

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

The Honorable MaryEllen Elia
Commissioner of Education
New York State Education Department
89 Washington Avenue
Albany, NY 12234

Dear Commissioner Elia:

Thank you for submitting New York's State Plan to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators (State Plan). I know you agree that all children – regardless of their race, zip code, or family income – need and deserve effective, engaging educators. All teachers and principals deserve the resources and support they need to help students reach their full potential. Unfortunately, family income and race continue to dictate too often a student's likelihood of attending a great school staffed by exceptional educators. This inequity is simply unacceptable, and I look forward to continuing to work with you and your team to make working in high-need schools more attractive and sustainable. New York's State Plan represents an important step toward these goals and to ensuring that all students have access to excellent, well-supported educators.

I have reviewed New York's State Plan and determined that it meets the requirements of sections 1111(a)(1), 1111(b)(8)(C), and 9304(a)(3)(B) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA). The U.S. Department of Education (ED) appreciates and shares New York's commitment to ensuring that all New York students have access to excellent educators as described in its State Plan. New York has described the steps that it will take to ensure that students from low-income families and students of color are not taught at higher rates than other children by inexperienced, unqualified, or out-of-field teachers, and the measures that New York will use to evaluate and publicly report progress with respect to such steps in accordance with ESEA requirements. I appreciate the consultation that New York conducted with stakeholder groups to inform the analysis and development of its State Plan, as well as your commitment to continuing to include these stakeholders in the implementation of your State Plan.

I am confident that New York will implement the strategies described in its State Plan and advance its efforts to ensure that all children have access to the excellent educators they deserve. ED looks forward to providing assistance and support through our ongoing performance management and monitoring activities as New York moves forward with implementation of its State Plan. As stated in ESEA section 1111(f)(1)(B),

Through GTL, EASN, and ED’s network of Regional Comprehensive Centers, Regional Education Labs, and Equity Assistance Centers, States can access technical assistance to support implementing State Plans including:

Regional meetings to support implementation planning and provide opportunities for States to discuss approaches to ensuring equitable access to effective educators;

Topical communities of practice to explore common implementation challenges and share best practices on data use and analysis, rural access issues, stakeholder engagement, and policies and programs;

Tools and resources to support implementation planning, ongoing stakeholder engagement and communication, supporting local educational agencies (LEAs) in implementing local strategies, and monitoring and reporting progress; and

State specific support.

New York continues to have an affirmative responsibility to ensure that it and its LEAs are in compliance with Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, and age in their implementation of this State Plan. These laws include Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and requirements under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. New York and its LEAs’ obligations under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 are further explained in ED’s Dear Colleague Letter of October 1, 2014, which, in the context of providing equitable educational resources, makes clear that recipients of Federal funds are prohibited from intentionally discriminating on the basis of race, color, or national origin, as well as from implementing facially neutral policies that have the unjustified effect of discriminating against students on the basis of race, color, or national origin ntinT* [(unj)-2(4(