



No Child Left Behind Waiver Application

The Tennessee Department of Education today announced its application to the U.S. Secretary of Education for a waiver requesting regulatory flexibility around the No Child Left Behind Act.

The U.S. Department of Education has proposed plans to provide “[regulatory flexibility](#)” around No Child Left Behind (NCLB). This option will not replace comprehensive reform, or give states and districts a pass from accountability, but is intended to help support reform efforts underway at the state and local level.

Why is Tennessee applying for a waiver?

- Congress was due to reauthorize the No Child Left Behind Act in recent years, but has not done so.
- The law’s outdated regulations mean that virtually all schools in Tennessee (and the vast majority of schools nationwide) will soon not make “adequate yearly progress” (AYP) and will be considered failing under No Child Left Behind.
- The law’s definition of adequate yearly progress no longer captures a nuanced view of which schools are in need of additional support and interventions from the state.

What is Tennessee seeking from the waiver?

- Tennessee is seeking freedom from adequate yearly progress (AYP) rules and definitions, as well as flexibility on some funding restrictions.
- Tennessee seeks to use our state proficiency targets as both the measure of progress and to determine districts and schools for intervention, including the Achievement School District.
- Tennessee also seeks to continue plans under Race to the Top as the central reform model in the state.