



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY

April 14, 2014

The Honorable Rick Scott
Office of the Governor
The Capitol
400 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Dear Governor Scott:

I am writing in response to Florida's request to amend its approved Race to the Top grant project. Between November 7, 2013 and April 9, 2014, 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. In March 2013, the Department issued "Amendment Requests with No-cost Extension Guidance and Principles" indicating the process by which amendments containing requests to provide additional time for a grantee to accomplish the reform goals and deliverables it committed to in its Race to the Top application and approved Scope of Work would be reviewed and approved or denied. To determine whether approval could be granted, the Department has applied the conditions and elements specific to no cost extensions noted in the document, and compared it with the Race to the Top program Principles included in the "Grant Amendment Submission Process" document issued to Governors of grantee States in October 2011.

I approve the following amendments, including extensions to the time period for implementation, as described below:

- In Projects B.2.1/B.2.2.a/B.5.2, Budget 2: "Teacher Standards Instructional Tools/Instructional Technology Support/Use of Data Lesson Study Toolkits," Florida will increase the scope of the contract for developing teacher instructional tools, model lessons and lesson study toolkits to extend and expand this work to June 30, 2015. As result of the change in Year 4 from Common Core State Standards to the Florida Standards, the State's vendor will revise coding of all standards to align with Florida Standards, add English Language Arts (ELA) literacy standards resources for social studies and science, continue to identify model lessons for all

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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.

ELA and mathematics standards as well as literacy standards to technical subjects and continue to add tools and resources to the CPALMS platform, the State's online source for standards and course information. Additionally, the State plans to complete the adoption process of CPALMS with the remaining 17 local educational agencies (LEAs) in the State. Adoption of the resources on CPALMS is voluntary; however FDOE notes that many LEAs have chosen to utilize the site as a resource to teachers through the State's single sign-on (SSO) portal.

- Budget Implications: As a result of under-budgeting in the original contract, shift \$3,075,844 in unspent Year 3 contractual funds to Year 4 contractual (\$1,575,844) and Year 5 contractual (\$1,500,000). Project-level shifts are as follows:
 - Project B.2.1: Shift \$965,476 from Year 3 contractual to Year 4 contractual (\$465,476) and Year 5 contractual (\$500,000).
 - Project B.2.2a: Shift \$1,600,000 from Year 3 contractual to Year 4 contractual (\$1,100,000) and Year 5 contractual (\$500,000).
 - Project B.5.2: Shift \$510,368 from Year 3 contractual to Year 4 contractual (\$10,368) and Year 5 contractual (\$500,000).

- In Project B.2.8, Budget 2: "Florida Standards Professional Development Training and Alignment Setting for Career and Technical Education (CTE)," FDOE shifts the timeline for completion of this project to June 30, 2015. The State originally planned to hold a CTE academic alignment workshop in December 2013 where CTE educators would align ELA and mathematics Florida Standards with existing CTE courses and review CTE courses to identify Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS) science benchmarks for courses not previously aligned. The State also planned to hold Florida Standards training conferences for approximately 8,000 CTE educators on the newly aligned CTE courses in spring 2014. With this extension, FDOE shifts the timeline for the CTE academic alignment workshop from December 2013 to spring 2014 and regional professional development conferences from spring 2014 to school year (SY) 2014-2015.
 - Budget Implications: Shift \$2,750,000 in unspent funds from Year 4 contractual to Year 5 contractual, because the majority of costs associated with professional development will be expended during Year 5.

