# Iowa's No Child Left Behind (ESEA) Waiver Request

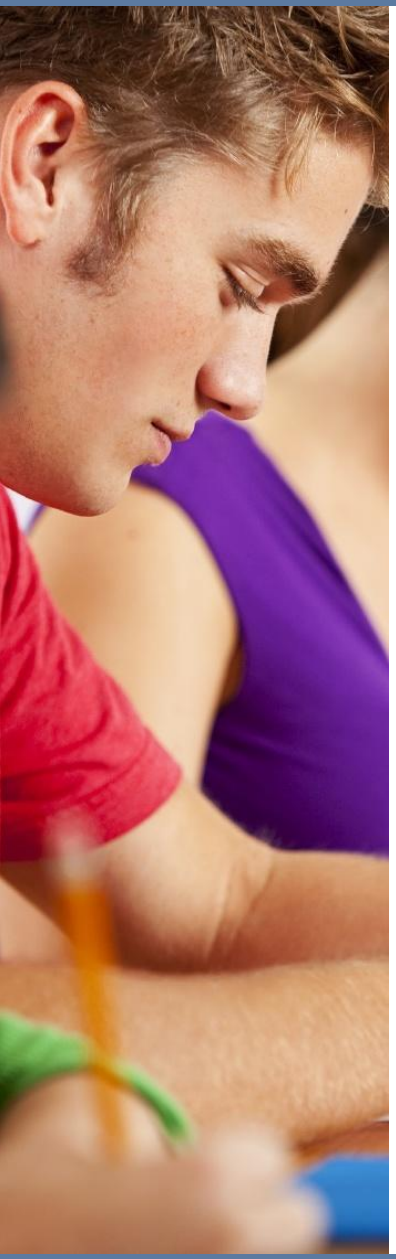
# Why Is Iowa Seeking A Waiver?

The No Child Left Behind Act is the latest version of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). While No Child Left Behind (NCLB) has been beneficial on many fronts, it doesn't reward schools based on overall progress. Instead, it penalizes schools that, while they may have made substantial progress, still fall short of federal thresholds.

A waiver would enable Iowa to move forward by giving more flexibility than is allowed by NCLB, creating rigorous and comprehensive state-developed plans to improve educational outcomes for all students, close achievement gaps, increase equity, and improve quality instruction.

# Timeline

The Iowa Department of Education will submit its application to the U.S. Department of Education by Feb. 21. Applications will be reviewed throughout the spring.



# Waiver's emphasis

- Iowa's waiver focuses on three principles:
- College- and career-ready expectations for all students.
- Differentiated recognition, accountability, and support.
- Supporting effective instruction and leadership.

# *College- and career-ready expectations for all students*

This means that students are ready for college courses without requiring additional academic assistance, such as tutoring.

# Principle 1

*College- and career-ready expectations for all students*

In order to ensure this, the state will:

- Adopt college- and career-ready standards in reading/language arts and mathematics, at a minimum.
- Administer high-quality assessments that measure student growth.

# Principle 2

*Differentiated recognition, accountability, and support*

This means ensuring students are learning, growing, and achieving at high levels.

# Principle 2

*Differentiated recognition, accountability, and support*

In order to ensure this, the state:

- Will set new, ambitious but achievable goals tied to reading/language arts and mathematics, at a minimum.
- Focuses on the individual student's achievement and growth from year to year.

# Principle 2

*Differentiated recognition, accountability, and support*

- Will implement a six-tiered rating system for schools based on their performance in educating students.
  - The rating system will range from exceptional to unacceptable, in which lower-scoring schools will face interventions and higher-performing schools will be rewarded.
  - The rating system will include achievement, growth, attendance, and test participation.
  - The rating system also will include college-ready rates and graduation rates.

# Principle 3

*Supporting effective instruction and leadership*

This means developing teacher and principal evaluation systems.

# Principle 3

*Supporting effective instruction and leadership*

In order to ensure this, the state:

- Will implement annual educator evaluations.
- Will increase the educator probationary periods from three to five years.
- Will require frequent observations and feedback to educators at the local level.