



Proposed Board Statement on ESEA Flexibility/Waiver Request
Reviewed by the Accountability Committee
11/5/14

The Nebraska State Board of Education continues to identify system investments to support school improvement and ultimately student success. Nebraska education and policy leaders in partnership with the State Board and Nebraska Department of Education have worked for over a decade to develop better standards, assessment, and accountability. Additionally, the State Board developed initiatives in Teacher/Leader Evaluation, Career and College Readiness Standards, data system improvement, and accountability for continuous improvement. Building on this strong foundation, the State Board continues to work to contribute to a “Nebraska” vision for the education system. The State Board believes it important to share this vision in an application for a waiver under NCLB that might better inform the United States Department of Education and Congress in any efforts to reauthorize ESEA.

Nebraska is well positioned to submit an application for a waiver under NCLB based on the following initiatives:

1. Career and College Ready Standards Adoption: Standards aligned with post-secondary institutions in English-Language Arts has already been completed, with Math and Science in various stages of development.
2. Nebraska’s next generation accountability model (AQuESTT) is being designed to exceed minimum legislated requirements and focus on quality through investment and support for schools in need of improvement.
3. Nebraska’s adoption of a Principal/Teacher evaluation framework in 2011 and the development of a meaningful instructional model consistent with the objectives of the ESEA Flexibility Principles.
4. Nebraska’s development of data systems is intended to reduce reporting burden and increase knowledge about student learning, best practices, and enhanced accountability and school improvement efforts.

The State Board believes that there are certain tenets that are not negotiable as defined in Board Policy and recent accountability discussions. However, the Board is encouraged by the increasing willingness of the USDOE to consider state plans that are designed by state level policy makers and local school officials.

The Commissioner and Department of Education staff are leading the development of a waiver under NCLB consistent with Board initiatives, policies, and developing vision.

Timeline:

December, 2014	Board review of commitment on specific ESEA flexibility conditions
January, 2015	Review of waiver options impacting a draft proposal
February, 2015	Board review of a first draft application for a waiver
March, 2015	Seek input from stakeholders on draft waiver application
April, 2015	Submit initial request for waiver