



NEWS

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Commissioner Williams seeks extension of ESEA Waiver and extends teacher, principal evaluation and support systems pilot

AUSTIN – Commissioner of Education Michael Williams has sent a letter to U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan seeking an extension of the state’s waiver from the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). In the letter, he also notified Secretary Duncan that the state would be adding an additional year to the pilot program for the new teacher and principal evaluation and support systems.

On Sept. 30, 2013, Texas was approved for the federal waiver from specific provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) through the 2013-2014 school year contingent upon implementation of the new teacher and principal evaluation system. In May, as part of the terms of the state’s conditional waiver, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) submitted to the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) updates to the state’s plan for implementing the new teacher and principal evaluation and support systems.

The evaluation systems will be piloted in school districts and charters beginning in the 2014-2015 school year. Commissioner Williams has decided to extend the pilot operation of the two systems for an additional year to allow time for system refinement.

“Texas educators understand the need to update the current evaluation system to one that better reflects what’s occurring in today’s classroom,” said Commissioner Williams. “If Texas is to develop an evaluation system that truly supports our teachers, we need time to complete the pilot year and then utilize the constructive feedback we will receive from our school districts, charters and educators.”

Elements of the new Teacher Evaluation and Support System were designed utilizing extensive input from the state’s teachers, principals, and superintendents and will replace the current state-recommended instrument for evaluating teachers – the Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS) – which has been in place since 1997.

Eighty percent of the new Teacher Evaluation and Support System is weighted on elements – such as multiple classroom observations, ongoing learning community feedback, and teacher self-assessments – that are currently commonplace in many high-performing campuses across Texas. The new system will encourage annual evaluations with multiple informal observations and walk-throughs and at least one formal observation.

The remaining 20 percent will be reflected in a student growth measure at the individual teacher level, providing data that will help to inform teachers, in conjunction with observation and self-assessment data, about their strengths and potential areas of focus for professional development. That data will come from value-add scores, student learning objectives, portfolios, or district-level pre- and post-tests.

For an overview of the Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System, visit [http://txcc.sedl.org/our work/tx educator evaluation/index.php](http://txcc.sedl.org/our_work/tx_educator_evaluation/index.php).

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