



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY

June 10, 2013

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. From August 2012 and May 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:

- Budget shifts as detailed in the table below.
- In subcriterion A:
  - Although the State intended to electronically track expenditures through the Daptiv project management system, the Department acknowledges this system does not have the capability to link with the State's budget system. Enhancements have been made to the State's existing budget system to ensure more efficient coding and tracking of grant expenditures which that State believes fulfills the purpose that would have otherwise been served by tracking expenditures in Daptiv.
- In subcriterion B:
  - Extend the interim reading assessment pilot timeline from Year 3 to Years 3 and 4. Item development and piloting will begin in Year 3. Piloting will be completed in Year 4 with all items finalized and available for students at the beginning of SY 2014-2015.

- Shift the piloting of hard-to-measure assessments from Year 3 to Year 4. Due to the delay in awarding the contract for the Florida Interim Assessment Item Bank and Test Platform (discussed below), the test platform will not be available to support pilot testing until Year 4.
- Although the State intended to complete 12 lesson study toolkits on using data in Year 2, the Department acknowledges the State encountered unanticipated delays and expects the State to complete six lesson study toolkits on using data in Year 3 and six in Year 4.
- Combine the project to develop professional development on Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in all LEAs and preservice programs and the project to develop school-level training materials and tutorials for teachers on the CCSS. These projects will be combined into one project and the professional development and related tools will be developed together.
- Remove reference to the development of science data toolkits. The budget narrative erroneously refers to science data toolkits but this is not mentioned in the application narrative and no funds have been allocated for the development of these toolkits. The State is developing toolkits for mathematics, English Language Arts (ELA), and data usage as part of its Race to the Top efforts.
- In subcriterion C:
  - Remove references to FACTS.org college and career readiness activities. Due to changes by the Florida Legislature, FACTS.org will now be focused on IHE activities rather than K-12 activities. Because of this, the enhancements planned under Race to the Top will not be made as they were focused on the K-12. The funds for this activity will be repurposed for Single Sign-On portal activities within the same budget.
  - Due to the changes discussed above, replace FACTS.org with the ELA Formative Assessment System as one of the six applications to be integrated into the Single Sign-On portal.
- In subcriterion D:
  - Expand Community of Practice participation to include Institutes on Higher Education (IHEs) as appropriate.
  - Amend outcomes as follows:
    - ~~By the end of SY 2012-2013~~ *During SY 2013-2014*, each participating LEA will conduct evaluations for each first-year teacher that are integrated with the LEA's beginning teacher support program and include multiple observations on the core effective practices and reviews of student performance data.
    - ~~Beginning in SY 2011-2012~~ *By the end of SY 2012-2013*, participating LEAs will have ~~reports on~~ professional development tools that will allow administrators and staff to evaluate professional development ~~offered through Race to the Top~~.
    - ~~By the beginning of SY 2012-2013~~ *By the beginning of SY 2013-2014*, participating LEAs will have instituted policies to make decisions about professional development offerings based on evaluation data.

- ~~By the beginning of SY 2012-2013~~ *By the beginning of SY 2013-2014,* participating LEAs will implement ~~state~~ standards for instructional coaches *based on the state's published standards.*

The efforts related to professional development systems were delayed because districts did not have educator evaluation observation results until the end of SY 2011-2012 and final educator evaluation results that incorporated student growth until December 2012. In addition, the contractor training to assist districts in evaluating their professional development systems did not begin until late summer 2012. As a result, districts did not have the information or the training to begin changing their approach to professional development.

The efforts to implement hiring standards for instructional coaches were delayed because the standards review is part of the assistance being provided by the contractor who is conducting the training to revise professional development systems. Because this contract was delayed, so was this work.

- Shift the piloting of new approval standards for teacher preparation programs to fall 2013 so that any legislative changes from spring 2013 can be taken into account.

