April 6, 2015

Dr. E. Casey Wardynski, Superintendent
Huntsville City School System
Post Office Box 1256
Huntsville, AL 35807-4801

Dear Dr. Wardynski:

Your November 17, 2014, request for a waiver to allow Huntsville City School System to use Teachers on Special Assignment (TOSA) personnel to conduct EducateAlabama observations has been reviewed and recommended for approval. Please consider this letter confirmation of my approval of your waiver request.

It is my understanding that these observations will follow EducateAlabama procedures and be conducted by personnel that currently hold administrative certification and are under the supervision of the school principal. It is essential that teachers receive quality pre-observations, observations, and post-conference experiences.

I remain supportive of your forward thinking and your efforts to develop strong leadership capacity within the Huntsville City School System by providing opportunities for growing prospective principals and school system leaders.

Sincerely,

Thomas R. Bice
State Superintendent of Education

TRB:KWP:DK

cc: Mrs. Sherrill W. Parris
    Dr. Mark Kirkemier
    Mrs. Karen W. Porter
In accordance with the Alabama Accountability Act of 2013, Huntsville City Schools (HCS) requests a waiver to Rules of the Alabama State Board of Education, Supp. No. 10-4, 290-3-2. Under the provisions of the Alabama Accountability Act we have held a public hearing, secured Board of Education approval of appropriate resolutions, and are forwarding the waiver request to you with proper certifications.

The waiver we seek would allow Huntsville City Schools to allow Teachers on Special Assignment (TOSA) personnel who currently hold Admin certification to conduct Educate Alabama observations.

HCS will ensure that these observations are done in accordance to Educate Alabama procedures and under the supervision of the principal.

I have attached a copy of our waiver request. I have also attached a copy of our Board Resolution and a Statement of Assurance.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

3 Attachments:
1. Flexibility Request
2. Board Resolution
3. Statement of Assurance
Huntsville City Schools

Request that Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA) personnel that currently hold Administrative certification be allowed to conduct Educate Alabama observations.

Current Situation:

• TOSA program: Teachers on special assignment are hired to serve in school administrative positions to build a system wide leadership cadre for future positions as principals.
• Majority of TOSAs currently hold Administrative certification.

Requested Changes: Huntsville City Schools (HCS) requests a waiver to allow TOSAs to support principals with the Educate Alabama observations.

School year we plan to implement the plan: Immediately

Anticipated results/wanted outcome:

• This proposal supports the principal by providing additional support for ensuring that all teachers receive quality observations. The TOSA program also allows us to develop leadership capacity within our school district by providing a comprehensive training opportunity for prospective principals and district leaders.

Schools included: Academy for Science and Foreign Language, Challenger Elementary, Chapman P-8, Dawson Elementary, Hampton Cove Elementary, Highlands Elementary, Huntsville High, Lakewood Elementary, Morris Elementary, Mountain Gap P-8, McNair Junior High, Providence Elementary, Ridgecrest Elementary, Rolling Hills Elementary, University Place Elementary, Weatherly Elementary, Westlawn Middle, Whitesburg P-8, and Williams Middle Schools. Other schools if/when TOSA is added.

Individuals, Groups, Schools, etc. who will be affected:

• Certified teachers; TOSAs; Principals; schools as listed above.

Why the innovation plan is required / how it will improve student achievement:

This proposal supports the new requirement of Educate Alabama that every teacher receive 2 observations in the school year. It is important to us that we provide the necessary support for teachers on evaluation. Providing quality time for pre-observations, observations and post conferences is vital to continuous improvement in our schools.

How the proposal differs from current practice or law:

Currently, only people with the title of assistant principal and principal may conduct formal observations. This proposal would allow our TOSA personnel who hold administrative certification, to assist with the observations.
Statement of Assurance

The Huntsville City Schools Board of Education (HCS) recognizes and fully embraces our responsibility to ensure that all observations are done in accordance with procedures and practices as outlined in the Educate Alabama process.

E. Casey Wardynski, Ph.D.
Superintendent, Huntsville City Schools
256-428-6810