



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

JUL 21 2009

The Honorable Carlos Chardón
Secretary of Education
Puerto Rico Department of Education
Post Office Box 190759
San Juan, Puerto Rico 00919-0759

Dear Secretary Chardón:

I am writing in response to your request under 34 C.F.R. § 200.19(b)(7) for an extension of the 2010–11 deadline for reporting a four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate (34 C.F.R. § 200.19(b)(4)(ii)(A)) and of the 2011–12 deadline for using a four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate in adequate yearly progress (AYP) determinations (34 C.F.R. § 200.19(b)(5)(i)). Graduation rates represent an important indicator of the extent to which schools and districts are preparing students for post-secondary education and the workforce.

Puerto Rico requested an extension to permit it to report a three-year adjusted cohort graduation rate beginning with students graduating in the 2011–12 school year because of modifications it is making to its student information system (SIS). The new SIS will enable Puerto Rico to calculate a three-year adjusted cohort graduation rate for the cohort of students including first-time 10th-graders in school year 2009–10, which will be reported with the results of assessments administered in 2011–12.

I am approving Puerto Rico's request to use a three-year adjusted cohort graduation rate and its request for a one-year extension to report its three-year adjusted cohort graduation rate. Puerto Rico will first be required to report its three-year adjusted cohort graduation rate with assessments administered in 2011–12 and to include it in AYP determinations based on assessments administered in 2012–13. I am also approving Puerto Rico to continue using the graduation rate in its current Accountability Workbook as its transitional rate until it can report its three-year adjusted cohort graduation rate in 2011–12. Please note that, beginning with AYP determinations based on assessments administered in 2011–12, Puerto Rico must include its transitional graduation rate in the aggregate and disaggregated by subgroups at the school, district, and state levels, as required in 34 C.F.R. § 200.19(b)(7)(iii). Finally, please note that, in accordance with 34 C.F.R. § 200.19(b)(6)(ii), Puerto Rico must submit for peer review and Department approval its graduation rate goal and targets for 2009–10 and beyond.

We appreciate the work you are doing to improve data quality in Puerto Rico. If you have any questions as you move forward with your work on Puerto Rico's graduation rate, please contact Vicki Robinson of my staff at Vicki.Robinson@ed.gov or (202) 205-5471.

Sincerely,

Joseph C. Conaty
Delegated Authority to Perform the Functions and
Duties of the Assistant Secretary for Elementary and
Secondary Education

cc: Governor Luis Fortuño
William Urbinas
Ramón DeAzua

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