



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY

November 25, 2013

Dr. Nancy J. McGinley  
Superintendent  
Charleston County School District  
75 Calhoun Street  
Charleston, SC 29401

Dear Superintendent McGinley,

I am writing in response to Charleston County School District's (CCSD) request to amend its approved Race to the Top -District grant project. Between April 8, 2013 and November 13, 2013, the grantee held conversations with and submitted amendment requests to the U.S. Department of Education (Department). As you are aware, the Department has the authority to approve amendments to your approved application and budget, provided that such a change does not alter the scope or objectives of the approved proposal. One March 27, 2013, the Department provided the "Scope of Work Grant Amendment Submission Process" document to grantees Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) indicated the process by which amendments would be reviewed and approved or denied. To determine whether approval could be granted, the Department has applied the conditions noted in the document, and compared it with the Race to the Top - District *Principles*, which are also noted in that document.

I approve the following amendments, as well as those in the attached table:

- In Project 1: Resources and Support, develop proficiency scales for kindergarten through twelfth grade in English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies to support CCSD's shift to a personal mastery system. CCSD will shift a total of \$32,657 to Year 2 personnel and fringe cost categories. To support this work and the amendments outlined below, CCSD identified \$1,114,000 in cost savings in the Year 2 contractual cost category due to revised cost estimates for increasing Wide Area Network (WAN)

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bandwidth and Internet bandwidth. CCSD was able to acquire bandwidth at a lower cost. Therefore, CCSD is not changing the scope of its commitment for expanding WAN and Internet bandwidth. The use for the remaining cost savings are described below.

- In Project 1: Resources and Support, add two positions, one full-time Project Manager and one full-time Administrative Technician, to the CCSD Race to the Top – District project team. The Project Manager will oversee technology rollout and integration in the 19 participating schools in the project. The Administrative Technician will provide administrative support to the CCSD Race to the Top – District team and will be responsible for overseeing the project budget. CCSD will use \$352,648 across Years 1-4 personnel, fringe, and contractual cost categories from the WAN and Internet cost savings described above.
- In Project 1: Resources and Support, shift \$324,750 to the Year 2 supply cost category to support wireless upgrades from the WAN and Internet cost savings, described above. In its application, the CCSD school board committed to sharing the costs to support wireless upgrades with project. Due to budget shortfalls, the school board is not able to contribute to wireless upgrades.
- In Project 1: Resources and Support, redefine the positions of the school-level staff tasked with supporting implementation of personalized learning. Instead of using 10 personalized learning coaches and 10 technology instructional coaches who would split their time between schools, CCSD will hire 20 personal mastery facilitators (PMFs). The PMFs will be skilled and trained in personalized learning and technology instruction and will be assigned to one school. This change does not represent a change in the project’s scope, nor does it require a change to the budget.
- In Project 2: Culture of Learning, provide targeted professional development for PMFs. CCSD has determined that additional professional development to better equip the PMFs to support and coach teachers on best practices for challenge-based learning and technology integration. CCSD will shift \$35,000 to the Year 2 contractual cost category from the WAN and Internet cost savings, described above.
- In Project 2, Culture of Learning, conduct site visits to school in Maine, New York, and Rhode Island that are implementing a personal mastery system. The site visits will provide CCSD teachers, PMFs, and school leaders an opportunity to observe personal mastery and to engage with and discuss personal mastery implementation with peers. CCSD will shift \$30,840 to the Year 2 travel cost category from the WAN and Internet cost savings, described above.

- In Project 2: Culture of Learning, shift \$22,170 to Years 2-4 travel cost category from the WAN and Internet cost savings, described above, to support project staff professional development. In the original proposal, the grantee proposed to send a subset of its project staff members to attend the annual Effective Schools Conference. CCSD has since recognized the need to provide project staff (including the Project Director, Project Officer, Digital Learning Platform Coordinator, and PMFs) with the opportunity to attend training, conferences, and courses that focus on grant-related areas in addition to the annual Effective School conference.
- In Project 2: Culture of Learning, shift \$178,592 to the Year 2 personnel and fringe cost categories from the WAN and Internet cost savings, described above, to supplement educator stipends funded by Title II. Due to a decrease in Title II funds, CCSD must use Race to the Top – District funds to fully fund the educator stipends described in its approved application.
- In the (A)(4) Student Outcome Measures, CCSD added subgroup targets that were missing from the application or not aligned with South Carolina’s Elementary and Secondary Education (ESEA) flexibility plan. See Appendix B for added subgroup targets.

It is our understanding that these amendments will not substantially change the scope and objectives of the approved plan. Please note that this letter will be posted on the Department’s website as a record of the amendments.

If you need any assistance or have any questions regarding Race to the Top – District, please do not hesitate to contact CCSD’s Race to the Top – District Program Officer, Karen Dorsey Hargrove, at 202-453-6695 or [Karen.dorseyhargrove@ed.gov](mailto:Karen.dorseyhargrove@ed.gov).

Sincerely,

//s//

Ann Whalen  
Director, Policy and Implementation  
Implementation and Support Unit

Attachments: A – Timeline changes to CCSD Race to the Top – District Project 1 Activities  
B – Appendix B: (A)(4) Student Outcomes Measures – Subgroup Targets

cc: CCSD, Lauren McCauley, L3 Project Director  
CCSD, Lisa Herring, Chief Academic Officer