



# UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

APR 7 2011

ASSISTANT SECRETARY

The Honorable Robert Hammond  
Commissioner of Education  
Colorado Department of Education  
201 East Colfax Avenue, Room 500  
Denver, Colorado 80203

Dear Commissioner Hammond:

On behalf of Secretary Duncan, I want to thank you for your hard work in implementing the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965* (ESEA). I am writing in response to Colorado's request to amend its state accountability plan under Title I of the ESEA. Following discussions between the Department and your staff, you made changes to Colorado's accountability plan, which are now included in the amended state accountability plan that Colorado submitted to the Department on March 10, 2011. I am pleased to approve Colorado's amended plan, which we will post on the Department's website. A summary of Colorado's requested amendments is enclosed with this letter. As you know, any further requests to amend Colorado's accountability plan must be submitted to the Department for review and approval as required by section 1111(f)(2) of Title I of the ESEA.

Please also be aware that approval of Colorado's accountability plan for Title I, including the amendments approved herein, does not indicate that the plan complies with Federal civil rights requirements, including Title VI of the *Civil Rights Act of 1964*, Title IX of the *Education Amendments of 1972*, Section 504 of the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973*, Title II of the *Americans with Disabilities Act*, and requirements under the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*.

I am confident that Colorado will continue to advance its efforts to hold schools and school districts accountable for the achievement of all students. If you need any additional assistance to implement the standards, assessment, and accountability provisions of the ESEA, please do not hesitate to contact Clayton Hollingshead ([Clayton.Hollingshead@ed.gov](mailto:Clayton.Hollingshead@ed.gov)).

Sincerely,

Thelma Meléndez de Santa Ana, Ph.D.

Enclosure

cc: Governor John Hickenlooper  
Pat Chapman  
Jo O'Brien

### **Amendments to Colorado's Accountability Plan**

The following is a summary of Colorado's amendment requests. Please refer to the Department's website (<http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/stateplans03/index.html>) for Colorado's complete accountability plan.

#### **Acceptable amendments**

The following amendments are aligned with the statute and regulations.

- **Defining public high school graduation rate for use in adequate yearly progress (AYP) determinations (Element 7.1)**

Revision: Colorado will include extended-year adjusted-cohort graduation rates for both the five-year and six-year cohorts in addition to its four-year adjusted-cohort graduation rate for AYP determinations based on 2010–2011 assessment results.