John Payne,
JRPayne@ed.sc.gov.

Sincerely,



Molly M. Spearman
State Superintendent of Education

MMS/eac

Enclosure

cc: Mr. John Payne

**Addendum to the ESEA Consolidated State Plan due
to the COVID-19 National Emergency**
under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of
1965, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act

South Carolina



U.S. Department of Education
Issued: January 2021

OMB Number: 1810-0576
Expiration Date: October 31, 2023

Paperwork Burden Statement According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1810-0576. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 249 hours per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this collection, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC 20202-4537. If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this collection, write directly to: Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., S.W., Washington, DC 20202-3118.

Addendum to the ESEA Consolidated State Plan

Introduction

To address the extraordinary circumstances of extended and widespread closures of schools due to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), on March 20, 2020, the U.S. Department of Education (Department) invited, pursuant to section 8401(b) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), each State educational agency (SEA) to request a waiver, for the 2019-2020 school year, of assessment, accountability and school identification, and certain related reporting requirements. The Department approved waivers for 53 SEAs (including the 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the Bureau of Indian Education) for the following assessment, accountability and school identification, and reporting requirements for the 2019-2020 school year to address the COVID-19 National Emergency (“COVID-19 waivers”):

- Assessment requirements in section 1111(b)(2) for the 2019-2020 school year.
- Accountability and school identification requirements in sections 1111(c)(4) and 1111(d)(2)(C)-(D) that are based on data from the 2019-2020 school year.
- Report card provisions related to assessments and accountability in section 1111(h) based on data from the 2019-2020 school year. These include:
 - Section 1111(h)(1)(C)(i) (accountability system description).
 - Section 1111(h)(1)(C)(ii) (assessment results).
 - Section 1111(h)(1)(C)(iii)(I) (other academic indicator results).
 - Section 1111(h)(1)(C)(iv) (English language proficiency results).
 - Section 1111(h)(1)(C)(v) (school quality or student success indicator results).
 - Section 1111(h)(1)(C)(vi) (progress toward meeting long-term goals and measurements of interim progress).
 - Section 1111(h)(1)(C)(vii) (percentage of students assessed and not assessed).
 - Section 1111(h)(1)(C)(xi) (number and percentage of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities taking an alternate assessment).
 - Section 1111(h)(2)(C) with respect to all waived requirements in section 1111(h)(1)(C) as well as 1111(h)(2)(C)(i)-(ii) (information showing how students in a local educational agency (LEA) and each school, respectively, achieved on the academic assessments compared to students in the State and LEA).

The waiving of these requirements, as well as the continued implications of COVID-19, may impact how each SEA will implement its ESEA consolidated State plan in the 2020-2021 school year (i.e., for accountability determinations in fall 2021 based on data from the 2020-2021 school year). Thus, the Department has created a streamlined process, this COVID-19 State Plan Addendum, for an SEA to amend its ESEA consolidated State plan to account for one-year changes (e.g., changes to how the SEA will hold schools accountable based on data from the 2020-2021 school year) and two specific long-term changes: (1) shifting forward timelines by one year for identifying schools and (2) shifting forward timelines by one year for meeting measurements of interim progress (MIPs) and long-term goals due to COVID-19. All other amendment requests must be made using the regular State plan amendment process outlined in the letter sent to SEAs on October 24, 2019 (see <https://oese.ed.gov/files/2019/10/csso-letter.pdf>).

While an amendment can be submitted at any time, the Department encourages States to submit amendment requests, either using the regular State plan amendment process or the COVID-19 State Plan Addendum process, by **February 1, 2021**, in order for the Department to determine whether the requested

amendments comply with all applicable statutory and regulatory requirements in time for an SEA to implement amendments to its accountability system for determinations in fall 2021 based on data from the 2020-2021 school year (e.g., identification of schools for comprehensive, targeted, or additional targeted support and improvement for the 2021-2022 school year).

The Department has also issued a “Frequently Asked Questions: Impact of COVID-19 on Accountability Systems Required under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA)” document that includes information on the general amendment process, accountability systems, school identification, and report card requirements. The document is available at <https://oese.ed.gov/offices/office-of-formula-grants/school-support-and-accountability/essa-consolidated-state-plans/>.

For any questions or additional information, please contact the U.S. Department of Education at oese.title-i-a@ed.gov.

