



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

The Honorable Nathan Deal
Office of the Governor
206 Washington Street
111 State Capitol
Atlanta, GA 30334

May 20, 2015

Dear Governor Deal:

I am writing in response to the Georgia Department of Education's (GaDOE) request to amend its approved Race to the Top grant plan, including an extension of the project period to implement a portion of its plan. On July 7 and July 17, 2015, GaDOE submitted documentation to and held conversations with the U.S. Department of Education (ED) to support the amendment request. ED has the authority to approve amendments to your plan and budget, provided the revisions do not change the overall scope and objectives of the approved proposal. In March 2013, ED 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. To determine whether approval could be granted, ED 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 amendment, including a timeline extension for the project described below:

- Shift a total of \$900,000 in funds unexpended as of Year 4 from Project 13 "Value-Added/Growth Model" (\$38,000), Project 16 "Evaluation Training and Evaluation Process Feedback" (\$509,000), and Project 29 "Project Management and Evaluation" (\$353,000) to support other areas of the State's plan. These funds are available because the actual costs to complete the State's approved work and objectives of the projects were lower than budgeted. Specific project-related details are provided below:
 - Of these unexpended funds, Georgia is approved to shift the total of \$900,000 to Year 5 of Project 1 "Preparation for Common Core Standards Implementation" and extend the project's timeline until August 14, 2015.
 - Georgia will utilize the funds in Project 1 to create a "Literacy Launchpad" to focus on determining needs as children matriculate from kindergarten to third grade. Extensions to this project will focus on children's early literacy development and support toward familiarization of and achievement in common core standards in English/language arts.

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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.

- Georgia’s use of additional funds will extend the original scope of work for Project 1. GaDOE will be able to further prepare for common core implementation by providing more support for children early in the accessibility of standards.

It is ED’s understanding that this amendment and no-cost extension will not result in a change in GaDOE’s performance measures and outcomes, nor will they substantially change the scope and objectives of the work. Please note that ED expects 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. GaDOE must request and receive approval to move forward with no cost extensions for any additional projects. This letter will be posted on ED’s website as a record of the amendment.

If you need any assistance or have any questions regarding Race to the Top, please do not hesitate to contact Eric Larson or Jamila Smith of my staff at: OSS.Georgia@ed.gov.

Sincerely,

/s/

Monique M. Chism, Ph.D.
Director
Office of State Support

cc: Richard Woods, Georgia School Superintendent
Susan Andrews, Race to the Top Deputy Superintendent
Clara Keith, Race to the Top Associate Superintendent