FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 28, 2020

ALABAMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO APPLY FOR NEW WAIVER OPTIONS RELATED TO TITLE IV

The Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) intends to apply for several new waiver options related to Title IV, Part A funds awarded to school districts for the 2020-2021 school year.

Recognizing that many schools and communities continue to face unprecedented challenges this year, the federal government has provided states with additional waiver opportunities related to Title IV, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

Pursuant to the authority granted under section 8401(b) of the ESEA, the U.S. Department of Education has invited states apply for waivers for one or more of the following Title IV, Part A program requirements:

☒ Section 4106(d) of Title IV, Part A of the ESEA, related to LEA needs assessments for the 2020-2021 school year.

☒ Section 4106(e)(2)(C), (D), and (E) of Title IV, Part A of the ESEA, with respect to content-area spending requirements for Federal fiscal year (FY) 2020 Title IV, Part A funds.

☒ Section 4109(b) of Title IV, Part A of the ESEA, with respect to the fifteen percent spending limitation for technology infrastructure for FY 2020 Title IV, Part A funds.

The ALSDE intends to apply for a waiver to each of the statutory requirements outlined above as part of our continued efforts to provide schools with as much flexibility as possible. Please note, however, that all other Title IV, Part A statutory requirements not subject to these waivers would remain in effect.

Earlier this year, Alabama requested and received a waiver of these provisions for funds awarded to school districts during the 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 school years. This was accomplished through the waiver authority of section 3511 of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. Unfortunately, the CARES Act did not provide any authority to extend these waivers beyond the 2019-2020 school year.

Accordingly, the federal government has now made this separate opportunity available for states to further waive these requirements for Title IV, Part A funds that were awarded to school districts for the 2020-2021 school year.

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SPECIAL NOTICE: ALSDE APPLYING FOR NEW WAIVER OPTIONS RELATED TO TITLE IV

As part of the statutory requirements for seeking this waiver, the ALSDE must solicit and respond to public comment on its waiver request as well as provide evidence of the available comment period. Public comments regarding this waiver are to be submitted to federalwaivercovid@alsde.edu. This 30-day public comment period shall begin on December 29, 2020 and conclude on January 27, 2021.

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