

**Apr. 17, 2025**

Dear Superintendents and BOCES leaders,

Today I am sharing updates on the following:

- [April 3 Title VI Certification Request](#)
- [Invitation-only superintendent meeting with Attorney General Weiser](#)
- [4/16 Colorado Senate Education Committee hearing](#)
- [ED press release on 2026 NAEP administration](#)
- [ED announces new appointees](#)

### **April 3 Title VI Certification Request**

After hearing a few questions and concerns, I want to clarify what the U.S. Department of Education (ED) has asked of states and school districts related to the April 3 Title VI certification. ED requested that state education agencies, like CDE, collect assurances from districts and submit those alongside the state's own assurance. Yesterday, we received a question from a school district asking whether there were options for school districts other than declining to sign the certification.

CDE continues to believe that signing the April 3 certification is not required because it did not follow the appropriate approval process and, therefore, cannot serve as a valid basis for withholding funds. I would not have made the decision to decline this certification if I believed it would put Colorado's federal funding at risk. At the same time, I know how deeply we all value and uphold the nondiscrimination obligations under Title VI, and we want that commitment to be loud and clear to the Office for Civil Rights.

Across the country, there are a multitude of ways that local education agencies (LEAs) and state education agencies (SEAs) have been responding to this request. Approaches we have heard about include:

- (1) not signing any new assurances and taking no action;
- (2) declining to sign any assurances, but submitting a letter in response;
- (3) signing the [April 3 certification](#) with no qualification,
- (4) signing the April 3 certification with a written qualification or comment,
- (5) re-submitting an existing certification or assurance that the LEA or SEA previously submitted to the federal government, or
- (6) signing the [most recent version of the civil rights assurances](#) that did go through the proper OMB approval process.

As I mentioned, it was important to me that OCR hear my personal commitment to Title VI on behalf of the state and all its LEAs. I will be taking the last option to sign the [OMB-approved civil rights assurances](#) and submitting a letter that says I take this action for all of us. I will also note that all districts annually assure Title VI compliance through the consolidated application for ESEA. If you choose to submit something additional, **please send this to us by April 23** so we can collect your response and include it with our communication to OCR on April 24. If you would like to discuss, please feel free to reach out.

#### **Invitation-only superintendent meeting with Attorney General Weiser**

On April 15, our superintendents and BOCES directors received an email from Diana Noyes in the Office of the Attorney General inviting you to a virtual meeting on Tuesday, April 22 at 8am. This meeting is intended to discuss timely priorities facing school districts and provide updates on related actions or guidance from the Department of Law. ***This event is open to superintendents and charter and BOCES leaders, members of their in-house legal team, and/or a designee of the leader.*** If you did not receive this email, please contact [Emma Garrett-Nelson](mailto:garrett-nelson_e@cde.state.co.us) at [garrett-nelson\\_e@cde.state.co.us](mailto:garrett-nelson_e@cde.state.co.us).

#### **4/16 Colorado Senate Education Committee hearing**

Yesterday, our state's Senate Education Committee held an informational hearing about the role of the US Department of Education. I was one of several individuals invited to present, and [you can click here to see the slides from that presentation](#).

#### **ED press release on 2026 NAEP administration**

Today, ED and the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) [announced that](#) planning for the 2026 administration of NAEP is underway. The release reads, in part, "The Department will ensure that NAEP continues to provide invaluable data on learning across the U.S. The 2026 NAEP assessments in reading and math are on track for administration in January 2026." As a reminder, NAEP required assessments are administered to a sample of schools in grades 4 and 8 in reading and math.

#### **ED announces new appointees**

On April 15, ED [shared a press release announcing new appointees at the department](#).

Warm regards,

Susana Córdova