May 20, 2014

TO: Chief School Administrators
Charter School Lead Persons

FROM: Rochelle Sinclair, Director
Office of School Improvement

SUBJECT: Opportunity to Comment on Waiver Request

The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) offers an opportunity to provide comment regarding a waiver request to the United States Department of Education (USDE) for an extension of the availability of funds with regard to New Jersey’s School Improvement Grants.

School Improvement Grants (SIG), authorized under section 1003(g) of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), are grants to state educational agencies (SEAs) that SEAs use to make competitive subgrants to local educational agencies (LEAs) that demonstrate the greatest need for the funds and the strongest commitment to use the funds to provide adequate resources in order to raise substantially the achievement of students in their lowest-performing schools.

Under section 421(b) of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (the “Tydings Amendment”), FY 2011 and FY 2012 SIG funds must be obligated by September 30, 2014. The NJDOE has requested to waive this to extend the period of availability of FY 2011 and FY 2012 carryover school improvement funds for the SEA and all of its LEAs to September 30, 2015. These carryover funds, along with the FY 2013 SIG allocation, will be used to support Cohort 3 SIG schools.

LEAs and the public may comment on this request at our Title I website at http://www.state.nj.us/education/grants/nclb/waiver/. The NJDOE will submit copies of comments received after the comment period closes on June 20, 2014.

c: Members, State Board of Education
Senior Staff
Executive County Superintendents
Executive Directors for Regional Achievement Centers
Executive County School Business Administrators
NJ LEE Group
Garden State Coalition of Schools