

April 3, 2012

SUBJECT: Waiver Request Awarded by U.S. Department of Education for School Improvement Grants Transformation Schools to Extend Timeline for Implementation of Evaluation Systems

Section I.A.2(d)(1)(i)(B) of the final requirements for the School Improvement Grants (SIG) program requires a local educational agency (LEA) to develop and implement teacher and principal evaluation systems that meet certain requirements during the first year a school is implementing the transformation model. The evaluation systems are required to be rigorous, transparent, and equitable and to take into account data on student academic growth as a significant factor as well as other factors such as multiple observation-based assessments of performance, ongoing collections of information on professional practice reflective of student achievement, and increased high school graduation rates. The purpose of this letter is to notify LEAs of the opportunity to request a timeline extension related to these requirements.

On November 9, 2011, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) requested a waiver to permit an LEA that is implementing the transformation model with SIG funds to have additional time to meet the teacher and principal evaluation requirements, and on January 23, 2012, the TEA was granted the requested waiver. The approved waiver allows the TEA to modify implementation timelines as follows.

A school that began implementing the transformation model during the 2010-2011 school year (cohort 1) and that was not able to complete the development and implementation of its evaluation systems during that year must develop them during the 2011-2012 school year and, at a minimum, pilot them for all teachers and principals no later than the 2012-2013 school year. The piloted systems should be capable of being used for decisions regarding, for example, retention, promotion, compensation, and rewards no later than the 2013-2014 school year. A school that began implementing the transformation model in the 2011-2012 school year (cohort 2) must develop its evaluation systems during 2011-2012, pilot them for all teachers and principals during the 2012-2013 school year, and use the system in the school for decisions regarding, for example, retention, promotion, compensation, and rewards, no later than the 2013-2014 school year.

In exchange for the waiver, the TEA made a number of assurances to the USDE. Information on how an LEA can submit a request to extend its implementation timeline as well as additional information regarding the waiver request and required assurances is available on the TEA website at http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index4.aspx?id=7354&menu_id=798 under the section titled *TTIPS News and Announcements*. Any timeline extension request must be received by the TEA Division of School Improvement and Support (SIS) no later than April 23, 2012.

For more information regarding this opportunity, please contact your assigned program specialist in the Division of School Improvement and Support.

Sincerely,

Sally Partridge
Director of School Improvement and Support, TEA