



STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

MOLLY M. SPEARMAN
STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION

Memorandum

TO: District Superintendents

FROM: Roy Stehle, Director
Office of Federal and State Accountability

DATE: September 10, 2015

RE: Approved ESEA Flexibility Waiver

The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) is in the process of submitting to the U.S. Department of Education (USED) an amendment to our approved waiver renewal request under Section 1111(b)(3) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA). The purpose of the amendment is to change the high school assessment.

Specifically, the amendment would make English 1 and Algebra 1 End Of Course tests the required high school assessment for accountability.

The leadership of SCDE believes that English 1 and Algebra 1 are appropriate as high school assessment tools, in part, because South Carolina has already aligned them to the new state standards. Additionally, there are direct ties between these assessments and college readiness based on college entrance tests. Data already exists for many years regarding these assessments and can be used to make meaningful comparisons and benchmarks for South Carolina. Furthermore, the SCDE has completed a study between English 1 and Algebra 1 to establish predictive college- and career-readiness cut scores on these assessments.

The USED requires that the SCDE receive comments regarding the proposed ESEA waiver amendment. If you have questions regarding this request, please contact SCDE staff member Roy Stehle at (803) 734-8118, rstehle@ed.sc.gov. If you wish to comment on the SCDE proposed amendment request, please send your comments by Friday, September 18, via email to the ESEA mailbox at ESEAWaiver@ed.sc.gov.