



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

The Honorable Mark McQuillan
Commissioner of Education
Connecticut State Department of Education
165 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

JAN 15 2009

Dear Commissioner McQuillan:

I am pleased to approve Connecticut's standards and assessment system under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). I congratulate you on meeting this important NCLB requirement; an assessment system that produces valid and reliable results is fundamental to a state's accountability system.

My decision is based on input from peer reviewers external to the U.S. Department of Education (Department) and Department staff who reviewed and carefully considered the evidence submitted by Connecticut. I have concluded that the evidence demonstrates that Connecticut's standards and assessment system satisfies the ESEA requirements. Specifically, Connecticut's system includes academic content and student academic achievement standards in reading/language arts, mathematics, and science; alternate academic achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities in those subjects; assessments in each of grades 3 through 8 and grade 10 in reading/language arts, and mathematics; assessments in science in each of the three required grade spans; and alternate assessments for each subject.

Accordingly, Connecticut's system warrants *Full Approval*. This status means that Connecticut's standards and assessment system meets all statutory and regulatory requirements under Title I of the ESEA for standards and assessments of reading/language arts, mathematics, and science.

Please be aware that approval of Connecticut's standards and assessment system under the ESEA is not a determination that the system complies with Federal civil rights requirements, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and requirements under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Please remember that, if Connecticut makes significant changes to its standards and assessment system, the state must submit information about those changes to the Department for review and approval.

We have found it a pleasure working with your staff on this review. Please accept my congratulations on your state's approved standards and assessment system under the ESEA. I wish you well in your continued efforts to improve student achievement in Connecticut.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K. Briggs".

Kerri L. Briggs, Ph.D.

cc: Governor M. Jodi Rell
Barbara Beaudin

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