



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



Clark Greene
Chief of Staff
Rhode Island Department of Education
255 Westminster St.
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Mr. Greene:

This letter is in response to Rhode Island's request to amend its approved Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant projects. The State submitted an amendment request package to the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services (Departments) on October 25, 2012. As you are aware, the Departments have the authority to approve amendments to your 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 letter and "RTT-ELC Amendment Process" document to Project Directors of grantee States 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 the document and compared it with the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge program requirements and conditions.

The following amendment request is approved, as described below:

- Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) will add .25 FTE time to an Early Learning Specialist at the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education: to devote approximately 10 hours per week to assist in the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (RTT- ELC) components assigned to the RIDE, including oversight of the State Pre-K Program and oversight of special education efforts targeting Children with High Needs.
- RIDE will add one FTE Information Services Technician: to support key projects identified in Rhode Island's Scope of Work: Project 4 - Using Early Learning and Development Standards, Project 5 - Developing and Supporting Effective Early Childhood Assessment including the development of a Kindergarten Entry Assessment, Project 6 – Building an Early Learning Data System, and Project 7 – Improving the Knowledge and Competencies of the Workforce.
- RIDE will add .5 FTE in the Division of Purchasing Department of Administration: to support the timely processing of Request for Proposals (RFP), Letters of Intent (LOI), and contracts generated by each of RTT – ELC projects and will assist in ensuring that each project's timelines are met.
- RIDE will add to Project 1 – Public Communication Consultant: to identify current base-line communication efforts and assist the state in designing and implementing an effective communication and outreach plan for three years of the grant that would sustain communication efforts beyond each grant year to increase public awareness, outreach as identified per project, and engage families and providers.
- RIDE will identify an outside Data Consultant: to conduct a base-line data scan on the current demographics of children, age birth to five, who are not currently enrolled in a licensed family

child care or center care program and identify strategies for collecting data to add to Rhode Island's proposed early learning data system.

- RIDE will hire a Physician Consultant: to promote the use of developmental screening and subsequent referrals to evidence-based programs, and act as a liaison to others in the primary care community.
- RIDE will add funding to support 20 hours a week for a staff person/consultant: to support a fiscal agent (to be identified) who will be responsible for facilitating family referrals from primary care providers to evidence - based service providers.
- RIDE will add one FTE Programming Services Officer at the Department of Human Services (DHS): to ensure DHS has sufficient staff to cover critical meetings across all projects and execute and monitor all DHS contracts that are related to RTT-ELC and optimize Rhode Island's early learning capacities.
- RIDE will add one FTE Licensing Aide to DCYF's Division of Licensing: to increase the capacity of DCYF to meet the demand for increased monitoring visits and the ability to disseminate information to child care providers ultimately increasing their knowledge of newly revised child care licensing standards.

It is our understanding that the amendments will not result in a change in your State's performance measures and outcomes, nor will they substantially change the scope of work. Please note that this letter will be posted on the Department of Education's website as a record of the amendment request.

We are confident that Rhode Island will continue its comprehensive efforts towards building successful state systems of early learning. If you need any assistance or have any questions regarding RTT-ELC, please do not hesitate to contact your Project Officer, Tammi Fergusson, at 202-453-7508 or Tammi.Fergusson@ed.gov.

Sincerely,



Deborah S. Delisle
Assistant Secretary
Office of Elementary and Secondary Education
U.S. Department of Education



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

cc: Governor Lincoln D. Chafee
Commissioner Deborah Gist
Judy Willgren