



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION  
ACADEMIC IMPROVEMENT AND TEACHER QUALITY PROGRAMS

November 14, 2008

Marsha Wansley  
Mississippi Dept. of Education  
P.O. Box 771  
Jackson, MS 39205-0771

Dear Ms. Wansley:

On August 29, 2008, the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) submitted a response to the monitoring report that resulted from a program review conducted by the Academic Improvement and Teacher Quality Programs office of the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Elementary and Secondary Education. The program office team reviewed your State's progress in meeting the highly qualified teacher provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001, and your State's administration of the ESEA Title II, Part A Improving Teacher Quality State Grants program. Thank you for sending this response to the monitoring report.

This response, in combination with additional information submitted on September 23<sup>rd</sup>, October 27<sup>th</sup>, November 7<sup>th</sup> and November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2008, satisfactorily addresses the findings identified in the monitoring report. Specifically, the MDE has submitted a process and timeline to establish appropriate highly qualified teacher requirements for elementary teachers not new to the profession. In addition, the State has provided a written assurance and policy documentation that new and veteran special education teachers are demonstrating subject competence in a manner appropriate to the grade level at which their students are assessed. The state has also established procedures to ensure that teachers with a teaching license or certificate from another state have demonstrated subject matter competency prior to being counted as highly qualified. Further, MDE established a plan and timeline to ensure that participants who complete Mississippi's Alternative Path to Quality Teachers (MAPQT) program must take and pass the appropriate Praxis test prior to being deemed highly qualified. The Department will follow up with MDE to ensure that progress is being made on these issues and that all agreed upon deadlines are met.

We commend your excellent work in responding to the concerns raised by the monitoring report. We look forward to continuing to work with you and your staff to ensure that all teachers meet the highly qualified requirements and to help improve the delivery of ESEA Title II, Part A services in Mississippi.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Stacey Spivey-Blackford".

Stacey Spivey-Blackford  
Program Officer

cc: Susan Lee

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