



National Association of State Directors of Special Education, Inc.

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February 6, 2018

The Honorable Betsy DeVos
Secretary, U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC

Dear Secretary DeVos:

We write on behalf of the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE), the national nonprofit organization that represents the state directors of special education in the states, the District of Columbia, the U.S. Department of Defense Education Agency, the Bureau of Indian Education, the U.S. territories and Freely Associated States.

Your staff has indicated that the Department is considering postponing implementation of the regulation on significant disproportionality in special education that was published in December, 2016. The regulation was designed to develop a uniform methodology for states to use in identifying disproportionality and to take steps to address it.

Our members are the state personnel who are charged with implementation of this regulation. While NASDSE members have had some concerns about the methodology proscribed in the regulation, **all** states have been moving forward to implement the regulation. Postponing implementation not only stops work already in motion, but it suggests that the identification and redress of significant disproportionality can be put on hold.

NASDSE does not believe that addressing equity should ever be put on hold. Postponing implementation leaves the states in limbo – should they move forward or stop what they doing?

We urge you to speak out and acknowledge the fundamental fact that equity for students with disabilities in special education exists and should be addressed. Postponing implementation of the regulation sends the wrong message at the wrong time.

NASDSE welcomes an opportunity to meet with you and members of your staff to discuss our concerns.

Please feel free to contact NASDSE's executive director, Bill East at bill.east@nasdse.org, (703) 3576 or NASDSE's president, Santina Thibedeau at santina.thibedeau@doe.nh.gov or (603) 271-1099.

Sincerely,

Theron (Bill) East, Jr.

Santina Thibedeau

Bill East
Executive Director

Santina Thibedeau
President