| **Virginia Board of Education Agenda Item** | **Seal of the Commonwealth of Virginia** |
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# Agenda Item: H

## Date: January 28, 2021

### Title: First Review of an Addendum and Waiver to Virginia’s Consolidated State Plan under the *Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015* (ESSA)

#### Presenters: Julie Molique, Director, Office of Accountability

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## Purpose of Presentation:

Action required by state or federal law or regulation.

## **Executive Summary:**

The continued implications of COVID-19 affects how each state will implement the federal accountability provisions outlined in its Consolidated State Plan under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) in the 2020-2021 school year. The United States Department of Education (USED) has created a streamlined addendum process for states to amend their Consolidated State Plans. Using the addendum process, states may request modifications for one year in current year calculations and may also request permission to shift forward by one year their interim measures of progress and school identification timelines.

The Board of Education is asked to consider the submission of a streamlined addendum to Virginia’s Consolidated State Plan that will revise the timeline for defined long term goals and measures of interim progress, modify indicator calculations, and shift the timeline for identifying Comprehensive Support and Improvement as well as Additional Targeted Support and Improvement Schools one year. The Board of Education is also asked to consider the submission of a waiver request that would shift the timeline for identifying Targeted Support and Improvement schools for one year. This item is not allowable under the streamlined addendum process.

## Action Requested:

Action will be requested at a future meeting. Specify anticipated date below:

March 18, 2021

## Superintendent’s Recommendation:

The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends the Board of Education receive for first review the addendum and waiver to the Consolidated State Plan.

## Previous Review or Action:

No previous review or action.

## **Background Information and Statutory Authority:**

To address the extraordinary circumstances of extended and widespread closures of schools due to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, on March 20, 2020, the U.S. Department of Education (USED) invited, pursuant to section 8401(b) of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965* (ESEA), each state to request a waiver, for the 2019-2020 school year, of assessment, accountability and school identification, and certain related reporting requirements. Virginia received this waiver in March of 2020.

The waiving of these requirements, as well as the continued implications of COVID-19, affects how each state will implement the federal accountability provisions outlined in its Consolidated State Plan in the 2020-2021 school year. Section 1111 of ESSA requires states to submit significant changes to their Consolidated State Plans to USED for review and approval. In response to the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, USED has created a streamlined addendum process for states to amend their ESEA Consolidated State Plans. Using the addendum process, states may request modifications for one year in current year calculations and may also request permission to shift forward by one year their interim measures of progress and school identification timelines. The Board of Education is asked to approve the submission of a streamlined addendum and waiver to include the three items below.

Long Term Goals and Yearly Measures of Interim Progress

The addendum includes a request to revise Virginia’s long-term goals and measures of interim progress by shifting the timeline forward by one year for academic achievement indicators in reading and mathematics, federal graduation rate, and progress in achieving English language proficiency for English Learners.

Indicator Calculation Adjustment

For the Academic Achievement indicators in reading and mathematics, Virginia’s Consolidated State Plan under ESSA allows a school to meet the measures of interim progress through either the current year rate or a three-year average that includes the current year and the two previous years. The addendum requests the modification of the three-year calculation to include the current year and the previous two years where data are available.

The addendum also allows a state to request flexibilities in indicators if the loss of data in 2019-2020 will impact accountability calculations in the fall of 2021, based on 2020-2021 data. Virginia is asking to exclude the following indicators involving data in the 2020-2021 school year in these calculations: growth, chronic absenteeism, and state accreditation rating.

Timeline for Identification of Schools

Virginia’s Consolidated State Plan describes the identification of Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) and Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI) schools to occur every three years. This timeline would result in the identification of new CSI and ATSI schools in the fall of 2021 using data based on the 2020-2021 school year. Virginia will request that this timeline be shifted forward by one year so that the next identification of CSI and ATSI schools would take place in the fall of 2022. The streamlined addendum process does not allow for changes to the timeline for the identification of Targeted Support and Improvement Schools (TSI). Because yearly identification of TSI schools is specifically cited in ESSA, states did not define the timeline for this identification in their Consolidated State Plan. Therefore, in addition to the addendum, Virginia intends to submit a waiver to the USED to allow the next identification of TSI schools to take place in the fall of 2022, rather than the fall of 2021.

The timeline in Virginia’s Consolidated State Plan for a school to exit from these designations is annually for ATSI schools and after two years (and each subsequent year if applicable) for CSI schools. The change in the identification timeline would not affect the opportunity for currently identified schools to exit federal improvement status in the fall of 2021. The addendum would modify the exit criteria for CSI schools to exclude student growth, chronic absenteeism, and state accreditation status.

## **Timetable for Further Review/Action:**

Final review is anticipated at the Board’s March 18, 2021, meeting. If the Board approves the addendum and waiver, these items will be submitted to USED for approval.

## Impact on Fiscal and Human Resources:

Costs associated with the implementation of the Consolidated State Plan addendum will be provided by federal funds awarded under ESSA.