



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY

April 25, 2014

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
New York State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo:

I am writing in response to New York's request to amend its approved Race to the Top grant project, including revisions to the project period to implement a portion of its plan. Between March 10, 2014, and April 24, 2014, the State submitted documentation to and held conversations with the U.S. Department of Education (Department) to support an amendment request to its approved Race to the Top plan. As you are aware, the Department has the authority to approve amendments to your plan and budget, provided the revisions do not change the overall scope and objectives of the approved proposal. In March 2013, the Department issued "Amendment Requests with No-cost Extension Guidance and Principles" indicating the process by which amendments containing requests to provide additional time for a grantee to accomplish the reform goals and deliverables it committed to in its Race to the Top application and approved Scope of Work would be reviewed and approved or denied. To determine whether approval could be granted, the Department has applied the conditions and elements specific to no cost extensions noted in the document, and compared it with the Race to the Top program *Principles* included in the "Grant Amendment Submission Process" document issued to Governors of grantee States in October 2011.

I approve the following amendment, including an extension to the time period for implementation of one project, as described below.

- In the "D3: Graduate-Level and Undergraduate-Level Clinically Rich Teacher Preparation Pilot Program" projects, reduce the total budget by \$3 million due to updated cost estimates across the 13 Graduate-Level and Undergraduate-Level Clinically Rich Teacher Preparation Pilot programs. Per approval in October 2013, programs will continue implementation, including providing intensive residencies and stipends to prepare and support teacher candidates in high-needs schools in New York and analyzing data gathered from implementation to identify best practices through school year (SY) 2014-2015. According to the State, the remaining budget is sufficient to www.ed.gov

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The Department of Education's mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.

support candidates participating in residency programs. The State believes that the 366 candidates in the first two cohorts and 118 currently recruited to participate in cohort three in SY 2014-2015 meet the commitments of this project.

- In the “D4: Higher Education Faculty Development Programs” project, shift the \$3 million as described above to Year 4 and 5 to expand support for implementation of the State’s new certification exams for teacher and school leader candidates. After piloting and field testing performance-based exams and providing training to faculty at institutions of higher education, in spring 2014 all new teacher and school leader candidates will be required to take and pass these new exams to earn New York State certification. In order to ensure all high-quality candidates have equitable opportunities for success with the new certification exams, the State plans to utilize the funds shifted from D3 based on revised projected costs to make certification assessment assistance available to eligible candidates during SY 2013-2014 and SY 2014-2015. According to the State, this adjustment will provide supports for up to approximately 6,000 candidates and will better enable the State to meet its overall goal to increase the number of new educators in the State prepared to provide instruction aligned with Regents reform agenda.

As described in a May 29, 2013, amendment approval letter, the Department indicated that it generally approves the State’s process to review LEA subgrant requests to obligate and liquidate funds after September 23, 2014. An updated version of the State’s process is included in Appendix 1. Prior to July 15, 2014, the Department expects the State to submit a record of each participating LEA project approved by the State for a no-cost extension and, prior to October 31, 2014, the Department expects to receive a record of the total funding approved for LEAs’ Year 5 Scopes of Work.

It is our understanding that this amendment and no-cost extension will not result in a change in your State’s performance measures and outcomes, nor will they substantially change the scope and objectives of the work. Please note that we are expecting grantees with no-cost extensions to liquidate all funds by September 1, 2015, given that by law all Race to the Top funds revert to the U.S. Department of Treasury as of October 1, 2015. The State must request and receive approval to move forward with no-cost extensions for any additional projects. This letter will be posted on the Department’s website as a record of the amendments. The State’s Scope of Work will also be updated to reflect approved extensions.

If you need any assistance or have any questions regarding Race to the Top, please do not hesitate to contact New York’s Race to the Top Program Officer, Jessie Harteis, at 202-453-6651 or Jessie.Harteis@ed.gov.

Sincerely,

/s/

Ann Whalen
Director, Policy and Program Implementation
Implementation and Support Unit

cc: Dr. John B. King, Jr., Commissioner of Education
Ken Slentz, Deputy Commissioner, Office of P-12 Education
Don Juron, Chief Financial Officer, New York State Education Department
John Delaney, Director of Operations, Office of P-12 Education
Karen Daugherty, Project Manager, Performance Management Office

Appendix 1: Process the State will use to review LEA subgrant requests to obligate and liquidate funds after the current project period, as described by the New York State Education Department (NYSED)

Participating New York State Race to the Top school districts and Charter Schools (LEAs) may request a one year extension to their four year local Race to the Top allocations in one or all of the assurance areas in which additional time is required to complete. LEAs should only request an extension of Race to the Top reimbursement funding in order to meet their specific reform goals as outlined in their approved Scope of Work. NYSED will consider the following criteria in reviewing each LEA request for an extension.

- *The amount of the LEA's original total four year allocation.*
- *Demonstrated progress towards the LEAs stated reform goals as outlined in their current and approved Scope of Work. Progress may be assessed via review of approved Annual Program Reports and/or site visits.*
- *LEA should have been active for at least the three years of the grant in terms of activity within the NYSED Business Portal and must be current on all reporting measures within the Portal. For example:*
 - *Current approved budget*
 - *Timely 1512 reporting*
 - *Approved Final Expenditure Reports*
- *LEA should be deemed to have been an active participant as defined in the LEA Memorandum of Understanding and as evidenced by records of attendance at Network Team Institutes (NTIs), communities of practice sessions, or other practice-sharing events.*

If an LEA chooses to request a one year extension of Race to the Top reimbursable funding in order to fulfill their Race to the Top reform goals, an LEA should submit this request along with an amended Scope of Work and an attestation of their commitment to engage parents in the transition to Common Core Learning Standards to NYSED for approval by June 30, 2014. This will enable NYSED adequate time to process requests and for funds to be obligated by June 30, 2015 in view of Race to the Top funding liquidation end date of September 1, 2015. NYSED's goal is that LEAs have adequate time to spend their allocation. Original Memorandums of Understanding will remain in effect during any approved extensions.