



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

May 24, 2023

The Honorable Joseph Graves
Secretary of Education
South Dakota Department of Education
800 Governors Drive
Pierre, SD 57501

Dear Secretary Graves,

I am writing to recognize South Dakota's ongoing commitment to the maintenance of equity requirements under section 2004(b) of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP). Knowing the numerous, competing priorities facing States, State educational agencies, and local educational agencies, South Dakota's early work to implement these new, critically important resource equity requirements is appreciated. We note that South Dakota's action is a result of cooperative efforts involving Governor Noem, appropriators in your legislature, and State educational agency leadership and staff.

ARP maintenance of equity requirements help ensure that State and local education funding supports students who experienced longstanding opportunity gaps before, and were disproportionately impacted by, the COVID-19 pandemic. In implementing these provisions through a mix of data quality efforts, engagement with Department-provided technical assistance, and maintenance of State education funding for the communities and students who need it most, South Dakota is taking critical steps to accelerate academic recovery and close opportunity and achievement gaps.

My team looks forward to continuing our work with yours in implementing the second year of maintenance of equity requirements in fiscal year 2023. Thank you for your collaboration, and all you do for South Dakota's students, educators, and families.

Sincerely,

James F. Lane, Ed. D.
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary
Delegated the Authority to Perform the Functions
and Duties of the Assistant Secretary Office of
Elementary and Secondary Education

CC: The Honorable Kristi Noem
Governor of South Dakota
500 East Capitol Avenue
Pierre, SD 57501