- In Project B.3.3, Budget 3: "Formative Assessments and Lesson Study Toolkits for ELA," FDOE will extend the timeline for completing development and approval of the remaining four clusters of ELA formative assessment tasks to June 30, 2015. The remaining clusters are: Language, Reading – Informational Test, Reading – Literature, Speaking and Listening, and Writing. The State will also continue to recruit task reviewers and the vendor will tag electronic tasks for the visually impaired. The State reports that the formative assessment tasks take a considerable amount of time to review and the number of active reviewers has been limited.
 - Budget Implications: Shift \$2,998,735 in unspent funds from Year 3 contractual to Year 4 contractual (\$1,498,735) and Year 5 contractual (\$1,500,000). Funds were unspent because the contract specifies that funds

may only be expended upon approval of the deliverable. Due to delays in reviewing and approving tasks, the majority of funds will be expended in Years 4 and 5.

- In Project B.3.4/B.5.1, Budget 3: Mathematics Formative Assessments (MFAS) and Lesson Study Toolkits for Grades K-8, Algebra and Geometry,” FDOE will extend the timeline to June 30, 2015 to maintain six to eight FTE project staff to continue to develop and deliver trainings to LEAs on the MFAS and modify or replace assessments based on teacher feedback and field test data.
 - Budget Implications: Shift unspent funds from Year 3 and Year 4 to Year 5 due to over-budgeting and hiring fewer project staff than anticipated.
 - Project B.3.4: Shift \$888,167 from Year 3 contractual and \$311,833 from Year 4 contractual to Year 5 contractual.
 - Project B.5.1: Shift \$696,960 from Year 3 contractual to Year 4 contractual (\$296,960) and Year 5 contractual (\$400,000).

- In Project B.3.7: Budget 3: “International Assessments (TIMSS/PIRLS/PISA),” FDOE will extend this project to June 30, 2015 in order to participate in State-level benchmarking of the spring 2015 TIMSS grades four and eight. FDOE believes that this additional data will allow Florida to continue to adjust priorities for developing and aligning resources and strategies to support instruction and assessment in STEM areas. The State reasons that obtaining State-level data for TIMSS will allow trend analysis and is an important feedback mechanism for comparing student achievement across multiple assessments. FDOE plans to seek funding from other sources to support participation in international benchmarking assessments after the Race to the Top grant period.
 - Budget Implications: Increase project budget from \$1,900,000 to \$3,100,000. Shift \$115,900 from Year 3 contractual to Year 4 contractual due to timing of contract payments. Add \$1,200,000 from unallocated to Year 5 contractual funds.

- In Budget 3: “Technology Set-Aside,” FDOE will extend the timeline for technology set-asides to support projects B.2.1/B.2.2.a/B.5.2, B.2.2.b, B.2.4, B.3.1, B.3.3/B.5.1, and C.6.1 to June 30, 2015. The ongoing technology plans for these projects include: development and execution of integrated system tests, pilot and item tryouts, load testing to simulate expected system loads when applications are fully operational, application and system tuning in preparation for going live, data migration, system build out, and establishment and integration of high stakes applications into an effective disaster recovery solution. During the Year 2 budget reconciliation process, the State established technology set-asides within Budgets 2, 3, 6, 11, and 16. FDOE believes that combining the remaining technology funds into one budget will allow for more efficient management of the State’s technology projects.
 - Budget Implications: Consolidate unspent Year 4 funds from technology set-asides in Budgets 2, 3, 6, 11, and 16 into Year 4 equipment and contracts in Budget 3 and shift unspent funds from Year 4 equipment and contractual to

Year 5 equipment and contractual. The State reports that funds were unspent due to judicious use of resources and contracts coming in under budget. The detailed budget shifts from Year 3 and 4 equipment and contractual to Year 5 contractual are as follows:

