



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION



January 27, 2021

Dear Secretary of Education,

Pursuant to 20 U.S.C. § 7861 (section 8401(a) of the Every Student Succeeds Act or ESSA), the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) is requesting a waiver from the ESSA requirement to annually identify schools for Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) based on consistently underperforming subgroups. This waiver request is in alignment with the CSDE's ESSA State Plan Addendum request, which is also being submitted to the U.S. Department of Education.

Specifically, this request is seeking a waiver from identifying TSI schools (referred to as Focus schools in Connecticut) in the fall of 2021 (i.e., the 2021-2022 school year based on data from the 2020-2021 school year). The CSDE expects to be able to restart the annual process of identifying TSI schools in the fall of 2022 (i.e., the 2022-23 school year).

We very much appreciate the partnership and flexibilities offered by USED over the past 10 months to help us navigate these challenging times. Through the unprecedented disruptions caused by the pandemic, Connecticut remains firmly committed to addressing the systemic equity issues that have surfaced while also ensuring that all students – regardless of race/ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, English proficiency, disability, or zip code – are growing and achieving at the highest levels on our state standards.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Commissioner of Education