



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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CHRIS CHRISTIE
Governor

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Commissioner

September 29, 2017

Dear Partners at the New Jersey Association of School Librarians,

Thank you for participating in the development of the New Jersey Department of Education's *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)* state implementation plan. Your genuine engagement enabled us to create a plan that focuses on equity for all students, deep support for the schools that need it most, and the promise that all children attend a school providing the support and skills they need to thrive throughout their K-12 experience and beyond. We are especially grateful for your dedication to student development through access to library media services. As a result of your input and the input of all of our stakeholders, our final product, which holds at its heart students and their needs, is a plan that New Jerseyans can be proud of.

Through an iterative and meaningful engagement process with stakeholders, we developed and then adjusted the plan to best meet the needs of our students and to consider more broadly what school success looks like. For instance, in many conversations, we heard that we must place a greater emphasis on student growth and generally expand what information our accountability systems provide, particularly school performance reports. Additionally, parents and educators asked that we lower the minimum number necessary for students to be captured in our accountability system (n-size) so that the performance of more students is captured and more schools are accountable for more discreet student groups.



We also know that to best support schools and districts, we at the New Jersey Department of Education must continually improve our efforts to provide assistance. For this reason, we are making significant adjustments and improvements to best serve schools and districts. I look forward to updating you over the next few months about how we are working to clarify, align and simplify our support systems and how we can provide communities with information that is more easily accessible and understandable to empower school communities to have conversations on how to best address identified student needs.

Please accept my deepest gratitude for your sustained collaboration, as the hardest work lies ahead. We cannot waiver from the commitment to collectively strive to improve current and future opportunities for all of our students. I hope to continue these critical conversations as we collectively raise the voices of each and every child in the state of New Jersey.

With gratitude,

Kimberley Harrington