- Budget 2: Shift \$854,722 from Year 4 to Year 5 Budget 3.
 - Budget 3: Shift \$999,206 from Year 3 to Year 4 (\$851,330) and Year 5 (\$147,876).
 - Budget 6: Shift \$76,718 from Year 4 to Year 5 Budget 3.
 - Budget 11: Shift \$71,469 from Year 4 to Year 5 Budget 3.
 - Budget 16: Shift \$136,182 from Year 4 to Year 5 Budget 3.
- In Project B.4.1, Budget 4: “High School Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Program for Gifted and Talented in Rural Districts – Florida STEM Scholars,” FDOE will extend the timeline to June 30, 2015 to continue support of approximately eight project staff across the three Florida STEM Scholars consortia to continue to collaborate with participating LEAs, institutions of higher education (IHEs), STEM-related businesses, and the military as well as continue coordination and implementation of student activities for the Florida STEM Scholars participants. The timeline extension will also allow staff to gather project impact data.
 - Budget Implications: Shift \$1,129,429 in unspent funds from Year 3 contractual to Year 4 contractual (\$429,429) and Year 5 contractual (\$700,000). Funds are available due to over-budgeting for student-related and professional development costs.
 - In Project D.13.1, Budget 13: “Assisting LEAs in Using Evaluation Results and Aligning Human Capital Systems,” the State will extend the timeline for contractor supported follow-up activities to June 30, 2015. During this extension, FDOE will hold another Florida Standards summer institute for pre-service and novice teachers in summer 2014, continue to provide follow up support on the train-the-trainer professional development during SY 2014-2015, and manage sub-grants to LEAs to provide their own professional development on evaluating instructional personnel on implementation of instructional practices that support Florida Standards and Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS) in STEM areas.
 - Budget Implications: Shift \$3,773,732 in unspent funds from Year 3 contractual to Year 4 contractual (\$1,773,732) and Year 5 contractual (\$2,000,000). Funds were unspent due to the timing of payments and expected payments to contractors.
 - In Project D.14.2, Budget 14: “Increasing Diversity Among Florida’s Education Workforce,” FDOE will extend the timeline through August 30, 2015. During this time, the contractor will conduct intensive mentoring of the third cohort of 21 teachers in Project PRIDE (Planning and Rewarding Instructional Diversity in Education) during their first year of teaching as well as complete a final comprehensive program evaluation.

- Budget Implications: Shift \$5,129,946 in unspent Year 3 contractual funds to Year 4 contractual (\$4,965,954) and Year 5 contractual (\$163,992) due to the timing of payments and expected payments in Year 5.
- In Project D.15.2, “UTeach Replication” and Project D.15.3, “STEM Coordination and Induction Center,” Budget 15, FDOE will extend the timeline for both projects to June 30, 2015. These contracts provide for a continuation of support for the Florida Institute of Technology’s (FIT) 86 UTeach students and maintenance of the University of Florida’s (UF) STEM Teacher Induction and Professional Support Center (STEM-TIPS) website, program administration positions, coaching support for beginning teachers in partner LEAs, and program evaluation activities. The State maintains that the UTeach replication model is structured to gradually decrease State funding support and increase the IHE financial responsibility to ultimately sustain the full costs of the program in SY 2015-2016.
 - Budget Implications: Shift \$762,340 in unspent Year 3 contractual funds to Year 4 contractual (\$115,177) and Year 5 contractual (\$647,163). Funds were unspent due to the timing of payments to the contracts. The project allocations for Year 5 are as follows:
 - Project D.15.2: \$397,163 in Year 5 contractual funds with matching funds (\$208,097) provided by FIT.
 - Project D.15.3: \$250,000 in Year 5 contractual funds with matching funds (\$1,250,000) provided by UF.
- In Project D.16.4, Budget 16: “Revision of Initial and Continued Approval Standards for Teacher and Principal Preparation Programs,” the State will build off of the recommended revisions to the Initial and Continued Approval Standards Guidance for State-approved Teacher and Leader Preparation Programs in Project D.16.3 by awarding three competitive sub-grants to IHEs with State-approved preparation programs. These grants will support the development of comprehensive, replicable program models using The New Teacher Project’s “Fast Start” skills or other equivalent research-based skills and practices. These sub-grantees will adopt outcome-based performance metrics for the program models. By June 30, 2015, all three sub-grantees will develop a three-year plan with evidence of progress toward implementation that results in the following outcomes:
 - Document agreement with an approved partner. Partners will be vetted by the State to determine if their model has had a documented impact on educator effectiveness;
 - More rigorous selection and training in best practice instructional leadership skills of cooperating and supervising teachers of pre-service educators;
 - Developed or adopted a quantitative student growth model to calculate the pre-service educator’s “impact on student learning” during field experiences;
 - Documented partnerships with at least one partner LEA;

