IMPROVEMENTS MADE BY INDIANA TO ITS ESEA FLEXIBILITY REQUEST

Based on feedback from peer reviewers and U.S. Department of Education staff, Indiana made the following changes to its original request in order to meet the principles of ESEA flexibility.

PRINCIPLE 1: COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READY EXPECTATIONS FOR ALL STUDENTS

- Indiana demonstrated the outreach it has already conducted and that it will conduct regarding its college- and career-ready standards. For example, Indiana described its Learning Connection portal, which hosts communities of practitioners and through which practitioners can access resources and discuss salient topics in weekly forums.

- Indiana described the steps it is taking to ensure that English Learners and students with disabilities will be able to achieve college- and career-ready standards and fully participate in aligned assessments. Technical assistance centers in the State that specialize in students with disabilities and English learners will support this effort.

- Indiana clarified that, as a governing member of the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) consortium, the State will fully implement college- and career-ready standards and will administer assessments aligned to those standards in accordance with the timeline required by ESEA flexibility.

PRINCIPLE 2: STATE-DEVELOPED SYSTEM OF DIFFERENTIATED RECOGNITION, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND SUPPORT

- The State has two combined subgroups: the "top 75 percent" and the "bottom 25 percent." Indiana clarified that its combined subgroups will be incorporated into its accountability system and will not replace traditional ESEA subgroups.

- Indiana has established annual achievement targets for each ESEA subgroup, the two combined subgroups, and the "all students" group. Annually, each school will be evaluated based on whether each of these groups meets its targets in reading/language arts and mathematics, separately, and for high schools, whether each group meets its targets for college- and career-readiness and graduation rates.

- Indiana will require all schools to implement interventions focused on any ESEA subgroup that fails to meet any of its targets, even if the subgroup that fails to meet its targets does not meet the minimum subgroup size of 30 students. These interventions will scale up over time and include modifying a school improvement plan to include strategies focused on improving subgroup performance and having that plan approved by the State, notifying

parents regarding the subgroup's performance, technical assistance focused on the school's needs, and increased monitoring if subgroup performance continues to lag.

- Indiana clarified that every priority school must implement interventions aligned with all of the turnaround principles beginning in the 2012–2013 school year. Indiana also modified its exit criteria to clarify that a school cannot exit priority status if it is able to raise its grade only because of the performance of the top 75 percent subgroup.

- Indiana clarified that each focus school must implement interventions aligned with the turnaround principles most relevant to the school's identification. Indiana also changed its exit criteria to clarify that a school cannot exit focus status unless it raises the achievement of the subgroup that caused the school to be identified.

- Indiana has demonstrated that, by identifying reward, priority, and focus schools based on the State's grading system, it has identified schools that meet the ESEA flexibility definitions of those schools.

PRINCIPLE 3: SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION AND LEADERSHIP

- Indiana has redesigned its Title II, Part A application to leverage these Federal funds and align that program with its goals for supporting teachers to improve their instructional practice.

- Indiana will update guidance materials based on what it learns through a pilot of its evaluation system as it transitions to statewide implementation of evaluation systems that meet the State's guidelines.

- Indiana explained that its support of districts in their implementation of the required teacher and principal evaluation and support systems includes leveraging the Teacher Incentive Fund grant, training teacher preparation programs on RISE, the State's evaluation model, and partnering with Regional Educational Service Centers to deliver training on RISE and build capacity statewide.

- Indiana clarified how it will include all teachers, including teachers of students with disabilities and teachers of English Learners, in the evaluation systems.