



# PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION | June St. Clair Atkinson, Ed.D., *State Superintendent*

WWW.NCPUBLICSCHOOLS.ORG

March 26, 2010

TO LEA Superintendents

FROM Rebecca B. Garland *RBG*

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT WAIVERS

We have received several questions regarding the status of previously approved ABCs waivers and the impact of recent changes to the school improvement planning cycle. This memo provides clarification of the new cycle and how it affects existing waivers.

The General Assembly approved multiple changes to the ABCs legislation specific to school improvement planning; however, two portions in particular are germane to your planning cycle and waivers:

- Section 3 of the bill amends GS § 115C-105.27 (e) to state that school improvement plans “shall remain in effect for no more than two years,” reducing the planning cycle length by one year.
- Section 4 of the bill states “This act is effective when it becomes law and applies beginning with the 2009-2010 School Year.

Since schools had already completed school improvement plans for the 2009-2010 School Year when the legislation passed, the Department determined that the two-year cycle would begin with the 2010-2011 School Year. Therefore, school team planning for the two-year cycle 2010-2012 should begin this spring.

Because the intent of ABCs waivers is to support school improvement, past practice for ABCs waivers has been to approve waivers for the duration of the planning cycle, or three years. We will maintain the alignment of waivers with the school improvement cycle; therefore, waivers will be valid for two years.

For schools with ABCs waivers originally approved through the 2010-11 School Year, these waivers will expire at the end of the current (2009-10) School Year, not at the end of the 2010-11 School Year. When school-level teams complete the improvement planning process for the cycle that begins this fall, school principals should submit the waivers needed to support the goals and strategies identified in their school improvement plans. Principals may submit the waiver requests to the district to be combined with those of the other schools in the district, or they may submit them directly to NC DPI, depending upon **accepted district practice**.

We know this transition is inconvenient for many districts that believed they had waivers in place for another year. However, the purpose for allowing waivers is to ensure the flexibility needed to implement a school improvement plan. As such, the waivers should be aligned with the planning cycle, and this is what we are attempting to achieve.

As a reminder, you may access the School Improvement Plan template, guide and professional development module on the DPI website at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/councils/lea/previous/templates>.

If you have additional questions about this, please email them to [SIPFeedback@dpi.state.nc.us](mailto:SIPFeedback@dpi.state.nc.us), and we will do our best to address them in a timely manner. Thank you for your time and for your patience as we all adjust to this new process.

c: Dr. June Atkinson  
LEA Curriculum and Instructional Leaders  
Rob Hines

## ACADEMIC SERVICES AND INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT

Rebecca Garland, Ed.D. *Chief Academic Officer* | [rgarland@dpi.state.nc.us](mailto:rgarland@dpi.state.nc.us)  
6368 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-6368 | (919) 807-3200 | Fax (919) 807-4065  
AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER