



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY

September 18, 2013

Superintendent Soner Tarim
Harmony Science Academy (Harmony Public Schools)
9321 W. Sam Houston Pkwy
S. Houston, TX 77099

Dear Superintendent Tarim:

I am writing in response to Harmony's Race to the Top - District amendment request. On September 4, 2013, the grantee submitted amendment request to the U.S. Department of Education (Department). On March 27, 2013, the Department provided the "Scope of Work Grant Amendment Submission Process" document to grantee Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) indicating the process by which amendments would be reviewed and approved or denied during the Race to the Top- District scope of work review process. 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 included in that document.

I approve the following amendment:

- For its Project-Based Learning (PBL) project, expand the school year (SY) 2013-2014 pilot of the three levels of PBL and shift \$400,000 of Harmony's Race to the Top District grant budget Years 2-4 supplies funding to budget Year 1.ⁱ
 - In its original application, Harmony committed to piloting all three PBL levels in three schools in SY 2013-2014. Since then, Harmony decided to expand the SY 2013-2014 pilot to implement Level 1 in all Harmony schools and pilot Levels 2 and 3 in select schools.
 - As a result of more schools implementing the program in SY 2013-2014, Harmony will shift \$400,000 of its budget Years 2-4 supplies funding to budget Year 1 to cover the additional costs for the expanded pilot.

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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.

On December 27, 2012, Harmony received a grant of \$29,866,938 with the condition that it draw down no more than 10 percent of the grant prior to approval of the Scope of Work. On June 7, 2013, the Department approved Harmony to access to \$7,270,556.72 on the condition that Harmony submit by July 1, 2013, a revised Scope of Work that includes the grantee's specific goals, activities, timelines, budgets, key personnel, and annual targets for key performance measures for all projects and budgets. Harmony submitted a revised Scope of Work that included this requested information. Based on the revised Scope of Work, Harmony has fulfilled the condition specified. The Department continues to review and request that Harmony make additional revisions to the document. As a result, the Department has not yet approved the Scope of Work.

Harmony has indicated that it needs immediate access to an additional \$400,000 of its Race to the Top - District grant to be able to proceed with the expanded PBL pilot described above. Upon approval of the Grantee Scope of Work, Harmony will be able to draw down its remaining award balance.

The Department approves Harmony's request for and access to an additional \$400,000 of its Race to the Top - District grant. Please note that this letter will be posted on the Department's website as a record of the amendment.

If you need any assistance or have any questions regarding Race to the Top-District, please do not hesitate to contact Harmony's Race to the Top-District Program Officer, Rebecca Zazove, at 202-260-1425 or Rebecca.Zazove@ed.gov.

Sincerely,

/s/

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

cc: Burak Yilmaz, Race to the Top – District Project Director

ⁱ Harmony defines its Race to the Top District grant budget years as follows: Year 1: December 26, 2012 – June 30, 2014; Year 2: July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015; Year 3: July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016; Year 4: July 1, 2016 – December.