



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY

June 27, 2014

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 amendment request submitted by the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (Smarter Balanced) on June 16, 2014. Smarter Balanced requested a no-cost extension of the grant period until December 31, 2014, for the purpose of completing several activities related to research and setting achievement standards. Smarter Balanced also submitted an amendment request to make adjustments to its approved budget.

As you know, 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 grant project. The Department's February 28, 2011, letter establishes the review process for any amendment to the Smarter Balanced approved plan. In determining whether to approve this request, the Department has applied the conditions noted in the February 28 letter.

The Department approves this request extending the grant period for certain activities related to the grant until December 31, 2014. The additional time will provide the ability for Smarter Balanced to properly sequence activities related to reviewing results from the field test in spring 2014 and setting academic achievement standards in fall 2014. The no-cost extension will also provide additional time to complete and ensure the quality of the consortium's work related to the reporting system and the formative tools and digital library. The Department also approves the budget amendment to reallocate \$219,891 to support this no-cost extension. The budget amendment will support an extension of the contract with WestEd, the Smarter Balanced project management partner, staff at the Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, and contracted staff who serve as contract managers for the consortium's work. The amendment request will also support an additional meeting of the Smarter Balanced technical advisory committee in October 2014. The funding source for these changes

www.ed.gov

400 MARYLAND AVE., SW, WASHINGTON, DC 20202

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

is the funds previously allocated, with the budget amendment approved on April 15, 2014, to Assessment Design and Governance modules but not allocated to specific consortium activities. There remains \$1,751,120 unallocated across the Assessment Design, Professional Capacity and Outreach, and Technology modules. Smarter Balanced is required to submit proposed use(s) for these funds to the Department and the consortium indicated it will do so by July 18, 2014.

It is our understanding that this amendment and no-cost extension will not result in a change to the Smarter Balanced performance measures and outcomes, nor will they change the scope and objectives of the work. The Department is not awarding any additional funds through this amendment approval. The consortium must request and receive approval to move forward with no-cost extensions for any additional projects. This approval letter will be posted on the Department's website as a public record of this amendment.

As always, the Department looks forward to a continued partnership with Smarter Balanced as it completes its goal of designing and implementing an assessment system that will provide information to students, parents, and educators about student readiness for college and careers. If you have questions or need assistance, please do not hesitate to contact Patrick Rooney at Patrick.Rooney@ed.gov or (202) 453-5514.

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