I also acknowledge the following changes:

- In subcriterion B:
  - Development of the Florida Interim Assessment Item Bank and Test Platform was delayed from Year 2 to Year 3. Due to a second procurement cycle and multiple bid protests, this contract was not executed until late Year 2 and work did not begin until Year 3.
  - References to Florida's Career and Technology Regional Banner Centers and Middle School Course Technology Integration Project from the STEM Program for Gifted and Talented Students in Rural Districts project were removed. The work is being completed as described in the State's application but not in conjunction with the remaining Banner Centers and not through the aforementioned Integration Project.
- In subcriterion D:
  - References to Florida Virtual School activities were moved from the project to Improve Districts' Access to Effective Teachers and Principals in Hard-to-Staff Subjects and Specialties to the STEM Program for Gifted and Talented Students in Rural Districts as this is the project under which the work with Florida Virtual Schools is taking place.
  - The project to train districts on evaluating professional development is not limited to only the professional development provided under Race to the Top.
  - Training for districts on revising their professional development systems to incorporate evaluation results was delayed. The State realized that it was necessary to have educator evaluation results to inform this work and this information was not available December 2012. Training is now underway and districts will submit their updated plans to the State by

September 2013. In addition, FDOE has chosen to conduct regional trainings rather than training districts individually.

- The first Commissioner's Leadership Academy was not held until Year 3 rather than in Year 2. This was due to multiple leadership transitions during Years 1, 2, and 3 of the grant.
- In subcriterion E:
  - The number of participating districts in the Develop Successional Principals and Assistant Principals for Persistently Lowest-Achieving High Schools and Their Feeder Patterns has decreased from seven to five. Two eligible districts declined to participate and the available slots in the program were reallocated to the remaining districts.
  - Expand participation in the Differentiated Accountability Summer Academies beyond the persistently lowest-achieving schools to include Priority and Focus schools identified as part of the State's Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Flexibility application.

It is our understanding that these amendments 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 this letter will be posted on the Department's website as a record of the amendment(s).

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, Patrick Carr, at 202-708-8196 or [patrick.carr@ed.gov](mailto:patrick.carr@ed.gov).

Sincerely,

//s//

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

cc: Dr. Tony Bennett, 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 <sup>1</sup>
(A)(2)	Project Management	<p>1) Florida is shifting \$1,939,741.96 from Year 2 contractual funds to Years 3 (\$898,338) and 4 (\$1,041,404) contractual funds. This shift is primarily because hiring through the staffing contracts did not take place until later than expected in Year 2. Additionally, funds were shifted to cover expected contract payments in Years 3 and 4 for technology costs, enhancements to FDOE financial systems, and the Daptiv project management system. Until the contracts were executed, the State could only provide an estimate of the funds needed in each year. This budget amendment more accurately aligns the budget with expected contract payments.</p> <p>2) Contracts and related costs for this budget came in under budget. As a result, \$1,129,720 is unallocated from this budget. The unallocated funds come from the following budget line items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$50,770 from personnel and fringe;</li> <li>• \$11,903 from travel;</li> <li>• \$147,751 from standard support, human resources, and equipment;</li> <li>• \$1,801.83 from supplies;</li> <li>• \$690,408 from contracts;</li> <li>• \$160,866 from other (communication/technology services); and</li> <li>• \$66,221 from indirect costs.</li> </ul>

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<sup>1</sup> Due to contracts coming in under budget, Florida has an unallocated amount of \$25,073,423. Florida will submit an amendment in the near future once it has determined the best use for unallocated funds.

Grant project area affected	Specific project	Description of change <sup>1</sup>
(B)(2)	Curricular Tools to Implement the Common Core State Standards	<p>1) Florida is shifting the following funds across years due to the timing of payments and expected payments to contractors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher Standards Instructional Tool: Shift \$940,600 from Year 2 to Years 3 (\$650,341) and 4 (\$290,259).</li> <li>• Instructional Technology Specialist: \$2,050,730 from Year 2 to Years 3 (\$706,316) and 4 (\$1,344,414).</li> <li>• Professional Development and Training Materials: \$500,000 from Year 3 to Year 4.</li> </ul> <p>2) A total of \$1,096,732 was shifted from the following projects to fund technology support costs (e.g., software, data storage, servers)<sup>2</sup>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data Lesson Study Toolkits: \$200,000;</li> <li>• Teacher Standards Tutorial: \$200,000;</li> <li>• Textbook Demand Study: \$3,100;</li> <li>• Highly Effective Teacher Materials Report: \$2,900; and</li> <li>• Student Tutorial: \$690,732.</li> </ul>

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<sup>2</sup> Funding for technology support costs was originally included in the estimated cost for each project as these costs were expected to be funded by the selected contractor for each project. However, the State is consolidating many of its technology support efforts, and as a result, they have chosen to pay for these supports separate from the project contract. When this occurred, funds were shifted from the project budget to technology support costs. In other instances, contracts were under budget, and the State shifted some or all of the remaining funds to technology support costs.

