

**ESEA FLEXIBILITY  
Amendment Submission Template**

Dear Assistant Secretary:

I am writing on behalf of the Maryland State Department of Education to request approval to amend the State's approved ESEA flexibility request. The relevant information, outlined in the *ESEA Flexibility Amendment Submission Process* document, is provided in the table below.

<b>Flexibility Element(s) Affected by the Amendment</b>	<b>Brief Description of Element as Originally Approved</b>	<b>Brief Description of Requested Amendment</b>	<b>Rationale</b>	<b>Process for Consulting with Stakeholders, Summary of Comments, and Changes Made as a Result</b>
<p>Principle 3.B. Ensure LEAs implement teacher and principal evaluation and support systems.</p>	<p>Originally, Maryland school systems intended to use the new evaluation systems to inform personnel decisions in 2014-15.</p>	<p>The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) proposes to delay personnel decisions based upon new evaluation systems one additional year.</p>	<p>Given the complexities of moving to developing and implementing college-ready and career-ready standards, the changes in curricula that teachers and principals must now start to teach, the transition to new assessments aligned to those standards, and the implementation of teacher and principal evaluation and support systems which include student growth as a significant factor and provide meaningful feedback to improve leadership and instruction; the State believes an</p>	<p>MSDE leadership met with local superintendents, representatives of the state education association and representatives from the Governor's office on July 15, 2013 and August 13, 2013. A committee composed of SEA staff, LEA staff and representatives of the state education association met to draft the written amendment on August 26, 2013. The State Board was briefed by the State Superintendent at an open meeting on August 27, 2013. On August 30, 2013, the SEA sent an email to all LEAs and the state education association inviting comment on the draft amendment.</p>

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1810-0581.

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			<p>amendment to defer the application of test scores to personnel decisions will provide time that is critical to elevating teacher and principal confidence in performance ratings resulting from these collective initiatives. This additional time will allow LEAs and the State to confirm that component measures are performing as intended and that combined measures equate to ratings that accurately reflect educator performance and result in appropriate professional development that is associated with the individual's developmental needs.</p> <p>LEAs will complete their evaluation processes according to their approved plans. Ratings will be used to inform developmental conversations and to frame the LEAs' study of the effectiveness of their intended evaluation system. The State</p>	<p>The comments were evaluated by SEA staff and some revisions were made to the draft amendment. A public notice including the revised draft amendment was posted on the SEA website from September 9 to 20, 2013. The request and any comments received were presented to the State Board at an open meeting on September 24, 2013.</p> <p>Some comments were received. Attached are comments submitted in response to the invitation to comment.</p>

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			<p>believes this step satisfies the requirements found within the Flexibility Waiver of 2012 and the Race to the Top Grant. LEAs will then extract the MSA growth measures and use the remaining portions of the evaluation to inform personnel decisions.</p> <p>This process will accommodate the concerns previously noted and build teacher and principal confidence in the accuracy and fairness of state and local evaluation processes in advance of their application to personnel decisions. During this transition, the state will be implementing "Influencing Transformation: Maryland's Plan for Preparing Educators to Implement and Sustain Teacher and Principal Evaluation." This plan addresses elements of Technical Assistance, Leadership Development, Communications, and Quality</p>	

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			<p>Control that are critical to executing local evaluation plans, increasing the capacity of internal and external stakeholders, and elevating confidence in the evaluation as a developmental process.</p> <p>When implemented statewide, these new evaluation systems will be used to continually improve instruction; differentiate performance at three levels; determine performance levels using multiple valid measures, including as a significant factor data on student growth for all students and other measures of professional practice; evaluate teachers and principals on a regular basis, and provide clear, timely, and useful feedback to drive support and professional development.</p>	

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Please contact Dr. Jack R. Smith at jrsmith@msde.state.md.us or by phone at 410-767-0368 if you have any questions regarding this proposed amendment.

The Maryland State Department of Education acknowledges that the U.S. Department of Education may request supplementary information to inform consideration of this request.

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*Chief State School Officer*

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*Date*