



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY

May 18, 2012

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

Dear Governor Gregoire:

I am writing in response to the budget amendment submitted to the U.S. Department of Education (the Department) on April 27, 2012, by the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (Smarter Balanced) to support the addition of two staff positions: Chief Technology Officer and Director of Professional Learning. Smarter Balanced described the need for these two positions as urgent. This summer, the consortium will begin developing the test platform and other technology components to deliver and support the assessment system. In addition, the consortium is finalizing its workplan for developing formative tools and processes and other professional development supports. These two positions have been proposed by Smarter Balanced to lead these large and important components of the project.

As you know, the 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 to you indicating the process that would be used to review any amendment to the approved plan from Smarter Balanced. To determine whether approval could be granted for this request, the Department has reviewed the request against the principles noted in the February 28 letter.

I am pleased to approve the requested budget change to support these two additional positions (see enclosure). It is our understanding that this amendment will not result in a change to the consortium's overall outcomes or key activities from the approved plan, nor will it change the scope of work. As noted in the request, this submission is part of a larger effort under way by Smarter Balanced to revise your budget to take into account your current obligations and expenditures now that the consortium is well into the

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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.

development of its assessment system. As we noted in our previous communication, the Department requests that Smarter Balanced submit by June 1, 2012, for our review and approval a revised budget that reflects the full amount of proposed changes.

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 Smarter Balanced will continue its 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 Patrick Rooney at Patrick.Rooney@ed.gov or (202) 453-5514.

Sincerely,

Ann Whalen
Director, Policy and Program Implementation

Enclosure

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

Smarter Balanced Budget Amendment

Line Item	Budget Amount	Proposed Budget Change	Revised Budget Amount
Test Delivery Application contract	\$15,000,000	-\$396,240	\$14,603,760
Chief Technology Officer, salary and fringe	0	\$376,240	\$376,240
Chief Technology Officer, Travel	0	\$20,000	\$20,000
Professional Development contractor(s)	\$5,125,000	-\$396,240	\$4,728,760
Director Professional Learning, salary and fringe	0	\$376,240	\$376,240
Dir. Professional Learning, Travel	0	\$20,000	\$20,000