



Office of the



State Superintendent of Education

Active and Early Engagement Strategy
“Connecting People to Education Policy”

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Office of the State Superintendent of Education, Washington, DC



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Executive Summary

In February 2012, the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) will submit a flexibility request regarding the implementation of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) – commonly known as No Child Left Behind – to the US Department of Education. This flexibility request will alter current accountability standards under ESEA legislation and allow the District to modify and redefine its Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) goals. While the agency possesses a legal requirement to nominally solicit public comment, OSSE seeks to proactively engage key stakeholders in the application process and facilitate an early and robust community dialogue.

In an effort to maximize public input and submit the strongest possible ESEA flexibility application, OSSE will exceed legal engagement requirements and initiate a three-month outreach strategy to solicit opinions, ideas, and insights from key constituents including parents, students, teachers, elected officials, and all DC residents concerned or involved in the provision of quality education. OSSE will not only host a series of ward-specific Town Halls, but will additionally host a sequence of community focus groups, hold agency office hours, and conduct outreach to area non-profit and community organizations. OSSE will also work collaboratively with elected bodies including the State Board of Education, the DC City Council, and neighborhood associations to solicit public input through stakeholder roundtables, online webinars, in-person meetings, and through our online public comment space.

With the goal of engaging as many DC residents as possible, OSSE will work to ensure that all community members have the opportunity to make their voice heard on this important policy change.



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LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

Under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, OSSE must satisfy a legal public engagement requirement within its flexibility request. To satisfy this requirement, OSSE must include the following items within its application:

1. A description of how the State Education Agency (SEA) meaningfully engaged and solicited input from teachers and their representatives based on its request.
2. A description of how the SEA meaningfully engaged and solicited input from other diverse communities such as students, parents, community-based organizations, civil rights organizations, organizations representing students with disabilities and English Learners, business organizations, and Indian tribes, based on its request.
3. An assurance stating we have consulted with our Committee of Practitioners.

In an effort to go beyond the legal requirements and engage the DC Community, OSSE will implement a multifaceted engagement strategy including:

1. Hosting Town Halls in the District of Columbia.
2. Hosting a series of focus groups with key organizations and stakeholders including: the Council of the District of Columbia, the District of Columbia State Board of Education (DC SBOE), Teachers, Parents, Elected Officials, Title I Practitioners, and area Non-profits.
3. Hosting a public comment period for residents to share their expertise and opinions with agency staff.
4. Collaborating with the DC SBOE to hold a public hearing on the District's ESEA Waiver Application.

COMMUNICATIONS & OUTREACH

To advertise and publicize engagement efforts, OSSE to date has completed the following tasks:

- Invited Key Elected/Government Official (Ex: DC SBOE, City Council Members, Mayor's Education Transition Team).
- Outreach to area non-profits.
- Outreach to *all* DC LEAs.
- Initiated Social Media Outreach.
- Posted Town Halls to Community Calendars.
- Disseminated On-Air PSA Scripts to Local Radio Outlets.
- Outreach to Teachers (WTU).
- Contacted and Briefed Parent Organizations.



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STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

To date, OSSE has engaged the following stakeholders to participate in our outreach events.

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| • DC BOE | Council of the District of Columbia |
| • DCPS | CHPSO |
| • PCSB | Fight for Children |
| • LSAT Team | MOMIE’s TLC |
| • PTA Leaders | DC Voice |
| • FOCUSDC | WTU |
| • DC Public Education Fund | U St. Neighborhood Associations |
| • Great Schools Initiative | Capitol Hill Parent Organization |
| • National Coalition for Parental Involvement in Education | Communities in Schools |
| • DC Federation of Civic Associations | Alliance for Excellent Education |
| • Campaign for High School Equity | Greater Washington Urban League |
| • Leadership Conference- Education Fund | All DC LEAs |
| • DCPCSA | |

ENGAGEMENT TIMELINE

Since the release of the ESEA Flexibility waiver from the Department of Education on September 23, 2011, OSSE has implemented the following course of action to engage a variety of stakeholders at all levels for input during the waiver process.

Implementation Timeline

Date	Action
10-07-11	Decision made by OSSE to apply by the February timeline instead of the November timeline to have more time to engage stakeholders in a meaningful way.
10-28-11	Posted information to announce Town Halls on OSSE website.
First Week of Nov.	Selected professional group of panelists to insure wide variety of perspectives.
11-02-11	Town Hall invites sent to over 200 education contacts.
11-03-11	Waiver information and invitations to the Town Halls were sent to SBOE, City Council and the Mayor’s Education Transition team.
11-03-11	Twitter updates.
11-04-11	Town Hall invite sent through “hotlists” to publicize to various stakeholders.
11-7-11	OSSE met with the PCSB.
11-8-11	PSA on-air reads were distributed to radio outlets.
Nov	Hosted 4 Town Halls (Wards 3, 4, 7, and 8).
11-08-11	OSSE met with DCPS
11-08-11	Town Halls were submitted to the DC Community calendar.
11-09-11	Information sent to Young Education Professionals (YEP) and Fritzwire.
11-14 (2-4PM)	OSSE Hosted open office hours for any stakeholder to come and give input.
11-14-11	Informed over 8,100 local education stakeholders and followers via @ OSSEDC



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Twitter updates and distribution.

Implementation Timeline (Continued)

Upcoming Outreach

Date	Action
Nov-Jan	Continue collaborating with key stakeholders
Dec-Jan	OSSE will continue to host open office hours for any stakeholder to come and give input. Every Tuesday 3-5 pm and Thursday 10-12 noon.
11-17-11	The DC Committee of Practitioners will meet to discuss the waiver.
Nov-Jan	Engagement of the Common Core Task Force, the Schoolwide Growth Task Force, the Human Capital Task Force, and the Data Management committees. Items regarding the waiver were put in the agendas for the November meetings of these committees.
Nov-Jan	Engagement with grassroots community organizations
Dec-Jan	Focus group meetings
12-08-11	The DC Committee of Practitioners will meet again to discuss the waiver.
12-9-11	OSSE meeting with DCPCSA
12-14-11	OSSE is tentatively scheduled for the SBOE Council briefing meeting.
Jan	Webinar/Virtual Town hall launching public comment period will be open.
Jan	Public comment emails will be sent to all education contact listserves
Jan	Town Halls
Jan 23	Submit application to Council of Chief State School Officers for peer review

FUTURE ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

To enhance our outreach efforts in the future, OSSE will additionally take the following steps.

- Increased outreach and collaboration with DC SBOE.
- Collaborate with Local Official to build relationships with key community leaders.
- Implement a direct-constituent contact strategy for ward-specific outreach (ex. targeting flyer distribution).
- Establish Point-Contacts with ANC/ Neighborhood Associations.
- Disseminate additional Media Alerts/Press Releases.
- Build volunteer capacity for targeted outreach efforts.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information regarding the OSSE active and early engagement plan, please contact OSSE’s Elementary and Secondary Education Division.