

April 3, 2008

Congressman David Skaggs
Executive Director
Colorado Department of Higher Education
1380 Lawrence, Suite 1200
Denver, Colorado 80204

RE: 2010 WAIVERS

Dear Congressman Skaggs:

This affirms our view that superintendents find a school district waiver to be an acceptable addition to the two waivers that the Department of Higher Education is prepared to propose. Those are:

- A waiver for students whose index is more than 10 points above the minimum index at the institution;
- A waiver applying the 20% window on a statewide basis rather than an institutional basis.

In forming this opinion, the Colorado Department of Education relied on input from the field. This includes conversations I and my staff have had with area superintendents (among these was Gerald Keefe from Kit Carson). It also includes advice received from three superintendents who polled colleagues in their respective regions (Mike Paskewicz from Adams 12, Dave Van Sant from Strasburg, and John McCleary from Crowley County). These conversations focused on four questions.

Question: What percent of the 2010 graduates from your school district will meet HEAR 2010?

Reply: While an unknown number of high school students who graduate in 2010 may not meet the Higher Education Admission Requirements, the teachers and superintendents we visited with do not believe that these 2010 standards pose a problem.

Question: Would the exemption for students that was put in place for HEAR 2008 provide flexibility for your students in meeting HEAR 2010 standards?

Reply: Yes

Question: Would the continuation of the 2008 exemption policy change beyond 2009 to the 2010 graduating class be an acceptable solution?

Reply: Yes

Question: Would the 2008 exemption policy change, if applied to HEAR 2010, 2008 replace the need for a waiver at the school district, or for students coming from certain school districts?

Answer: The clear preference is to have as many waiver options available as possible.

Thank you for asking for our input on a recommendation.

Respectfully,



Dwight D. Jones
Commissioner of Education