



December 11, 2013

Rolf Grafwallner
Assistant State Superintendent
Division of Early Childhood Development
Maryland State Department of Education
200 West Baltimore Street, 10th Floor
Baltimore, MD 21201

Dear Dr. Grafwallner:

This letter is in response to Maryland's request to amend its approved Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant project. On September 4, 2013, the State submitted an amendment request and supporting information to the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (the Departments). As you are aware, the Departments have the authority to approve amendments to your RTT-ELC plan and budget, provided that such a change does not alter the scope or objectives of the approved proposal. On July 18, 2012, the Departments sent a "Grant Amendment Submission Process" document to RTT-ELC Project Directors indicating 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.

The following amendment to the State's budget and project plan is approved, as described below: Maryland proposes adding a program, "Raising a Reader," to Project 8, Family Engagement and Support, as an additional means by which to enhance the capacity of families to support the early learning and development of their children. Maryland has found that the nonprofit "Raising a Reader" program (www.raisingareader.org) is having great success in Title I service areas around the U.S. The program is currently being successfully implemented in a few Baltimore City areas using non-State funds, and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) will expand the program to additional Title I service areas in other jurisdictions.

To do so the State will add \$472,785 to Project 8. These funds will be moved from unspent funds in Year 1 of Project 6. Comprehensive Assessment Project, as follows:

Maryland did not and will not expend \$472,785 in salary stipends for early childhood educators. The stipends had been budgeted to support teachers being training on the revised and new formative standards. But teachers were and will be able to receive training in other ways that did not require use of stipends. For example:

- The number of stipends needed in 2011 was fewer since the field test was smaller than anticipated when the RTT-ELC application was written in 2010;

- Training was offered via existing professional development mechanisms, meaning additional stipends (summer program only) were not needed;

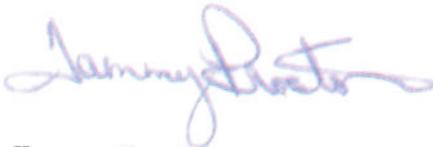
Local educational agencies have fewer professional development training days available than anticipated at the time of the grant application, so Maryland is creating training that does not require as much paid time, for example, online training modules.

Maryland notes that the quality of training for preschool and kindergarten teachers will not be impacted by the fact that salary stipends are no longer needed, because the training time is not reduced, the trainers are qualified, and the full curriculum will be taught. Maryland notes that the numbers of preKindergarten and Kindergarten teachers to be trained will not be impacted by the fact that salary stipends are no longer needed because LEAs are working with MSDE to ensure that all PreK and K teachers are trained on the new Kindergarten Entry Assessment (KEA).

It is the Departments' understanding that this amendment will not result in a change in your State's performance measures and outcomes, participation rates, and grant activities, nor will it substantially change the scope of work.

Please note that this letter will be posted on the U.S. Department of Education's website as a record of the amendment request. If you need any assistance or have any questions regarding RTT-ELC, please do not hesitate to contact your Project Officer, Katie Chase, at (202) 205-0266 or katie.chase@ed.gov.

Sincerely,



Tammy Proctor
Group Leader
Race To The Top—Early Learning Challenge
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Cc: Governor Martin O'Malley
Dr. Lillian M. Lowery, Ed.D., State Superintendent of Schools