Grant project area affected	Specific project	Description of change <sup>1</sup>
(B)(3)	Assessments	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Florida is shifting the funds from the following projects across years due to the timing of payments and expected payments to contractors, and as noted above, project delays : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interim Assessment Item Bank and Test Platform, English Language Arts (ELA) Formative Assessments, and Mathematics Formative Assessment projects: \$1,672,805.12 from Year 2 to Year 3.</li> <li>• Hard to Measure Subject Area Assessments: \$1,582,511 from Year 3 to Year 4.</li> </ul> </li> <li>2) The State is shifting \$7,735,969 from the Interim Assessment Item Bank and Test Platform and ELA Formative Assessment projects contractual lines to fund technology support costs, equipment, and supplies for these projects.</li> <li>3) The Interim Assessment Item Bank project came in under budget. A total of \$5,088,497 remains unallocated. Florida will submit an amendment in the near future once it has determined the best use for these funds.</li> </ol>
(B)(4)	Increased Access to Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)	The State is shifting \$895,084 in contractual funds to Year 3 from Years 2 (\$828,837) and 4 (\$66,247) due to the timing of payments and expected payments to the contractor.

Grant project area affected	Specific project	Description of change <sup>1</sup>
(B)(5)	Classroom Support (Lesson Study Toolkits)	<p>1) Florida has determined to move the lesson study toolkit funding to project budgets 2 and 3 in order to more accurately reflect funding sources for contracted work and the complementary efforts of the lesson study toolkits and the standards and assessments work. The funding is shifting as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$2,012,470 to budget 2 to fund lesson study toolkits for lesson study to guide the use of interim assessment data.</li> <li>• \$820,692 to budget 3 to fund lesson study toolkits for mathematics lesson study toolkits.</li> </ul> <p>2) The contracts for lesson study toolkits came in \$2,990,115 under budget. This occurred, in part, because the costs of the contracts were lower than originally anticipated. Also, the State did not need a separate contract for the development for ELA lesson study toolkits because this is being completed as part of the contract for the development of the ELA formative assessment. Florida will submit an amendment in the near future once it has determined the best use for these funds.</p>
(C)(2)	Single Sign-On	<p>1) Florida is shifting \$4,027,847 from Year 2 to Year 3 (\$749,952) and Year 4 (\$3,277,895). All funds were not spent in Year 2 because this work fell behind due to contractor delays. The majority of funds were shifted to Year 4 because the State will be completing much of its application integration and Single Sign-On rollout in Year 4.</p> <p>2) The State is shifting \$244,172 from this project because it will no longer be paying for enhancements to FACTS.org (see related amendment above). Florida will submit an amendment in the near future once it has determined the best use for these funds.</p>
(C)(3)	Implement Local Instructional Improvement Systems	<p>Florida is shifting \$2,876,148 in contractual funds from Year 2 to Year 3. Grants to LEAs were not issued until December 2012 so districts did not spend as much as originally expected in Year 2. Additionally, now that the grants have been awarded, the State knows the timing of the payments to districts and has shifted funds accordingly.</p>



Grant project area affected	Specific project	Description of change <sup>1</sup>
(C)(3)	Professional Development to Schools on Accessing and Using Data	The State is shifting \$750,282 in contractual funds from Year 2 to Years 3 (\$131,887) and 4 (\$618,395). This shift is due to the timing of payments and expected payments to contractors. Florida also experienced some staff turnover early in the project so not all funds were spent as expected in Year 2.
(C)(3)	Data Implementation Committee	Florida is shifting \$26,810 from this project to unallocated funds. Because some data implementation committee meetings are being held via webinar, the State is spending less than expected on travel. Florida will submit an amendment in the near future once it has determined the best use for these funds.
(C)(3)	Race to the Top Data and Technology Initiatives	<p>1) Florida is shifting \$2,568,458 from Year 2 Equipment budget in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$142,228 to Year 3 Equipment</li> <li>• \$99,645 to Year 4 Equipment</li> <li>• \$439,366 to Year 3 Contracts</li> <li>• \$1,719,195 to Year 4 Contracts</li> <li>• \$6,883 to Supplies</li> <li>• \$272 to Other</li> <li>• The remaining \$160,869 is unallocated at this time. Florida will submit an amendment in the near future once it has determined the best use for these funds.</li> <li>• The shift in funds is not due to a change in expected use of funds, but rather how the funds are classified. For example, some equipment purchases were made in such a way that they are classified as contractual payments.</li> </ul> <p>2) In addition, \$448,929 in contractual funds is shifting from Year 2 to Year 3 due to timing of expected contract payments.</p>