Submitting Amendments to the ESEA Consolidated State Plan

COVID-19 State Plan Addendum Process

If an SEA proposes to amend its ESEA consolidated State plan due to COVID-19 for the 2020-2021 school year only (e.g., for accountability determinations in the fall of 2021 based on data from the 2020-2021 school year) using the streamlined COVID-19 State Plan Addendum process, it must submit the following:

1. A COVID-19 State Plan Addendum, using this template, to the approved ESEA consolidated State plan that reflects all proposed changes due to COVID-19;
2. The signature of the chief State school officer or authorized representative; and
3. A description of how the State provided the public a reasonable opportunity to comment on the plan.

Prior to submitting an amendment to the Department, the SEA must consult with the Governor, afford a reasonable opportunity for public comment, and consider such comments consistent with the consolidated assurances the State submitted in June 2017 under ESEA section 8304.

In order to ensure transparency, the Department will post each approved addendum along with the currently approved version of the ESEA consolidated State plan at <https://oese.ed.gov/offices/office-of-formula-grants/school-support-and-accountability/essa-consolidated-state-plans/>.


If the SEA chooses to submit a COVID-19 State Plan Addendum to propose the two specific longer-term changes that can be proposed through the addendum process (i.e., shifting forward timelines for identifying schools or meeting MIPS and/or long-term goals), the SEA must submit the items listed above and also submit, at a later date, an updated State plan that incorporates those changes.

Redlined ESEA Consolidated State Plan Process

If an SEA proposes to amend its ESEA consolidated State plan to make changes that are not included in this template, it must follow the process the Department has used for the past two years. As indicated in a letter sent to SEAs on October 24, 2019 (see <https://oese.ed.gov/files/2019/10/csso-letter.pdf>), prior to submitting an amendment to the Department, the SEA must consult with the Governor, afford a reasonable opportunity for public comment, and consider such comments consistent with the consolidated assurances the State submitted in June 2017 under ESEA section 8304. An SEA submitting an amendment under the regular process must submit to the Department the following:

1. A redlined version of the approved ESEA consolidated State plan that reflects all proposed changes;
2. A cover letter describing the proposed changes;
3. The signature of the chief State school officer or authorized representative; and
4. A description of how the State provided the public a reasonable opportunity to comment on the plan.

Cover Page

Authorized SEA Representative (Printed Name) Molly M. Spearman State Superintendent of Education	
Signature of Authorized SEA Representative 	Date: 28 January 2021

Title I, Part A: Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Educational Agencies (LEAs)

Statewide Accountability System and School Support and Improvement Activities (ESEA section 1111(c) and (d)) (corresponds with A.4 in the revised State plan template):

- a. ☐ **Establishment of Long-Term Goals.** (ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(A)) (corresponds with A.4.iii in the revised State plan template) Due to the COVID-19 waivers, the State is revising its long-term goal(s) and measurement(s) of interim progress by shifting the timeline forward by one year for:
- (1) ☐ **Academic Achievement.** If a State is proposing to shift the timeline forward by a year, check the box.
 - (2) ☐ **Graduation Rate.** If a State is proposing to shift the timeline forward by a year, check the box.
 - (3) ☐ **Progress in Achieving English Language Proficiency (ELP).** If a State is proposing to shift the timeline forward by a year, check the box.
- b. ☒ **Indicators.** (ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(B)) (corresponds with A.4.iv in the revised State plan template) Due to COVID-19, the State is revising one or more of its indicators for the 2020-2021 school year to be used in accountability determinations in fall 2021. These revisions are limited to the 2020-2021 school year.

1. ☒ **Academic Achievement Indicator.** Describe the Academic Achievement indicator for the 2020-2021 school year.

If an assessment waiver is not granted (letter to Secretary DeVos dated November 20, 2020), South Carolina will follow the calculation methodology described in its ESSA State Plan (amendment approved January 2021), except as follows: for school year 2020-21, South Carolina proposes to calculate points for meaningful differentiation of schools; however, South Carolina will suspend for one year the assignment of state ratings overall and to each indicator (Excellent, Good, Average, Below Average, and Unsatisfactory).

2. ☒ **Indicator for Public Elementary and Secondary Schools that are Not High Schools (Other Academic Indicator).** Describe the Other Academic indicator for the 2020-2021 school year.

South Carolina will follow the growth measure calculation methodology described in its amended ESSA State Plan (approved January 2021); however, it will use the results of the 2018-19 and the 2020-21 assessments (because there were no 2019-20 assessments, the state cannot use the “prior year” as described in the plan). In addition, the state will suspend the assignment of state ratings, overall and for this indicator (Excellent, Good, Average, Below Average, and Unsatisfactory).

The only exception will be that no growth calculation will be made based upon students in fourth grade because there will be no assessment results for the prior year or for 2018-19. The existing business rules will be used in those situations.

