



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY

February 24, 2014

Thomas E. Torkelson  
IDEA Public Schools  
505 Angelita Drive Suite 9  
Weslaco, TX 78596

Dear Chief Executive Officer Torkelson:

I would like to extend my thanks to you and your staff for your hard work and collaboration with us as IDEA Public Schools (IDEA) begins to implement its Race to the Top – District grant. Between April 8, 2013 and February 21, 2014, we received initial and revised school implementation plans and a detailed Scope of Work that is consistent with IDEA's approved application.

The Department conditionally approves IDEA's Scope of Work and the format of the school implementation plans; the grantee Scope of Work and school implementation plans include specific goals, activities, timeline, budgets, key personnel, and annual targets for key performance measures, where available. As noted in the conditions specified below, the Scope of Work will be subject to the submission of completed tables with annual targets for performance measures.

Conditions:

- According to the Race to the Top – District FY 2012 Notice Inviting Applications (NIA), grantees are required to set ambitious yet achievable annual goals that are equal to or exceed the State Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) targets for the LEA(s), overall and by student subgroup (as defined in the NIA), for each participating LEA. On September 30, 2013, the Department approved Texas' request for ESEA Flexibility. Therefore, IDEA must submit revised annual goals for each participating LEA that are aligned with the Texas' approved request for ESEA Flexibility and in accordance with the Race to the Top – District NIA no later than March 7, 2014.

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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.*

- In accordance with the FY2012 Notice Inviting Applications, IDEA must submit annual targets for all sub-groups for (A)(4)(c): Graduation rates and (A)(4)(d): College enrollment rates no later than March 7, 2014.

On December 27, 2012, IDEA received a grant of \$31,228,967 with the condition that the grantee draw down no more than 10 percent (\$3,122,896.70) of the grant prior to approval of the Scope of Work. In accordance with the condition outlined above, IDEA may access the remaining balance of the award, consistent with its approved Year 1 Scope of Work and budget. Funds may be drawn down only as they are needed, and their use must be consistent with the implementation of IDEA's Race to the Top - District plan and in support of accomplishing its proposed milestones.

Sincerely,

//s//

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

cc: Emily Pyeatt