



State of New Jersey
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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JON S. CORZINE
Governor

LUCILLE E. DAVY
Commissioner

May 2, 2008

Kerri L. Briggs, Ph.D.
Assistant Secretary
Office of Elementary and Secondary Education
United States Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Dr. Briggs:

I am pleased to submit New Jersey's Differentiated Accountability Pilot Proposal. As New Jersey continues to implement the accountability provisions of the *No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)*, it seeks to increase the effectiveness of its strategies to help schools most in need of assistance while also providing the greatest opportunity for students to participate in supplemental education programs that will advance their educational success.

New Jersey's plan will continue to identify schools that need to improve student outcomes based on total and subgroup populations as required under *NCLB*. Yet, we propose to differentiate our response to those schools in a way that allows us to effectively and efficiently allocate the department's professional resources as well as the resources of our stakeholders and partners. While the model allows us to acknowledge the progress of schools toward higher levels of student achievement and respect improvement activities that are taking hold and beginning to demonstrate success, it also allows us to identify those schools that are persistently low-performing.

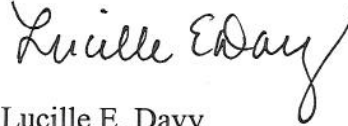
New Jersey assures that there are no significant *NCLB* or *IDEA* monitoring findings. It has a fully approved Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT) plan which can be found at <http://www.nj.gov/education/data/hqt/06/plan.pdf>. New Jersey also provides timely information to parents regarding the AYP status of their schools. In August, districts are notified by the department of the status of their schools. In response, districts are required to notify parents of the status of the schools and the availability of school choice and Supplemental Educational Services. The department also posts AYP

information at <http://www.nj.gov/education/title1/accountability/ayp/0708/>. New Jersey currently has 29.6 percent of its Title I schools in Needs Improvement status.

New Jersey is working with USED representatives to gain final approval of its statewide assessment system, currently in "Approval Pending" status. It is our expectation that once all steps are completed in August 2008, the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) will receive full peer approval for assessments in reading and mathematics. A separate USED peer review for New Jersey's science standards and assessments was initiated in April 2008 and we expect to receive full approval. Once these approvals are received, New Jersey will meet all eligibility requirements for the differentiated pilot.

I look forward to your review. Should you have questions about the proposal, please contact Willa Spicer, deputy commissioner, at (609) 984-5069 or via email at willa.spicer@doe.state.nj.us.

Sincerely,



Lucille E. Davy
Commissioner

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Enclosure

c: Members, State Board of Education
Willa Spicer
Senior Staff