



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION  
ACADEMIC IMPROVEMENT AND TEACHER QUALITY PROGRAMS

September 28, 2010

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

Dear Governor Gregoire,

I am pleased to provide the enclosed grant award notification (GAN) for the Race to the Top Assessment program, as funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). These funds are being awarded on the basis of the approved budget of \$159,976,843 for the SMARTER Balance Assessment Consortium (SBAC).

Congratulations to you and others participating in SBAC on your hard work and accomplishment. As the Secretary noted in his remarks on September 2<sup>nd</sup> when he announced the Race to the Top Assessment winners, if America is to have a public school system second to none, each state needs a first-rate assessment system to measure progress, guide instruction, and prepare students for college and careers. This is important and challenging work. I look forward to working with SBAC in support of your efforts to develop the next generation of assessment systems on behalf of educators, students and families across the country.

This award is subject to the attached grant conditions related to administering the grant, monitoring sub-recipients, reporting, maintaining adequate financial controls and procedures regarding the selection, award, and administration of contracts or agreements. Further, in accordance with 34 CFR 75.234(b), this award is classified as a cooperative agreement and will include substantial involvement on the part of the Department of Education (Department) program contact. As noted in the grant award documents, we expect that SBAC and the Department will successfully negotiate and complete a final cooperative agreement the recipient signs and returns no later than January 7, 2011.

In addition, I am enclosing a second GAN for a supplemental award of \$15,872,696. These funds support efforts to help participating States successfully transition to common standards and assessments. As soon as possible but no later than January 7, 2011, or when the cooperative agreement is signed (if sooner), the consortium will complete a plan that details transition strategies and activities recommended to the Department by the peer reviewers. The final approved plan and budget for this supplemental award will be incorporated into the cooperative agreement that is signed by the consortium and the Department.

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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.*

If you have any questions concerning your Race to the Top Assessment awards, please contact Meredith Farace at [meredith.farace@ed.gov](mailto:meredith.farace@ed.gov) or 202-401-8368.

Sincerely,

Joseph Conaty  
Director of Academic Improvement and Teacher Quality Programs

cc: Joe Willhoft

Enclosure: Grant Award Notifications with Attachments

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*Our mission is to ensure equal access to education and to promote educational excellence throughout the Nation*