



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

MAY 9 2007

The Honorable Christopher Koch
State Superintendent of Education
Illinois State Board of Education
100 North First Street
Springfield, Illinois 62777-0001

Dear Superintendent Koch

I am writing in response to Illinois' request to amend its State accountability plan under Title I of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965* (ESEA), as amended by the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB). Following our discussions with your staff, the change is now included in an amended State accountability plan that Illinois submitted to the Department on May 2, 2007. I am pleased to fully approve Illinois' plan, which will be posted on the Department's website. A summary of the approved amendment is enclosed with this letter. As you know, any further requests to amend the Illinois accountability plan must be submitted to the Department for review and approval as required by section 1111(f)(2) of Title I.

Please also be aware that approval of Illinois's accountability plan for Title I, including the amendment approved above, does not indicate that the plan complies with Federal civil rights requirements, including 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*, and requirements under the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*.

NCLB has provided a vehicle for States to raise the achievement of all students and to close the achievement gap. We are seeing the results of our combined endeavor; achievement is rising throughout the nation. I appreciate Illinois' efforts to raise the achievement of all students and hold all schools accountable. If you need any additional assistance to implement the standards, assessment, and accountability provisions of NCLB, please do not hesitate to contact Patrick Rooney (Patrick.Rooney@ed.gov) or Grace Ross (Grace.Ross@ed.gov) of my staff.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kerri L. Briggs".

Kerri L. Briggs, Ph.D.
Acting Assistant Secretary

Enclosure

cc: Governor Rod Blagojevich
Ginger Reynolds

Amendment to the Illinois Accountability Plan

The following is a summary of the State's amendment request. Please refer to the Department's website (www.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/stateplans03/index.html) for the complete Illinois accountability plan.

Acceptable amendment

We have reviewed your request to amend the Illinois accountability plan and found the following amendment aligned with the statute and regulations.

- **Including students with disabilities in AYP (Element 5.3)**

Revision: Illinois will use the "proxy method" (option 1 in our guidance dated December 2005) to take advantage of the interim flexibility regarding calculating adequate yearly progress (AYP) for the students with disabilities subgroup (refer to:

<http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/secletter/070207.html>). Illinois will calculate a proxy to determine the percentage of students with disabilities that is equivalent to 2.0 percent of all students assessed. For this year only, this proxy will then be added to the percent of students with disabilities who are proficient. For any school or district that did not make AYP solely due to its students with disabilities subgroup, Illinois will use this adjusted percent proficient to re-examine if the school or district made AYP for the 2006-07 school year.