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January 15, 2021

To whom it may concern,

Utah is pleased to submit the state's 2021 State Plan Addendum Template and Waiver Request for your consideration. Due to the national COVID-19 emergency and the waiving of assessment requirements in 2019-2020, Utah has utilized the streamlined addendum and waiver process as outlined by the department to clarify how Utah will implement its ESEA consolidated State plan in the 2020-2021 school year. Utah's COVID-19 State Plan Addendum amends our State's ESEA consolidated State plan to account for one-year changes, the shifting forward timelines for identifying schools and for meeting measurements of interim progress (MIPs). At this time, Utah is also submitting for your consideration a waiver requesting to shift forward the timeline for TSI/ATSI identification by two years.

Utah provided reasonable opportunity for public comment between December 7th, 2020 and January 6th, 2021 for both the state's addendum and the waiver. During this period, the Utah State Board of Education (USBE) received 370 responses, with strong support for submitting the Addendum and Waiver on behalf of our state. Both documents were approved by the Utah State Board of Education during their January 7th, 2021 Board meeting. In addition, USBE staff engaged with the Governor Gary Herbert's office on December 10th, 2021.

Utah is committed to providing a transparent assessment system that aligns with the vision of the Utah State Board of Education, which is "to lead by creating equitable conditions for student success which includes advocating for necessary resources, developing policy, and providing effective oversight and support." Our state is grateful for the support of the U.S. Department of Education as we continue to navigate the implications and current challenges of COVID-19 and to support schools during these unprecedented times.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ann-Michelle Neal".

Ann-Michelle Neal, Accountability Specialist
Utah State Board of Education

Consultation with Governor Herbert:
Draft Addendum and Waiver for Utah's Consolidated Plan
December 10, 2020
2:00 pm

Present: Karen Peterson, Gordon Larsen, Leah Voorhies, Rebecca Donaldson, Tracy Vanderverter, Ann-Michelle Neal, Darin Nielsen

Absent: Brittney Cummins

Business:

The group discussed the draft expedited Addendum to the ESEA Consolidated State Plan due to the COVID-19 National Emergency and proposed waiver application to the requirement to annually identify schools for targeted support and improvement (TSI). These discussions included the rationale for the Utah State Board of Education's November motion to "take steps to relieve schools from federal and state accountability determinations based on 2020-2021 assessments," consideration of opinions that may disagree with this direction, the timeline established by the U.S. Department of Education, and the process for seeking and reviewing public comment.

The Governor's staff reported they would share meeting notes regarding these proposals with Governor Herbert and Governor-elect Cox. If concerns with the proposals exist, they will share them with staff for the Utah State Board of Education prior to January 6, 2021 when the Utah State Board of Education is scheduled to review and vote on the proposed addendum and waiver.