- Implementation and documented use of a State-approved evaluation rubric for evaluating the instructional practice of pre-service educators; and
 - Revised programs so that pre-service educators begin culminating field experience before the school year begins.
- Budget Implications: Increase this budget from \$3,302,203 to \$9,256,021. Add \$6,060,917 from unallocated funds and \$29,083 from Budget 2 (approved on March 10, 2014) to Year 3 contractual (\$2,568), Year 4 contractual (\$687,432), and Year 5 contractual (\$5,400,000). Shift \$136,182 from Year 4 to Year 5 Budget 3. The contract for the Initial and Continued Approval Standards Guidance for State-approved Teacher and Leader Preparation Programs was in the State's original Scope of Work; however, funding was not included in the budget. The State allocates \$90,000 from unallocated (\$60,917) and Budget 2 (\$29,083) in Year 3 and Year 4 to support these contracts. Each sub-grant in Project D.16.4 will be up to \$2,000,000 and the State will use Title II funds to sustain the work beyond the Race to the Top grant period.
- In Project D.17.1, Budget 17: "Train Districts on Methods of Evaluating Professional Development," FDOE will extend this contract to June 30, 2015 and contract for four additional staff to continue to provide technical assistance to LEAs and review and approve LEA's revised professional development and evaluation system plans. The State reports that it is shifting the timeline for the development of State standards for instructional coaches and LEAs to develop beginning teacher support programs from Year 3 to Year 4. The evaluation of the professional development project began in Year 3 and new deliverables were not available until the latter part of the year; therefore, the related work on standards for instructional coaches could not begin until Year 4.
 - Budget Implications: Increase budget from \$2,381,925 to \$2,797,748. Shift \$774,858 in unspent Year 3 contractual funds to Year 4 contractual. Funds were not spent due to the timing of payment to contractors. Add \$415,823 from unallocated to Year 5 contractual funds.
 - In Project E.28.2, Budget 28: "Model Community Compact," FDOE will extend this work until June 30, 2015 for three sub-grantees to provide an additional year of services in high-need partner schools. The State will amend each award to reflect the additional work in the extension year.
 - Budget Implications: Shift \$2,300,621 in unspent Year 3 contractual funds to Year 4 contractual (\$2,000,621) and Year 5 contractual (\$300,000), due to the timing of payments and expected contract payments.
 - Year 3 to Year 4 budget shifts as detailed in the table at the end of this letter.

As described in a July 17, 2013 amendment approval letter, the Department indicated that it generally approves the State's process to review LEA sub-grant requests to obligate and liquidate funds after September 23, 2014. Prior to June 30, 2014, the Department expects the

State to submit a record of each participating LEA project approved by the State for a no-cost extension and the total funding approved for LEAs' Year 5 Scopes of Work.

As noted in the Notice Inviting Application (NIA) and the Notice of Final Priorities (NFP) under the Statewide Summative Assessments program requirement, no funds awarded under the Race to the Top competition may be used to pay for costs related to statewide summative assessments required under the Elementary and Secondary Act (ESEA).

It is our understanding that these amendments and no cost extensions will not result in a change in your State's performance measures and outcomes, nor will they substantially change the scope and objectives of the work. Please note that we are expecting grantees to liquidate all funds by September 1, 2015, given that by law all Race to the Top funds revert to the U.S. Department of Treasury as of October 1, 2015. The State must request and receive approval to move forward with no cost extensions for any additional projects. 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 Florida's Race to the Top Program Officer, Ariel Jacobs, at 202-453-7025 or ariel.jacobs@ed.gov.