3. ☒ Graduation Rate. Describe the Graduation Rate indicator for the 2020-2021 school year.

South Carolina will use the methodology described in its approved, amended ESSA State Plan, but will suspend for the 2020-21 year the state ratings, overall and for this indicator.

4. ☒ Progress in Achieving English Language Proficiency (ELP) Indicator. Describe the Progress in Achieving ELP indicator for the 2020-2021 school year.

South Carolina will use the methodology described in its approved, amended ESSA State Plan, but will suspend for the 2020-21 year the state ratings, overall and for this indicator.

5. ☒ School Quality or Student Success Indicator(s). Describe each School Quality or Student Success Indicator for the 2020-2021 school year.

One of South Carolina's SQSS measures included an annual survey of student engagement for students in grades 3 through 12. The contract for that survey has ended. The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) with the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) has engaged in a statutorily-required cyclical review of the accountability system with broad stakeholder support and intends to use that input to determine what, if anything, should replace this measure. Because of the impact of COVID-19 and the cyclical review, the SCDE is unable to administer the survey during the 2020-21 school year. The approved plan, however, still meets the statutory requirements of SQSS measures in the areas of science summative assessments (elementary and middle level) and College and Career Readiness and science and U.S. History summative assessments for the high school level. Therefore, South Carolina will not include the survey measure in its SQSS indicator in 2020-21, will not adjust points for that measure, and will suspend for one year the assignment of the following state ratings to the SQSS measure: Excellent, Good, Average, Below Average, and Unsatisfactory.

- c. ☒ Annual Meaningful Differentiation. (*ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(C)*) (*corresponds with A.4.v in the revised State plan template*) Due to COVID-19, the State is revising its system of Annual Meaningful Differentiation in fall 2021 based on data from the 2020-2021 school year:

1. ☒ State's System of Annual Meaningful Differentiation. Describe the State's system of annual meaningful differentiation of all public schools in the State for accountability determinations in the fall 2021 based on data from the 2020-2021 school year.

For 2020-21 South Carolina will use its weighted point index to determine the annual meaningful differentiation of schools; except as stated in this addendum related to ratings labels, how growth will be calculated, and the reduced points for the SQSS indicator.

2. ☒ Weighting of Indicators. Describe the weighting of each indicator in the State's system of annual meaningful differentiation in fall 2021 based on data from 2020-2021 school year.

Weighting of indicators will be as described in its approved ESSA State Plan, except for reduction of points for the SQSS indicator due to removal of the engagement survey portion of that indicator.

3. ☐ Different Methodology. If the State is using a different methodology or methodologies for annual meaningful differentiation for schools for which an accountability determination otherwise cannot be made (e.g., P-2 schools), describe the methodology or methodologies in fall 2021 based on data from 2020-2021 school year.

If a State is proposing revisions due to the COVID-19 waivers, check the box and describe the revisions here.

- d. ☒ Identification of Schools. (ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(D)) (corresponds with A.4.vi in the revised State plan template) Due to COVID-19, the State is revising its timeline or methodologies for identifying schools using data from the 2020-2021 school year:

1. ☒ Timeline. A State may, but is not required to, shift forward by **one-year** school identifications. Complete the below table to indicate each school identification category (i.e., comprehensive support and improvement (CSI) and additional targeted support and improvement (ATSI)) for which the State will shift identification forward for one year. Although CSI schools must be identified at least once every three years, due to the COVID-19 waivers, a State may choose not to count the 2019-2020 school year. Only complete the rows for the categories of identified schools for which the State chooses to shift the timeline forward.

A. Type of Identification	As Defined in Approved State Plan		
	B. Most Recent Year of Identification (e.g., identified in 2018-2019 based on data from the 2017-2018 school year)	C. Next Year of Identification as described in the current ESEA consolidated State plan	D. Revised Next Year of Identification (i.e., one year forward from column C)
<i>Example: Comprehensive support and improvement</i>	<i>2018-2019 school year (based on data from the 2017-2018 school year)</i>	<i>2020-2021 school year (based on data from the 2019-2020 school year)</i>	<i>2021-2022 school year (based on data from the 2020-2021 school year)</i>
<i>Comprehensive support and improvement: Low performing ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(D)(i)(I)</i>	<i>2018-19 school year (based upon data from 2017-18)</i>	<i>2020-21 school year (based upon data from 2019-20)</i>	<i>2022-23 school year (all 2022) (based upon data from 2021-22)</i>
<i>Comprehensive support and improvement: Low graduation rate ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(D)(i)(II)</i>	<i>2018-19 school year (based upon data from 2017-18)</i>	<i>2020-21 school year (based upon data from 2019-20)</i>	<i>2022-23 school year (fall 2022) (based upon data from 2021-22)</i>
<i>Comprehensive support and improvement: Not Exiting Additional targeted support and improvement status ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(D)(i)(III)</i>	<i>None</i>	<i>2023</i>	<i>2023</i>
<i>Additional targeted support and improvement</i>	<i>2018-19 school year</i>	<i>2019-20</i>	<i>2022-23 school year (Fall 2022)</i>

