



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY

November 22, 2013

The Honorable Janice Brewer
Office of the Governor
1700 West Washington Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Dear Governor Brewer:

I am writing in response to Arizona's request to amend its approved Race to the Top grant project. Between September 30 and November 14, 2013, the State submitted amendment requests to the U.S. Department of Education (Department). As you are aware, the Department has 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 October 4, 2011, the Department sent a letter and revised "Grant Amendment Submission Process" document to Governors of grantee States indicating the process by which amendments would be reviewed and approved or denied. To determine whether approval could be granted, the Department has applied the conditions noted in the document, and compared it with the Race to the Top program *Principles*, which are also included in that document.

I approve the following amendments:

- Revise language and targets for performance measures related to the development of high-quality instructional resources in support of Arizona's transition plan for the implementation of enhanced standards for English language arts and mathematics. The State-created performance measures targets reflect instructional resource development during spring 2012 and school year (SY) 2012-2013, or Year 1 and Year 2, respectively. However, the State greatly underestimated the time and coordination required to develop high-quality instructional resources as defined in the measure. In addition, the State did not have a reliable platform for LEAs to share the resources. During Year 2 the State developed a process to identify and vet high-quality instructional resources with the intent to release it to Regional Education

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The Department of Education's mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.

Centers and participating local educational agencies (LEAs) in Year 3. The State is also developing a new eLearning platform (see below). Regional Education Centers and participating LEAs will use the process to identify resources and share them statewide in SY 2013-2014 and SY 2014-2015. The revised measures reflect the actual timing of implementation.

- Rather than have two sets of performance measures, one for Regional Education Centers and one for participating LEAs, the State will now have one set of performance measures for high-quality instructional resources developed by the Regional Education Centers and participating LEAs together. In addition, for the Regional Education Center measures, rather than set region-specific targets, the State will have an aggregate target. A copy of the revised performance measure language and targets is attached in Appendix A.
 - Remove performance measures in (B)(3) related to development of high-quality instructional resources created solely by participating LEAs. The State reports that the number of instructional resources reflected in the revised measures will capture resources developed by participating LEAs.
- Shift \$576,915 from the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) Administration and Oversight project-level budget to the Data Systems budget and shift \$230,085 from within the Data Systems project-level budget to the “other” category in the Data Systems budget to support development of a Content Management System (CMS) and a Learning Management System (LMS). In Year 1 and Year 2 of the grant period the State realized savings in the Administration and Oversight budget because they staffed fewer administrative positions than initially budgeted; the State has adjusted the Year 3 budget according to actual staffing needs. Similarly, the State realized some costs savings in the Data Systems budget based on actual expenditures in Year 1 and Year 2 and anticipated expenditures in Year 3 (see other Data Systems project-level budget shifts below). Per the State’s approved Scope of Work, participating LEAs and Regional Education Centers will develop high-quality instructional resources and share them statewide through an eLearning platform; the LMS will serve as this eLearning platform. In addition the State will develop the CMS to provide professional development for educators throughout the State. The \$807,000 budget for CMS and LMS development will support operating expenses for ADE information technology contractors and hardware. It is the Department’s understanding that the State’s existing eLearning platform is not an interoperable system and is not sustainable in terms of maintenance. As such, the State reports that development of the CMS and LMS will ensure interoperability with other ADE systems and in the future the systems will be sustained through user fees.
 - In the Data Systems budget, shift \$564,000 from the Year 1 “contractual” category to the Year 2 “other” category to reflect actual expenditures for the

State's student-teacher-course connect work. Shift \$764,742 from the Year 1 "contractual" category to the Year 2 "contractual" category to reflect actual expenditures. The shifts to these budget categories reflect new information regarding how the Arizona Chart of Accounts classifies professionals hired to work on-site at the grantee's location; as such, not all of the State's student-teacher-course connect work is "contractual" work. Finally, shift \$715,000 from the Year 1 "contractual" category to the Year 3 "other" category for ADE contractors to provide LEAs with continued technical assistance in SY 2013-2014. The Department acknowledges that the work in this project remains unchanged but that the State's original budget did not accurately reflect the implementation timeline.

It is our understanding that these amendments will not substantially change the scope and objectives of the work. Please note that this letter will be posted on the Department's website as a record of the amendments.

If you need any assistance or have any questions regarding Race to the Top, please do not hesitate to contact Arizona's Race to the Top Program Officer, Monika Bandyopadhyay, at 202-260-2531 or monika.bandyopadhyay@ed.gov.

Sincerely,

//s//

Ann Whalen
Director, Policy and Program Implementation
Implementation and Support Unit

cc: Superintendent John Huppenthal
Peter Laing

Appendix A.*(B)(3) Performance Measures*

The cumulative number of high-quality ACCS instructional resources (such as: Integrated ELA/STEM Lesson Plans; Curriculum Maps; Supplemental Instructional Materials and Resources; and, Professional Development Materials and Modules), as determined by rubrics, developed through the support of Regional Education Centers, ADE and Participating LEAs in support of Arizona's transition plan for the implementation of Arizona's Common Core Standards) for ELA available for LEAs to access online through Arizona's eLearning Platform.

	Baseline	Year 1 (5/31/12)	Year 2 (5/31/13)	Year 3 (5/31/14)	Year 4 (12/21/15)
Region 1	0	10	30	60	100
Region 2	0	10	30	60	100
Region 3	0	10	30	60	100
Region 4	0	10	30	60	100
Region 5	0	10	30	60	100
<i>Revised</i>	0	50	150	48	72

Note: Revised targets in italics.

The cumulative number of high-quality ACCS instructional resources (such as: Integrated ELA/STEM Lesson Plans; Curriculum Maps; Supplemental Instructional Materials and Resources; and, Professional Development Materials and Modules), as determined by rubrics, developed through the support of Regional Education Centers, ADE and Participating LEAs in support of Arizona's transition plan for the implementation of Arizona's Common Core Standards) for mathematics available for LEAs to access online through Arizona's eLearning Platform.

	Baseline	Year 1 (5/31/12)	Year 2 (5/31/13)	Year 3 (5/31/14)	Year 4 (12/21/15)
Region 1	0	10	30	60	100
Region 2	0	10	30	60	100
Region 3	0	10	30	60	100
Region 4	0	10	30	60	100
Region 5	0	10	30	60	100
<i>Revised</i>	0	80	220	48	72

Note: Revised targets in italics.