



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY

August 1, 2011

The Honorable Rick Scott
Executive Office of the Governor
PL05, The Capitol
400 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0001

Dear Governor Scott:

I am writing in response to the amendment request submitted to the U.S. Department of Education (the Department) on May 25, 2011, by the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC). That request outlined PARCC's proposal for a revised approach and budget for their technology audit and transition support work, which is intended to assist PARCC States and districts in planning and implementing the necessary infrastructure for online delivery of the new assessment in school year 2014–15. As outlined in the Cooperative Agreement, the Department has the authority to approve amendments to your plan and budget provided that such a change does not alter the scope or objectives of the approved proposal. On February 28, 2011, the Department sent a letter to you indicating the process that would be used to review any amendment to PARCC's approved plan. To determine whether approval could be granted for this request, the Department has applied the conditions noted in the February 28 letter.

I am pleased to approve your proposal. Under this amendment, PARCC will collaborate with the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) to develop an online readiness assessment tool in lieu of creating a PARCC-specific audit. PARCC originally budgeted \$50,000 for developing and implementing an audit in the first year of the grant, with \$450,000 budgeted for technical assistance to States following the audit. The online readiness assessment tool—which will be a dynamic, interactive evaluation and planning tool for all participating States—has an estimated cost of \$500,000, which will be split equally between PARCC and SBAC. As a result, PARCC will reallocate \$200,000 from the post-audit technical assistance to the development of the tool. This requires moving \$100,000 of the \$225,000 budgeted amounts for each of years two and three into the budget for year one. This reduction in the post-audit technical assistance will still allow for 10 days of consulting services for each PARCC State rather than the 18 days originally budgeted. We agree that this is an appropriate change; collaborating with SBAC to create a robust tool is the necessary first step to provide sufficient detail for the member States and school districts to align their technology plans with the requirements of the PARCC assessment system.

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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.

It is our understanding that this amendment will not result in a change to PARCC's overall timeline and outcomes, nor will it substantially change the scope of work. As noted in our communication of February 28, 2011, this approval letter will be posted on the Department's website as a public record of the amendment.

I am confident that PARCC will continue its bold efforts to create the next generation of assessment systems that will more accurately measure what students know and are able to do. If you need any assistance or have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Jessica McKinney at (202) 401-1960 or Jessica.McKinney@ed.gov.

Sincerely,

/s/

Anthony W. Miller
Acting Assistant Deputy Secretary, Implementation and Support Unit

cc: John Winn, Florida Department of Education
Mitchell Chester, Massachusetts Department of Education
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