Grant project area affected	Specific project	Description of change <sup>1</sup>
(D)(2)	Improve Measurement of Student Academic Growth	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The State is shifting \$630,772 in Year 2 funds and \$150,064 in Year 4 funds to Year 3 due to timing of expected vendor payments.</li> <li>2) The contract for this project came in under budget. As a result, \$402,201 remains unallocated. Florida will submit an amendment in the near future once it has determined the best use for these funds.</li> </ol>
(D)(2)	Implement Evaluation Systems for Teachers and Principals That Measure Student Growth	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Florida is shifting \$818,502 to Year 2 from Years 3 and 4 due to the timing of expected contractor payments.</li> <li>2) This contract for this work was slightly under budget leaving an unallocated amount of \$2,853. Florida will submit an amendment in the near future once it has determined the best use for these funds.</li> </ol>
(D)(4)	Improve Performance of Teacher and Principal Preparation Program	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Florida is shifting \$94,800 in contractual funds from Year 2 of the eIPEP project to Years 3 (\$79,846) and 4 (\$14,954) due to the timing of expected contract payments.</li> <li>2) Florida is shifting \$577,016 in contractual funds from Year 2 of the teacher certification exam project to Years 3 (\$298,164) and 4 (\$278,852) due to the timing of expected contract payments.</li> <li>3) The eIPEP enhancement contract is \$42,451 under budget and the teacher certification examination project is \$18,466 under budget leaving \$60,917 in unallocated funds. Florida will submit an amendment in the near future once it has determined the best use for these funds.</li> </ol>

Grant project area affected	Specific project	Description of change <sup>1</sup>
(D)(5)	Provide Effective Support for Teachers and Principals	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Florida is shifting \$186,959 in contractual funds from Year 4 to Year 3 to cover expected costs for the Commissioner’s Leadership Academy and the project to assist districts with evaluating professional development.</li> <li>2) The State is shifting \$2,398,433 from Year 2 and \$624,022 from Year 4 to unallocated funds. The project to assist districts with evaluating professional development is \$3,022,455 under budget. As described above, this project started later than originally expected and so the State will only be funding 2 years of training rather than 4. Florida will submit an amendment in the near future once it has determined the best use for these funds.</li> </ol>
(D)(5)	Community of Practice	<p>Florida is shifting \$88,200 from this project to unallocated funds. The State originally allocated funds to contract for web support to post Community of Practice products online. These funds are no longer needed because the vendor leading the Community of Practice work is providing this service. Florida will submit an amendment in the near future once it has determined the best use for these funds.</p>
(D)(5)	Great Teachers and Leaders Assurance Evaluation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The State is shifting \$421,859 in Year 2 contractual funds to Years 3 (\$12,361) and 4 (\$409,498). The contract for this project was not executed until February 2012, therefore, the State did not expend as much as originally anticipated in Year 2. Additionally, now that the contract has been executed, Florida expects that it will need additional funds in Year 4 to pay for deliverables due in Year 4.</li> <li>2) The contract for this project is \$194,925 under budget and these funds remain unallocated at this time. Florida will submit an amendment in the near future once it has determined the best use for these funds.</li> </ol>

