



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

NOV 25 2008

The Honorable Robert Scott  
Commissioner  
Texas Education Agency  
1701 North Congress  
Austin, Texas 78701

Dear Commissioner Scott:

Thank you for submitting a growth-based accountability proposal to the U.S. Department of Education (Department). Growth models show promise as fair, reliable, and innovative methods to measure student improvement and to hold schools accountable for academic achievement, and the Department welcomes thoughtful proposals from all states.

The Department has reviewed Texas' growth model proposal and has decided to forward it for peer review. However, as indicated in the Secretary's letter of August 2008, one of the core principles is that the state's assessment system must be *Fully Approved* or *Fully Approved with Recommendations* before it can incorporate a growth model. As stated in my letter from May 7, 2008, the Texas assessment system is currently *Approval Pending* and is currently in a Memorandum of Agreement regarding the steps to have a fully compliant assessment system. Should the Secretary decide that the Texas growth model should be approved, Texas will be required to administer a fully compliant assessment system before it could implement its growth model.

In addition, I want to provide you with additional information about how we will handle the next steps in the review and approval process. The peers will independently review each state's proposal. Simultaneously, we will post the submissions on our website at <http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/growthmodel/index.html>.

This step will help ensure the process is open and transparent to all those concerned. As the peers review each proposal, they may seek clarifications. Consequently, to the extent necessary, we may facilitate a conference call between your staff and the peer review team prior to or during the peer review.

The peer reviewers will meet in Washington, DC on December 2-3 to discuss each proposal. Following their review, the peers will make recommendations to the Secretary. The Department expects to make final decisions by the end of the year.

Again, I appreciate your work on the proposal and your continued efforts to ensure quality education for all children.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kerri L. Briggs".

Kerri L. Briggs, Ph.D.

cc: Governor Rick Perry  
Criss Cloudt  
Shannon Housson

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