

**ESEA FLEXIBILITY
Amendment Submission Template**

Dear Assistant Secretary:

I am writing on behalf of the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) to request approval to amend the State’s approved ESEA flexibility request. The relevant information, outlined in the *ESEA Flexibility Amendment Submission Process* document, is provided in the table below.

Flexibility Element(s) Affected by the Amendment	Brief Description of Element as Originally Approved	Brief Description of Requested Amendment	Rationale	Process for Consulting with Stakeholders, Summary of Comments, and Changes Made as a Result
<p><u>Principle 2</u> 2.B. Set Ambitious but Achievable Annual Measurable Objectives</p>	<p>Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) for elementary and middle school (grades 3 through 8) in English Language Arts (ELA) and Math increase incrementally from 2012–13 to 2013–14 as presented in the Table of Annual</p>	<p>Amend the table to freeze the elementary and middle school ELA and Math AMOs for grades 3 through 8 at the 2012–13 levels. A rationale for this freeze is included on page 75.</p>	<p>The state is administering a bridge assessment in 2013–14 in ELA and Math, for grades 3 through 8. The original AMOs were set using our state assessment, PASS (Palmetto Assessment of State Standards). The test items on the bridge assessment will be a combination of items from our previous test of state standards (PASS) and the new standards. This bridge assessment has never been administered and it will give us an unknown result; hence, it is</p>	<p>The SCDE asked a stakeholder group of school district instructional leaders to comment on South Carolina’s proposed ESEA flexibility extension request when they met for the Quarterly School District Instructional Leaders meeting on January 9, 2014. This group represents the majority of school districts in the state. A majority of those present provided input to the SCDE to freeze all AMOs for 2013–14 due to uncertainty surrounding the results of the bridge (assessment) year of state testing.</p>

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	Measurable Objectives for South Carolina (on page 74).		fair to schools and districts to raise the AMOs in ELA and Math for this testing period.	
<p><u>Principle 3</u> 3.A Develop and Adopt Guidelines for Local Teacher and Principal Evaluation and Support Systems, and 3.B Ensure LEAs Implement Teacher and Principal Evaluation and Support Systems</p>	Statewide implementation of educator evaluation system in 2014–15 for all teachers (in both tested and non-tested grades and subjects)	<p>Delay implementation of student growth measure for teachers in non-tested grades and subjects until the 2015–16 school year. Value-added calculations will be performed for teachers in relevant tested grades and subjects in 2014–15.</p> <p>For teachers in non-tested grades and subjects, student growth measures will be calculated</p>	Development of meaningful, measurable student learning objectives (SLOs) requires a level of data literacy that is not currently a component of teacher training programs in South Carolina. Trainings conducted in the pilot schools allowed us to observe participants and gather feedback. We conclude from clear evidence that a single or even several trainings are going to be insufficient. Such professional development will need to be sustained over time. Further, experiences reported by districts that have been working on developing common formative	<p>Trainings were conducted in the pilot schools in Fall 2013 and Winter 2014 with the intention of developing and implementing SLOs in the pilot schools.</p> <p>This requested change originates from stakeholder feedback and is based on direct interaction with a diversity of stakeholders both inside and outside of the educator evaluation pilot. External stakeholders included administrators, teachers, parents, and members of educator advocacy groups from across the state, who were consulted via face-to-face stakeholder meetings, online surveys, and an ESEA feedback portal on the SCDE website. The SCDE also contracted an external evaluation team at the University of South Carolina to</p>

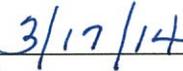
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		using Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) in 2015–16.	assessments and tracking progress for the last three years (like Lexington 2 School District) suggests that this is often a multi-year process.	<p>assist in evaluating pilot participants' perceptions of and experiences with the pilot evaluation system. Online surveys and focus groups were used to gather participant feedback. Overall, participants were pleased with the shift from achievement to growth; however, they desired additional time and training in preparation for the new measures of teacher performance and student growth. Pilot participants data was first used for internal discussion. It will be presented to the State Board of Education on March 12, 2014, for use in policy decisions.</p> <p>The feedback is summarized as follows: due to limited capacity and funding, the SCDE should delay statewide implementation to better prepare educators to develop, monitor, and evaluate student growth through the use of SLOs.</p>

Attached to this letter is a redlined version of the pages from our approved ESEA flexibility request that would be impacted with strikeouts and additions to demonstrate how the request would change with approval of the proposed amendments. Please contact Karla McLawhorn Hawkins, SCDE Deputy General Counsel, at khawkins@ed.sc.gov or by phone at 803-734-7078 if you have any questions regarding these proposed amendments.

The SCDE acknowledges that the U.S. Department of Education may request supplementary information to inform consideration of this request. The SCDE acknowledges that the U.S. Department of Education may request supplementary information to inform consideration of this request.



Chief State School Officer



Date