

IMPROVEMENTS MADE BY MASSACHUSETTS TO ITS ESEA FLEXIBILITY REQUEST

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

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

- Massachusetts will provide information about the transition to the new accountability system to a broader audience (including districts, schools, parents, and the public) and committed to continually monitor the effectiveness of this new system and make necessary adjustments.
- Massachusetts lowered the minimum number of students necessary for individual subgroup performance to be considered from 40 to 30. This change will ensure the performance of more students counts and holds additional schools accountable for subgroup results.
- Massachusetts will require schools to use performance target determinations for all subgroups and will use that information to direct supports and interventions in schools designated as Levels 2-5 in its accountability system.
- Massachusetts made several changes with respect to focus schools. For example, identification of focus schools will include schools with persistently low-performing individual subgroups. Interventions will be differentiated for each low-performing subgroup based on performance target determinations, and exit criteria must demonstrate improvement for the subgroup whose performance led to the school's identification.
- Massachusetts will now identify Level 2 schools that are close to falling into the focus category in order to promote improvement.
- Massachusetts also provided additional information regarding its monitoring structure for schools designated as Levels 3-5.

PRINCIPLE 3: SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION AND LEADERSHIP

- Massachusetts added more detail regarding implementation of teacher and leader evaluation and support systems, including its eight part implementation guide on educators' professional development plans.

- Massachusetts elaborated on the development of guidance for district-determined teacher and leader effectiveness measures that will include the growth of students with disabilities and English Learners.