



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



June 20, 2016

Christopher Ruskowski
Deputy Secretary for Policy and Program
New Mexico Public Education Department
300 Don Gaspar
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501-2786

Dear Christopher Ruskowski:

This letter is in response to New Mexico's request to amend its approved Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant budget. On June 8, 2016 New Mexico submitted an amendment request to its overall grant budget.

As you are aware, the Department of Education and the Department of Health and Human Services (“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.

The entire adjustment involves moving funds across all grant projects from one fiscal year of the State's budget to another; no project activities are changing as a result of this request.

The following amendment request is approved, as described below:

- Project 1: Grants Management – The State will shift a total of \$229,417 of unspent funds from year 3 to year 4 within the current project and to Project 5 (Early Childhood Data Systems). \$111,781 will be transferred within this project and \$117,636 will move to Project 5. In addition, \$120,000 from Project 1's year 4 budget will be transferred to Project 5 (Early Childhood Data Systems).
- Project 2: FOCUS-TQRIS - The State will shift a total of \$2,229,118 unspent funds from all three agencies' (Department of Education (PED), Department of Children Youth and Families (CYFD) and Department of Health (DOH) year 3 budgets to the contractual budget within the project and to Project 5 (Early Childhood Data Systems). A total of \$745,885 will be allocated to Project 5 and \$2,154,533 will remain within project. The reallocation of funds is:
PED TQRIS Implementation Support – PED will adjust the support for TQRIS and transfer \$500,000 in funds from the year 4 budget to Project 5 to support the development of the Early Childhood Data Project.

CYFD Quality Grants – The funds to support program quality improvement were not spent in year 3, because the contract to manage the quality grants was fully executed at the end of year 2. As a result, quality grants will be cancelled and CYFD will reallocate \$7,964 to Project 5 and \$2,154,533 will transfer to year 4 within project 2 in order to continue the year 4 TQRIS activities.

FIT KIDS Contractual – Due to cost savings in contractual activities to support TQRIS at the Department of Health, DOH will transfer \$237,921 from year 3 to Project 5 to support the Early Childhood Data Project.

- Project 3: Investment Zones – The State will reallocate a total of \$23,479 unspent funds from year 3 to year 4 of the grant. All funds are reallocated within the project under the contractual category.
- Project 4: Professional Development - The State will reallocate a total of \$92,986 unspent funds from year 3 to year 4 of the grant. All funds are reallocated within the project under the contractual category.
- Project 5: Early Childhood Data Systems – The State will transfer a total of \$1,083,521 in unspent funds from year 3 budgets of projects 1, 2 and 6. These funds will support the identified new contractual activities, as a result of an evaluation of the project and the need for additional funds to successfully implement more robust data system. The activities below describe the new activities:

Data Warehouse – The current data contractor will create a data repository for all three agencies, DO E, CY FD and DOH. This Data Warehouse will address all the grant requirements including hosting of the data and being available to all participating agencies by the end of the grant. Included in year 4 is a requirement to contract with an Independent Verification and Validation contractor to oversee the development of the data repository for the data warehouse project.

FIT-KIDS (Family Infant Toddler -Key Information Data System) - the online system that collects data on children with developmental delays and disabilities under IDEA Part C will be enhanced to be interoperable with the Early Childhood Integrated Data System. The contract with the vendor increased once the technical specifications were established and a vendor to conduct Independent Verification and Validation was procured to oversee this work.

- Project 6: KEA Assessment - The State will reallocate a total of \$219,915 funds from year 3 to year 4 within Project 6. The reallocation of funds is \$210,358 to the contractual line within the project and 4,779 of unspent travel from year 3 as well as \$4,000 of travel funds from year 4 will transfer to the contractual category. In addition, \$100,000 from year 4 will transfer to Project 5 (Early Childhood Data Systems).

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

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 New Mexico 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, Tammy Proctor, at 202-260-7803 or Tammy.Proctor@ed.gov or your co-Project Officer, Joey Bishop at Joey.Bishop@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

Enclosure