

Empire State Supervisors and Administrators Association



11300 Veterans Memorial Pkwy, Ste 330 | Hauppauge, NY 11788
888.88.ESSAA | www.essaa.org | info@essaa.org

December 15, 2021

Jason Harmon, Assistant Commissioner
Office of Accountability
New York State Education Department

Dear Mr. Harmon,

On behalf of our organization, I wish to express our full support for the request put forth by NYSED to the USDE to not make accountability determinations and school improvement identifications using data from the 2021-22 school year and to provide flexibility in the use of Title I School Improvement Funds.

School leaders in New York are committed to using assessment data to drive instructional decision making and promote shared accountability for student achievement. State assessment data generated during the pandemic in 2020-21 should only be used by schools in a limited capacity. We assert this data to be inadequate for use to identify Comprehensive Support and Improvement Schools and Targeted Support and Improvement Schools. We believe that assigning accountability levels to schools or subgroups based on these results could be counterproductive to ongoing school improvement efforts. At the same time, allowing schools that are at risk of identification the ability to apply for Title I funds proactively has the potential to enhance school improvement efforts.

We are grateful for the Department's advocacy in pursuing this waiver and ongoing support for efforts to improve teaching and learning in New York.

Sincerely yours,

Carol L. Conklin-Spillane, ESSAA President