



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL P. FLANAGAN
SUPERINTENDENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

July 7, 2011

MEMORANDUM

TO: Local and Intermediate School District Superintendents
Public School Academy Directors

FROM: Sally Vaughn, Ph.D. *Sally*
Deputy Superintendent/Chief Academic Officer

SUBJECT: Section 1003(g) School Improvement Grants Waiver Request

The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) is requesting a U.S. Department of Education (USED) waiver of certain requirements in the final requirements for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Section 1003(g) School Improvement Grants.

The waiver will permit the identification of persistently low achieving (PLA) schools based on a system that uses a straight classification of the lowest performing 5 percent of schools without using a tier system. The lowest achieving 5 percent will be identified based on Michigan standard assessments (Michigan Educational Assessment Program, Michigan Merit Exam, and MI-Access). Growth data, achievement gap data, and graduation rate data (for high schools) will also be included in the top to bottom ranking of all schools in the state, from which the complete lowest 5 percent will be identified as PLA.

The end result is that the list of PLA schools will be leveled across grade levels/school configuration. The list of PLA schools will be represented by a more accurate mix of elementary, middle/junior high, and high schools. The designation of a school as PLA as currently defined tends to weight school identification toward elementary schools.

The waiver request may be accessed online at www.michigan.gov/osi under "Current Topics."

LEAs wishing to comment on the request should submit comments to ARRAWaiverResponse@michigan.gov by July 14, 2011.

cc: Michigan Education Alliance

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