

April 24, 2013

Deborah S. Delisle
Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-6100

Dear Assistant Secretary Delisle:

On behalf of Missouri, I am writing to request a waiver of the requirement in Section 421(b) of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. § 1225(b)) to extend the period of availability of FY 2012 (S377A120026) School Improvement Grant (SIG) funds for the State Education Agency (SEA) and all of its Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to September 30, 2016. Missouri received and reviewed all submitted applications from eligible LEAs in cohort two. The State fully funded all approvable applications in cadre two using FY 2009, 2010 and 2011 allocations. The State believes that the requested waiver and extension of time will increase its ability to implement the SIG program effectively in Priority Schools as identified in the State's approved Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Flexibility Waiver. Missouri's ESEA Flexibility Waiver identifies priority schools as those previously identified in Cadre I and Cadre II and newly identified schools that are:

- "a. Among the lowest 5 percent of Persistently Low Achieving (PLA) Title I schools in the state, based on the achievement of students in the total population group in terms of proficiency on assessments that are part of the SEA's differentiated accountability system and have demonstrated minimal progress in improving the achievement of the school's total population over a period of years;*
- b. Title I participating or eligible high schools with a graduation rate less than 60 percent over a period of years;*
- c. Tier I and Tier II schools receiving funding and support at a component of the 1003(g) School Improvement Grants (SIG)."*

The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is providing all LEAs in the State with notice of the waiver request and a reasonable opportunity to comment on this request. Missouri provided such notice by posting the notice in the Department's electronic list serve for school district staff who work with federal programs, FedPro. The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is accepting comment on this request through May 10, 2013. Any comments received in response to this request will be forwarded to the U.S. Department of Education.

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Please feel free to contact Craig Rector, Coordinator of Grants and Resources, by phone at (573) 526-1594 or by email at craig.rector@dese.mo.gov if you have any questions regarding this request. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris L. Nicastro". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "C".

Chris L. Nicastro
Commissioner of Education

c: Margie Vandeven
Dennis Cooper
Craig Rector
Jocelyn Strand