



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



Ellen Wolock, Director
Division of Early Childhood Education
New Jersey Department of Education
PO Box 500
Trenton, NJ 08625

June 5, 2015

Dear Dr. Wolock,

This letter is in response to New Jersey's request to amend its approved Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant projects. The U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (the Departments) approved New Jersey's grant projects and scope of work, including supplemental funds, on July 16, 2014. On May 19, 2015, the New Jersey Department of Education submitted an amendment request, whereby it proposes overall adjustments to its budget based on expenditures and cost savings in its first grant year.

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. The Departments have provided 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.

This amendment will make the following changes:

Project 1 (Grant Administration): NJ will transfer \$15,510 of unspent funds within Project 1, and the remaining \$764,102 will be transferred to Project 8 (Data System). Initially, the NJ DOE was going to develop the integrated data system. However, the State's Office of Information Technology (OIT) will now implement the project, which means that the funding for staff will now be needed in Project 8. The \$15,510 in unspent funds remaining in Project 1 will be redistributed to travel, equipment, and supplies to address delays in spending.

Project 2 (Aligned Training and Professional Development): NJ will reallocate \$1,722,836 in unspent Year 1 funding to Years 2 through 4. All of these funds are within the contractual line and will be used to support the Training Academy and the Core Knowledge and Competencies Framework. Funds are also being reallocated to Project 7 and 9 as described below.

Project 3 (Grow NJ Kids Rollout and Incentives Administration): NJ will reallocate all unspent incentives funding (\$2,596,000) as well as \$117,242 in unspent salary, benefits, and indirect costs, to incentives in years 2 through 4. NJ will move \$4,380 in unspent

funds to pay for equipment for staff. NJ will also move \$115,620 to Project 7 as described below.

Project 4 (Independent Ratings for Program Quality Improvement): NJ is requesting to redistribute the \$538,965 in unspent funds to Years 2-4 for the same activities.

Project 6 (Family Engagement and Health Promotion): NJ is requesting to reallocate \$968,745 in unspent funding. Funds will support six activities: start-up costs of the County Councils for Young Children (CCYCs); laptop computers for field staff; infant/early childhood mental health training; parent leadership training; a Business Analyst to assess the development of an MIS tracking system for developmental screening; and funding to support the Central Intake Hubs. All funds are being moved from the salary, benefits, travel, contractual, indirect, and equipment lines into "Funds to Localities" because funds are going to an Early Learning Intermediary Organization.

Project 7 (Public Outreach and Awareness): NJ is requesting to transfer \$441,454 in unspent Project 2 funds to the Contractual line of Project 7 for development of a newsletter and a website. NJ is also requesting to transfer \$115,620 from Project 3 to the contractual line of Project 7 to support a consultant to assist in developing public/private partnerships. This activity was already in the approved budget and is simply moving to a different project.

Project 8 (Data Systems): NJ is requesting to transfer \$202,833 in unspent funding for Year 1. Because this project will be implemented by NJ's OIT, this amendment will reduce funding in the equipment and contractual lines and put most of the funding in the "other" category. This amendment will leave \$50,000 in equipment and \$2,264,480 in contractual. Funding in the "other" category will increase from \$0 to \$3,053,000. These funds will support the work of OIT's data architects and include the \$761,177 in salary and benefits transferred from Project 1 for this purpose.

Project 9 (Preschool-Third Grade Initiatives): NJ is requesting that \$45,427 in unspent Year 1 funds be transferred to Year 2 for the same purpose. These funds have already been obligated. In addition, NJ is requesting to transfer \$80,000 from Project 2 to Project 9 to develop a video for training in the First through Third Grade Guidelines.

Project 11 (Standards): NJ is requesting that \$113,315 in unspent Year 1 funds be transferred to Year 2 for the same purpose.

We understand that this amendment request will not impact New Jersey's overall RTT-ELC goals, plans, outcomes, or performance measures, but will ensure New Jersey can continue to make progress on its RTT-ELC scope of work activities.

Please note that this letter will be posted on the Department of Education's website as a record of the amendment request and our approval. All budget changes are recorded in the GRADS 360 system and the detailed budget request is saved in the official grant file.

We are confident that New Jersey 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, Deborah Spitz, at (202) 260-3793 or Deborah.Spitz@ed.gov or your co-project officer Richard Gonzales, at (202) 401-5138 or Richard.Gonzales@acf.hhs.gov.

Sincerely,



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



Linda K. Smith
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