Sincerely,

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

cc: Pam Stewart, Commissioner of Education
Linda Champion, Deputy Commissioner of Finance and Operations
Holly Edenfield, Race to the Top Program Coordinator

Grant project area affected	Specific project	Description of change
(B)(3) Budget 3	B.3.6: Hard-to-Measure Subject Area Assessments	Shift \$3,868,494 from Year 3 contractual to Year 4 contractual to align with the timelines consistent in the project award.
(C)(3) Budget 7	C.7.2: Acquire, Adopt, and Use Local Instructional Improvement Systems	Shift \$1,347,130 in unspent Year 3 contractual funds to Year 4 contractual due to the timing of payments and expected payments to contractors and in-house costs for the annual technology survey were lower than expected.
(C) Budget 9	Data Implementation Committee	Shift \$60,000 to unallocated. Costs for travel (\$55,000) and other (\$5,000) categories in this budget came in under-budget.
All Budget 10	C.10.1.a: RTTT Data and Technology Initiatives - In Support of All Assurance Areas	Shift \$792,749 from Year 3 contractual funds to Year 4 contractual. All funds were not spent in Year 3 because this work fell behind due to contractor delays. Additionally, the majority of funds were shifted to Year 4, because the State will be completing half of its Single Sign-on application integration and Dashboards and Reports rollout in Year 4.
(D)(2) Budget 12	D.12.1/D.12.2: Implement Evaluation Systems for Teachers and Principals that Measure Student Growth	Shift \$82,903 from the LEA evaluation systems monitoring contract from Year 3 contractual to Year 4 contractual. Shift \$1,333,333 from the sub-grants to LEAs to train school administrators on effective monitoring of evaluation systems from Year 3 contractual to Year 4 contractual, because sub-grants to LEAs were not executed until Year 4.
(D)(2) Budget 13	D.13.2: Assisting LEAs in Using Evaluation Results and Aligning Human Capital Systems	<p>Shift \$300,000 in unspent Year 3 contractual funds for compensation technical assistance to unallocated, because this work was completed in Year 3 primarily through virtual tools or at association meetings and travel costs were less than estimated.</p> <p>Shift \$500,000 in unspent Year 3 contractual funds to Year 4 contractual for LEA-level administrator technical assistance. FDOE originally planned to complete district-level administrator evaluation systems technical assistance in Year 3; however the contract was not executed until Year 4.</p>

(D)(4) Budget 16	D.16.1 and D.16.2: Improve Performance of Teacher and Principal Preparation Program	Project D.16.1: Shift \$93,799 in unspent Year 3 contractual funds to Year 4 contractual funds due to the timing of contract payments. Project D.16.2: Shift \$281,048 in unspent Year 3 contractual funds to Year 4 contractual funds due to the timing of contract payments.
(D) Budget 18	D.18.1: Community of Practice	Shift \$283,620 in unspent Year 3 contractual funds to Year 4 contractual (\$80,800) and unallocated (\$202,820), because travel reimbursements were less than budgeted.
(E)(2) Budget 20	E.20.1: Expand Recruitment of Promising Teachers Through External Partnerships	Shift \$1,200,265 in unspent Year 3 contractual funds to Year 4 contractual due to the timing of payments and expected payments to contractors.
(E)(2) Budget 21	E.21.1: Leadership Pipeline for Turnaround Principals and Assistant Principals	Shift \$739,603 in unspent Year 3 contractual funds to Year 4 contractual due to the timing of payments and expected payments to contractors.
(E)(2) Budget 22	E.22.1: Building District- Level Capacity for Turnaround in Rural Districts	Shift \$1,000,000 in unspent Year 3 contractual funds (\$378,823) and Year 4 contractual funds (\$621,177) to unallocated. Due to changes in State leadership, the contract was not extended past Year 2 as originally planned.