ESEA section 1111(d)(2)(C)			(based upon data from 2021-22)
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* Targeted support and improvement: Consistently underperforming subgroups (TSI) schools must be identified annually. Therefore, absent a waiver, a State must identify TSI schools in the fall of 2021 (i.e., the 2021-2022 school year based on data from the 2020-2021 school year).

2. ☒ Methodologies. The State is revising its methodology or methodologies for identifying schools in fall 2021 based on data from the 2020-2021 school year for the following types of school identification:

- A. ☒ Comprehensive Support and Improvement Schools: Low Performing. Describe the State's methodology for identifying not less than the lowest-performing five percent of all schools receiving Title I, Part A funds in the State for comprehensive support and improvement in fall 2021 based on data from the 2020-2021 school year.

South Carolina proposes an extension on identification until the 2022-23 year (fall 2022).

- B. ☐ Comprehensive Support and Improvement Schools: Low Graduation Rate. Describe the State's methodology for identifying all public high schools in the State failing to graduate one-third or more of their students for comprehensive support and improvement in fall 2021.

If a State is proposing revisions due to COVID-19, check the box and describe the revisions here.

- C. ☐ Comprehensive Support and Improvement Schools: Not Exiting Additional Targeted Support and Improvement Status. Describe the methodology by which the State identifies public schools in the State receiving Title I, Part A funds that have received additional targeted support under ESEA section 1111(d)(2)(C) (based on identification as a school in which any subgroup of students, on its own, would lead to identification under ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(D)(i)(I) using the State's methodology under ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(D)) and that have not satisfied the statewide exit criteria for such schools within a State-determined number of years for school identifications in fall 2021 based on data from the 2020-2021 school year.

If a State is proposing revisions due to COVID-19, check the box and describe the revisions here.

- D. ☐ Targeted Support and Improvement Schools: Consistently Underperforming Subgroup(s). Describe the State's methodology for annually identifying any school with one or more "consistently underperforming" subgroups of students, based on all indicators in the statewide system of annual meaningful differentiation, including if the State is revising the definition the State uses to determine consistent underperformance for school identifications in fall 2021 based on data from at least the 2020-2021 school year.

If a State is proposing revisions due to COVID-19, check the box and describe the revisions here.

- E. ☒ Targeted Support and Improvement Schools: Additional Targeted Support and Improvement. Describe the State's methodology for identifying schools in which any

subgroup of students, on its own, would lead to identification under ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(D)(i)(I) using the State's methodology under ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(D) (i.e., schools with subgroups performing as poorly as low-performing schools identified for comprehensive support and improvement) for school identifications in fall 2021 based on data from the 2020-2021 school year.

South Carolina proposes an extension to the 2022-23 year (fall 2022).

- e. ☐ Continued Support for School and LEA Improvement (ESEA section 1111(d)(3)(A))
(corresponds with A.4.viii in the revised State plan template)
1. ☐ Exit Criteria for Comprehensive Support and Improvement Schools. Due to COVID-19, the State is revising its statewide exit criteria for schools identified for comprehensive support and improvement using either or both of the options below.
- A. ☐ The State does not count the 2019-2020 school year toward the number of years in which a school must meet the criteria in order to exit.
- B. ☐ The State is revising the statewide exit criteria only for schools identified for comprehensive support and improvement that would be eligible to exit status in fall 2021 based on data from the 2020-2021 school year.

If a State is proposing revisions due to COVID-19, check the box and describe the revisions here.

2. ☐ Exit Criteria for Schools Receiving Additional Targeted Support. Due to COVID-19, the State is revising the statewide exit criteria for schools receiving additional targeted support under ESEA section 1111(d)(2)(C) using either or both of the two options below:
- A. ☐ The State does not count the 2019-2020 school year toward the number of years in which a school must meet the criteria in order to exit.
- B. ☐ The State is revising the statewide exit criteria only for schools receiving additional targeted support under ESEA section 1111(d)(2)(C) that would be eligible to exit status in fall 2021 based on data from the 2020-2021 school year.

If a State is proposing revisions due to COVID-19, check the box and describe the revisions here.