



# Focus Learning Academy of Northern Columbus

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Abdirizak Farah, Superintendent

Jessee McKown, Principal

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December 13, 2021

Ohio Department of Education

Office of School Nutrition

Attn: Sarina Wilks

25 South Front Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor

Columbus, Ohio 43215-4183

## Waiver Request

1. State agency submitting waiver request and responsible State agency staff contact information: The Ohio Department of Education
2. Region: Midwest
3. Eligible service providers participating in waiver and affirmation that they are in good standing: Focus Learning Academy of Northern Columbus /IRN 142943
4. Description of the challenge the State agency is seeking to solve, the goal of the waiver to improve services under the Program, and the expected outcomes if the waiver is granted. [Section 12(l)(2)(A)(iii) and 12(l)(2)(A)(iv) of the NSLA]:
  - We'd like to use direct certification results lists obtained on November 15, 2021, to establish a new base year and to file a correct CEP ISP election document after the Sept 30 deadline.
5. Specific Program requirements to be waived (include statutory and regulatory citations). [Section 12(l)(2)(A)(i) of the NSLA]:
  - We are requesting to apply for CEP and use direct certification results obtained after June 30, 2021 to establish a new base year for the 2021-2022 school year.
  - The regulations to be waived are: **Election documentation and deadline**. A local educational agency, group of schools, or school that intends to elect the community eligibility provision for the following year for one or more schools must submit to the State agency documentation demonstrating the LEA, group of schools, or school meets the identified student percentage, as specified under [paragraph \(f\)\(3\)\(i\)](#) of this section. Such documentation must be submitted no later than June 30 and must

- include, at a minimum, the counts of identified students and enrolled students as of April 1 of the school year prior to CEP implementation.
6. Detailed description of alternative procedures and anticipated impact on Program operations, including technology, State systems, and monitoring:
- If we are not approved for CEP we will determine student eligibility for free or reduced price school meals based on an individual basis. We are operating
  - with less staff than ever before due to multiple vacancies. The time it would take to approve the individual applications would be extensive because our student demographic is 99% from an immigrant community. This would present us with additional challenges as a result of language barriers as well.

#### Attachment A

7. Description of any steps the State has taken to address regulatory barriers at the State level. [Section 12(l)(2)(A)(ii) of theNSLA]:
8. Anticipated challenges State or eligible service providers may face with the waiver implementation:
- If we are not approved for CEP one of the biggest challenges we will face will be parental confusion due to the language barrier. 97% of our students receive some sort of subsidy and the only reason we did not do CEP was due to the pandemic last year and the higher reimbursement rates under SFSP. Parents would not understand that we need them to participate in sending in breakfast and lunch money each day in order for their students to eat. This would cause our school to face a hardship as we are already short on staff in virtually every department as it is. The paperwork necessary to track all of this would present as a problem because many of our staff members are already handling additional duties for other open positions within our organization.
9. Description of how the waiver will not increase the overall cost of the Program to the Federal Government. If there are anticipated increases, confirm that the costs will be paid from non-Federal funds. [Section 12(l)(1)(A)(iii) of theNSLA]:
- The waiver will not increase the cost of the program because most of the student demographic would qualify for free and reduced lunch. If there should be an increase in the program costs overall we ensure that we will pay for those increases out of non-Federal funds pursuant to [Section 12(l)(1)(A)(iii) of theNSLA].
10. Anticipated waiver implementation date and time period:
- July 28, 2021 to May 25, 2022


**11. Proposed monitoring and review procedures:**

- We will ensure that we follow all guidelines for completing direct certifications in the future in a timely manner going forward. i.e Oct 15, Jan 15, April 15, June 15 of each year
- We will follow all monitoring and review procedures to ensure that we are compliant with all program mandates as well.
- We will review the program guidelines and requirements on a quarterly basis going forward.

**12. Proposed reporting requirements (include type of data and due date(s) to FNS):**

**13. Link to or a copy of the public notice informing the public about the proposed waiver [Section 12(l)(1)(A)(ii) of the NSLA]:** The waiver request has been posted at <https://www.focusacademynorth.org/school-menu-1>

**14. Signature and title of requesting official:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

Food Service Director  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

leslieeaves@live.com  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Email

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Requesting official's email address for transmission of response:

**TO BE COMPLETED BY FNS REGIONAL OFFICE:**

*FNS Regional Offices are requested to ensure the questions have been adequately addressed by the State agency and formulate an opinion and justification for a response to the waiver request based on their knowledge, experience and work with the State.*

**Date request was received at Regional Office:**

☐ **Check this box to confirm that the State agency has provided public notice in accordance with Section 12(l)(1)(A)(ii) of the NSLA**

**• Regional Office Analysis and Recommendations:**