Grant project area affected	Specific project	Description of change <sup>1</sup>
(E)(2)	Expand Recruitment of Promising Teachers Through External Partnerships	The State is shifting \$1,779,264 from Year 2 to Years 3 (\$1,758,881) and 4 (\$20,383). The contract for this project was not executed until halfway through Year 2 so the State did not expend as much as originally expected. The funding was reallocated to Years 3 and 4 based on expected payment dates. <sup>3</sup>
(E)(2)	Leadership Pipeline for Turnaround Principals and Assistant Principals	Florida is shifting \$1,783,322 from Year 2 and \$261,374 from Year 3 to Year 4. Once the contract for this project was executed, the State found that additional funds were needed for Year 4. The internship component of the program will occur in this year and it is expected to cost more than the training occurring in Years 2 and 3.
(E)(2)	Building District-Level Capacity for Turnaround in Rural Districts	The State is shifting \$657,500 in contractual funds from Year 2 to Years 3 (\$648,546) and 4 (\$8,954). Florida did not spend as much as originally expected in Year 2 so the majority of the funds have shifted to Year 3 when the State expects to make payments on this contract. The remaining Year 2 funds were shifted to Year 4 in order to fund additional work in this project area. An additional \$991,046 was shifted to this project in an amendment approved by the Department in February 2013 in order to provide additional funds for Year 4.
(E)(2)	Differentiated Accountability Summer Academy	Florida is shifting \$2,318,994 in contractual funds Year 3. All budgeted funds were not spent in Year 2 due to timing of contract payments and because some of the Summer Academies were held early in Year 3 (July and August) rather than the end of Year 2.
(E)(2)	Charter School Partnership	The State is shifting \$3,774,946 in contractual funds from Year 2 to Years 3 (\$3,441,613) and 4 (\$333,333). Florida did not spend as much as expected in Year 2 because it was not able to recruit the number of charter schools for which it planned in Year 2. The State will attempt to recruit additional charter schools in Years 3 and 4 and has increased the budget for these years accordingly.

<sup>3</sup> In an amendment letter dated May 2012, the Department approved a request from the State to shift funds across years in the Recruitment of Promising Teachers project in (E)(2). The letter notes that \$220,583 in Year 3 funds would be shifting to Year 4. The letter should have stated that these funds would be shifting from Year 2 to Year 4.

Grant project area affected	Specific project	Description of change <sup>1</sup>
(E)(2)	Improve and Expand STEM Career and Professional Academies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) An additional \$213,112 has been added to this budget to cover the total cost of the programs included in this project budget. This additional funding is taken from the pot of unallocated funds. Due to the cost of funding the STEM Career and Professional Academies, the mentoring program, and the added cost of the Microsoft IT Academies (see June 2012 amendment approval letter), additional funds were needed to cover the full cost of this project.</li> <li>2) The State is shifting \$1,987,512 in contractual funds from Year 2 and \$1,903,416 in Year 4 to Year 3. The Year 2 funds are rolling over because the district grantees did not spend as much as expected in Year 2. It is expected that they will spend these funds in Year 3. Additionally, the Year 4 funds were reallocated to Year 3 because the district grants end in Year 3 and the funds will need to be spent in Year 3 rather than Year 4.</li> </ol>
(E)(2)	Reading Coordinators	The State is shifting \$1,129,679 in contractual funds from Year 2 to Year 3. The Reading Coordinator positions were not fully staffed in early Year 2 so Florida did not spend as much as originally expected.
(E)(2)	STEM Coordinators	The State is shifting \$836,017 in contractual funds from Year 2 to Years 3 (\$807,931) and 4 (\$28,086). The STEM Coordinator positions were not fully staffed in early Year 2 so Florida did not spend as much as originally expected.
(E)(2)	Community Compacts	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Florida is shifting \$1,201,485 in Year 2 funds to Year 3. Florida issued awards for the community compact projects in the middle of Year 2. Now that the agreements are in place, the State has a better understanding of when funds will be expended and the budget has been adjusted accordingly.</li> <li>2) The State is also shifting \$5,580,839 from this project to unallocated funds. Florida made awards to four community groups as originally expected but the awards were less than originally estimated resulting in unallocated funds.</li> </ol>

Grant project area affected	Specific project	Description of change <sup>1</sup>
(F)	Ensuring Successful Conditions for High-Performing Charter Schools and Other Innovative Schools	The contracts for the projects in this budget are slightly under budget resulting in \$296.329 in unallocated funds. Florida will submit an amendment in the near future once it has determined the best use for these funds.