



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY

March 1, 2013

The Honorable Jay Inslee  
Office of the Governor  
P.O. Box 40002  
Olympia, Washington 98504-0002

Dear Governor Inslee:

I am writing in response to the January 25, 2013, request by the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (Smarter Balanced) to amend its approved Race to the Top Assessment budget. Smarter Balanced requested to adjust funds within its approved budget to increase funding for the consortium's field test administration.

The U.S. Department of Education (Department) has the authority to approve an amendment 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 indicating the process by which amendments would be reviewed and approved or denied. To determine whether approval could be granted for this request, the Department applied that process.

We approve the requested budget adjustment, which will increase the budget for the administration of the field test in spring 2014 by \$4.1 million. This funding will include the development of administration manuals, training for stakeholders, and help desk support for the 5 million students anticipated to participate in the field test. The funding for this will be redirected from:

- Reallocate \$1,514,414 from professional capacity and outreach due to the amount of money required to fund the formative practices and professional development contract being less than estimated.
- In assessment design, reallocate \$1,499,138 because, in part, the consortium's cost to develop the interim assessment design was less than estimated. The consortium notes that the decrease in the assessment design module does not impact the total number of items that will be developed or available to support the assessment system at the end of the grant period.

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- Reallocate \$308,695 from the governance module that is no longer necessary because the consortium received external funding to support initial sustainability work.
- In research, reallocate \$548,427 due to the cost for the digital library being less than estimated and by reducing the amount of money available for technology advisors to the consortium (from \$436,375 to \$231,105).
- Reallocate \$258,100 from across areas of the budget that support contract and procurement expenses because they were either not used during the procurement process (e.g., travel costs for in-person presentations) or because the amount required for managing the contract is less than the budgeted amount.

It is our understanding that the consortium's requested budget adjustment will not change the consortium's scope of work nor result in a change to the consortium's approved master work plan. This approval letter will be posted on the Department's website as a public record of the amendment.

The Department looks forward to future collaboration with Smarter Balanced as the consortium continues to develop an assessment system that measures the college- and career-readiness of all students in the Smarter Balanced states. If you have questions or need assistance, please do not hesitate to contact Benecia Tuthill at [Benecia.Tuthill@ed.gov](mailto:Benecia.Tuthill@ed.gov) or (202) 453-5545.

Sincerely,

/s/

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

cc: Randy Dorn, Washington State Superintendent  
Joe Willhoft, Executive Director, Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium  
Tony Alpert, Chief Operating Officer, Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium  
Michael Middleton, Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public  
Instruction  
Stanley Rabinowitz, WestEd