

Tennessee Assessment Letter

April 24, 2006

The Honorable Lana Seivers
Commissioner of Education
Tennessee Department of Education
Andrew Johnson Tower - 6th Floor
Nashville, Tennessee 37243-0375

Dear Commissioner Seivers:

I am pleased to approve Tennessee's assessment system under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). I congratulate you on meeting this important NCLB requirement.

My decision is based on input from peer reviewers external to the U.S. Department of Education (the Department) and Department staff who reviewed and carefully considered the evidence submitted by Tennessee. I have concluded that the evidence demonstrates that Tennessee's standards and assessment system satisfies the NCLB requirements. Specifically, Tennessee's system includes academic content and student achievement standards in reading/language arts, mathematics, and science; alternate achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities in those subjects; assessments in each of grades 3 through 10 in reading/language arts and mathematics; assessments in science in three grade spans; and alternate assessments for each subject. Accordingly, Tennessee's system warrants Full Approval. This status means that Tennessee's standards and assessment system meets all statutory and regulatory requirements.

Please be aware that approval of Tennessee's assessment system under NCLB is not a determination that the system 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. Finally, please remember that, if Tennessee makes significant changes in its assessment system, the State must submit information about those changes to the Department for review and approval.

We have found it a pleasure working with your staff on this review. Please accept my congratulations for your State's approved standards and assessment system under NCLB. I wish you well in your continued efforts to improve student achievement in Tennessee.

Sincerely,

Henry L. Johnson