

New Hampshire Receives Flexibility Waiver Under Federal No Child Left Behind Education Law

Waiver Enhances Local Control, Allows for Innovation in Public Education

CONCORD – Governor Maggie Hassan announced that the federal Education Secretary Arne Duncan has approved the New Hampshire Department of Education’s (NHDOE) request for a waiver of ten different sections of the No Child Left Behind law.

“New Hampshire is now free to pursue more effective and innovative ways to address the needs of all our students and prepare them for the jobs of the 21st century economy,” Governor Hassan said. “By receiving this waiver, New Hampshire will continue to protect its most underserved students, close achievement gaps, increase equity, and improve the quality of instruction while also pursuing needed comprehensive reforms and protecting local control.”

“This waiver is the achievement of many stakeholders, and I thank the staff of the New Hampshire Department of Education and others across the state who came together to do the hard work to make sure our students are prepared for the jobs and innovation of the 21st century,” Governor Hassan added.

“This waiver provides our state the opportunity to focus resources on those initiatives that will move our state forward in the best interest of children,” NHDOE Commissioner Virginia Barry said.

“After a year-long thoughtful process to determine the impact of the waiver, educators throughout our state should be recognized for their willingness to support statewide reform efforts that focus on students,” Heather Gage, Director of the Division of Instruction, said.

With the waiver approved, the Department of Education is empowered to go forward with its innovative reforms that will help all students, including: continuing to provide support to innovative local school districts that embrace the rigorous Common Core standards; reducing duplicative and unnecessary paperwork; and supporting effective instruction and leadership.

Under No Child Left Behind, approximately 75 percent of the state’s schools would have been labeled “failing” next year. Now, the state can focus on the students that most critically need help: those in schools with the widest achievement gaps and the lowest-performing schools in the state.

The 2002 No Child Left Behind law was the most recent reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which passed in 1965 as part of Lyndon Johnson’s War on Poverty. ESEA/NCLB authorizes federally funded education programs that are administered by the states.