



**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**

RICK PERRY  
GOVERNOR

November 29, 2012

The Honorable Michael Williams  
Commissioner  
Texas Education Agency  
1701 North Congress Avenue  
Austin, Texas 78701-1494

Dear Commissioner Williams:

This week we received the excellent news that our state's graduation rate ties for the nation's third best. As you know, this accomplishment did not happen by accident, nor did it happen overnight. The State of Texas has set the bar for a standard of excellence and our school districts, teachers, parents and students have worked together to meet the challenges of our rigorous standards. While we must continue to adhere to our state's accountability system, we must also recognize the importance of local control. That is why I am asking you to defer until the 2013-14 school year the requirement that an end-of-course assessment count as 15 percent of a student's final course grade.

The deferral of this provision should not be interpreted as prohibiting districts from including end-of-course exams in a student's final grade should a district choose to do so. It is merely giving local districts the flexibility to enact changes at a level and pace that is right for them.

I will work with the legislature during the upcoming session to give local districts greater control, while maintaining our strong accountability system. Until then, I understand the authority given to you through the transition plan authorized under the Texas Education Code Section 39.025(f) permits you to postpone the implementation of the 15 percent requirement by amending the transition plan.

Texas must remain committed to working toward the state's goal of every student graduating ready for college, career or service in our nation's military.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "RICK PERRY".

Rick Perry  
Governor

RP:khp