



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY

September 7, 2011

The Honorable Jack Markell
Office of the Governor
Carvel State Office Building
820 N. French Street 12th Floor
Wilmington, Delaware 19801

Dear Governor Markell:

I am writing with regards to the documentation that Delaware submitted on August 12, 2011, in response to the U.S. Department of Education's July 15, 2011 conditional approval of Delaware's request to amend sub-criterion (D)(2) *Improving Teacher and Principal Effectiveness Based on Performance* of its approved Race to the Top plan. In particular, in conformance with the condition, Delaware submitted a detailed plan and timeline describing how the State will comply with the revised timelines that the Department approved under the amendment. Based on the documentation that Delaware submitted, as well as additional clarification and explanation of that documentation on an August 29, 2011 follow-up phone call, I am pleased to fully approve this amendment to Delaware's approved Race to the Top plan.

As you know, under the approved amendment, for the 2011–2012 school year, Delaware will allow a teacher to 1) be rated *Effective* even if that teacher did not rate *Satisfactory* on the student growth component and 2) receive tenure without receiving two years of *Satisfactory* ratings on the student growth component of the Delaware Performance Appraisal System II (DPAS II) system. Thus, for the 2011–2012 school year, a teacher's rating on the student growth component will not be one of the possible triggers of consequences for teachers (including not being granted tenure/a continuing license and being required to begin in the improvement process). With respect to the performance measures for sub-criterion (D)(2), under the approved amendment, by the 2012–2013 school year Delaware will grant tenure to teachers only if they demonstrate *Satisfactory* student growth for two or more years and have no more than one year of *Ineffective* teaching (as opposed to the 2011–2012 school year in Delaware's approved plan).

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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.

As stated in my July 15, 2011 letter, it is important to note that, while the amendment has short term consequences, it is our understanding that Delaware will still accomplish within the grant period all of the activities and deliverables articulated in its approved application. Further, Delaware has indicated that this amendment will neither result in a change in Delaware's Race to the Top student outcome goals nor substantially change the scope of work from its approved application.

I am confident that Delaware will continue its bold, comprehensive reform efforts. If you need any assistance or have any questions regarding Race to the Top, please do not hesitate to contact Delaware's Race to the Top Program Officer, Victoria Hammer, at 202-260-1438 or Victoria.Hammer@ed.gov.

Sincerely,

//s//

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

cc: Lillian Lowery
Dan Cruce