



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES



May 2, 2016

Thomas L. Weber
Commissioner
Massachusetts Department of Early Learning and Care
51 Sleeper Street, 4th Floor
Boston, MA 02210

Dear Commissioner Weber:

This letter is in response to Massachusetts' request to amend its approved budget for the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant. The U.S. Departments of Education and Health & Human Services (Departments) approved Massachusetts' grant projects and scope of work on May 16, 2012.

As you are aware, the Departments have the authority to approve amendments provided that such a change does not alter the scope or objectives of the approved proposal. On July 18, 2012, the Departments sent a document to Project Directors describing the process by which amendments would be reviewed and approved or denied. To determine whether approval could be granted, the Departments have applied the conditions noted in that document and compared it with RTT-ELC program requirements and conditions.

On March 7, 2016 the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EED), the lead agency for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant (RTT-ELC), submitted a request to amend its RTT-ELC budget by moving all unspent funds from year 4 to the approved Not Cost Extension period year 5 in order to ensure that all objectives are met and that that funds are fully utilized.

The following amendment request is approved, as described below:

Massachusetts will move unspent funds from:

- Project 2 “Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) Program Quality Support” — This project has accomplished its’ goals, and the remaining balance in the amount of \$208,054.31 from year 4 will be moved to Project 10.
- Project 3 “Measuring Growth Through the MA Early Learning Development Assessment System” — Expenses for this project were lower than originally anticipated. The year 4 unspent funds from this project in the amount of \$145,810.39 will be reallocated to Project 10.
- Project 5 “Sustaining Program Effects in the Early Elementary Grades” -- This project has ended and expenses were lower than anticipated in year 4. The year 4 unspent funds in the amount of \$34,359.93 will be moved to Project 10 in year 5.
- Project 6 “Standards: Validation and Alignment” -- This project had unspent funds in the amount of \$11,867.47 in year 4. These unspent funds from year 4 will be reallocated to Project 10 in year 5.
- Project 7 “Interagency Partnerships” -- This project had lower than anticipated expenses in year 4. The year 4 unspent funds in the amount of \$34,482.06 will be reallocated to Projects 1, 8 and 10 in year 5.
- Project 12 “Pre-K to Three Alignment for Educational Success: Content Based Media Partnership” -- This project had lower than anticipated expenditures in year 4. The year 4 unspent funds in the amount of \$5,531.65 will reallocated to Project 10 in year 5.

And will move the following fund amounts to other year 5 Projects to continue work in:

- Project 1 “System Infrastructure (Grant Management)” — \$11,920.82 of the \$34,482.06 of year 4 unexpended funds in Project 7 will be reallocated to Project 1 to cover increased indirect cost expenses and to sustain salaries for 3 staff until December 31, 2016.
- Project 8 “Ensuring Competency through Workforce Knowledge, Skills and Practice-Based Support” — Unspent funds in the amount of \$15,039.63 from Project 7 will be reallocated to Project 8 for year 5 to complete the remaining approved planned activities.
- Project 10 “Early Childhood Information System (ECIS)” — \$615,626.18 in unspent funds from year 4 will be used in year 5 and unspent funds from Project 2 (\$8,054.31), Project 3 (\$145,810.39), Project 5 (\$34,359.93), Project 6 (\$11,867.47), and Project 12 (\$5,531.65) for a total amount of \$413,145.36 will be moved into Project 10 to support the outside contractor for completion of the final upgrades to the State’s information technology system.

We acknowledge your statement that this amendment request does not impact Massachusetts’ overall RTT-ELC goals, plans, outcomes, or performance measures, and will ensure Massachusetts can continue to make progress on its RTT-ELC scope of work activities. The Departments expect grantees with no-cost extensions to liquidate all funds by March 31, 2017, given that by law all RTT-ELC funds revert to the U.S. Department of Treasury as of October 1, 2017. This letter will be posted to ED’s website as a record of the amendments.

Please note that you should record all budget changes in the GRADS360° system and a detailed budget request is saved in the Departments’ official grant file.

We are confident that Massachusetts will continue its comprehensive efforts towards building successful state systems of early learning. If you need any assistance regarding RTT-ELC, please do not hesitate to contact your Project Officer, Anne Karasek, at 202-245-6108 or anne.karasek@ed.gov, or your Co-Project Officer, Amy Spates, at 215-861-4020 or amy.spates@acf.hhs.gov.

Sincerely,

/s/

Libby Doggett
Deputy Assistant Secretary
Office of Early Learning
Office of Elementary and Secondary Education
U.S. Department of Education

/s/

Linda K. Smith
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Early Childhood
Development
Administration for Children and Families
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services