



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

MAR 13 2015

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

Dear Governor Scott:

I am writing with regard to the documentation that Florida submitted between July 31, 2014, and January 30, 2015, in response to the conditions in the U.S. Department of Education's (ED) May 28, 2014, Race to the Top amendment approval related to sub-project B.2.9, Project 2: "Local Educational Agencies (LEA) Project 4 to Bolster Technology for Improved Instruction and Assessment." In conformance with the conditions, Florida submitted its request for applications for LEAs to support their digital learning plans and a summary of LEAs' approved local awards as well as the Florida State Digital Learning Plan.

Based on the documentation submitted, Florida has fulfilled the conditions specified. Under the approved amendment, the State's participating LEAs will implement grants in school year (SY) 2014-2015 to provide professional development to support the use of technology to improve student learning.

On February 26, 2015, the State submitted documentation to ED to support an additional amendment request to this project. ED has the authority to approve amendments to your plan and budget, provided that such a change does not alter the scope or objects of the approved proposal. In March 2013, the Department issued *Amendment Requests with No-cost Extension Guidance and Principles*, indicating the process by which ED reviews amendments containing requests to provide additional time for a grantee to accomplish the reform goals and deliverables to which it committed in its Race to the Top application and approved Scope of Work. To determine whether to approve this request, ED applied the conditions noted in the document, and compared your request with the Race to the Top program *Principles*, which are also included in that document.

I approve the following amendments, as described below.

- Shift a total of \$22,276,659 in unallocated funds from Years 4 and 5 of multiple Race to the Top projects to expand work underway in Year 5 for sub-projects B.2.9, "Project 2: LEA Project 4 to Bolster Technology for Improved Instruction and Assessment" and F.29.3, "Project 29: Common Core Local Instructional Improvement System Support for Charter Schools." Funds are available due to lower-than-expected expenditures needed to complete grant activities, primarily in the contractual budget category.¹ According to the State, projects where unallocated funds

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were identified have completed the planned scope and objectives successfully or were allocated more funds than necessary and expect to be completed with a revised budget.

- Utilize \$21,826,610 of the total unallocated funds discussed above to expand work underway in Year 5 in sub-project B.2.9, “Project 2: LEA Project 4 to Bolster Technology for Improved Instruction and Assessment.” Based on an assessment of LEAs’ digital learning plans, the State believes expanding this project will allow LEAs to make additional investments in classroom technology to improve teaching and learning conditions. The State plans to issue a request for applications to participating LEAs to expand their existing grants to support investments in technology infrastructure, devices, software and licenses, and aligning technology to support other tools created through Race to the Top. After review and approval by the State, LEAs will have through June 30, 2015, to obligate funds.
- Utilize \$450,049 of the total unallocated funds discussed above to continue and expand work underway in sub-project F.29.3, “Project 29: Common Core Local Instructional Improvement System Support for Charter Schools” through June 30, 2015. Specifically, the State will: (1) continue coaching sessions during the entire no-cost extension period with an emphasis on schools in corrective action or newly established schools serving students in low-performing feeder patterns; (2) expand development of web-based professional development resources, including additional modules on serving students with disabilities, English learners, and writing based on feedback from teachers and school leaders; (3) develop a best practices guide to support school leaders implementing Florida’s standards; and (4) conduct an evaluation of supports offered through this initiative to better understand the impact of this project on teaching and learning in charter schools.

As described in a July 17, 2013, amendment approval letter, ED indicated that it generally approves Florida’s process to review LEA subgrant requests to obligate and liquidate funds after September 23, 2014. On June 30, 2014, Florida submitted 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.

It is ED’s understanding that this amendment will not result in a change in your State’s performance measures and outcomes, nor will it substantially change the scope and objectives of the work. Please note that we expect grantees with no-cost extensions 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. This letter will be posted on ED’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 Jessie Harteis at (202) 453-6651 or OSS.Florida@ed.gov. Thank you for your continued commitment to enhancing education for all of Florida's students.

Sincerely,



Deborah S. Delisle
Assistant Secretary

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

ⁱ The total of \$22,276,659 includes \$8,184,070 discussed in a January 12, 2015, amendment letter. The \$22,276,659 total is derived from the following projects: \$1,660,070 from Project 1 "Department of Education – Administrative," \$5,558,559 from Project 3 "Assessments," \$4,000,000 from Project 6 "Centralized User-Friendly Portal with Single Sign-on," \$200,350 from Project 7 "Implement Local Systems," \$9,840 from Project 9 "Data Implementation Committee," \$2,793,404 from Project 10 "Race to the Top Data and Technology Initiatives," \$627,944 from Project 12 "Implement Evaluation Systems for Teachers and Principals that Measure Student Growth," \$513,000 from Project 13 "Assisting LEAs in Using Evaluation Results and Aligning Human Capital Systems," \$2,118,944 from Project 14 "Improve the Assignment of Effective Teachers and Principals to High-need Schools," \$265,000 from Project 15 "Improve Districts' Access to Effective Teachers and Principals in Hard-to-Staff Subjects/Specialties," \$144,905 from Project 16 "Improve Performance of Teacher and Principal Preparation Programs," \$56,998 from Project 18 "Community of Practice," \$1,030,000 from Project 20 "Expand Recruitment of Promising Teachers through External Partnerships," \$2,427,279 from Project 21 "Leadership Pipeline for Turnaround Principals and Assistant Principals," \$497,248 from Project 25 "Improve and Expand STEM Career and Professional Academies," and \$373,118 from Project 28 "Community Compacts."