



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY

August 6, 2012

The Honorable Patrick Quinn
Office of the Governor
207 State House
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Governor Quinn:

I am writing in response to Illinois's request to amend its approved Race to the Top grant project. Between May 10th and July 27th, 2012, the State submitted amendment requests to the U.S. Department of Education (Department) and additional clarification as requested. 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. The Department provided grantees with a copy of the "Grant Amendment Submission Process" document. 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 and those included in Appendix 1:

- For section (A)(2), reallocate all Race to the Top funds for the "Center for School Improvement" (CSI) project (\$2,110,514 in total) to other projects described below. The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) has determined that there are adequate State funds to support this work without the use of Race to the Top funds, and has indicated that reallocation of these limited resources to other areas of greater need would benefit the State overall.
- For section (A)(2), in the "Build ISBE Capacity" project, repurpose \$329,936 originally allocated for salary and fringe of the Race to the Top Implementation staff and reallocate \$595,776 in funding from other Race to the Top projects (as described below) to increase funding for the State's Race to the Top leadership team.

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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.

- Repurpose \$220,896 of the \$329,936 originally allocated for salary and fringe of the Race to the Top Implementation Counsel to hire a Co-Deputy General Counsel for Chicago and the remaining \$109,140 plus \$111,776 from the CSI project to hire and support a Deputy Chief Information Officer.
 - Reallocate \$228,224 from the CSI project and \$111,776 from the “Teacher and Principal Induction and Mentoring” project to fund a contractor to oversee work related to teacher effectiveness.
 - Reallocate \$144,000 of the funds from the CSI project to support additional staff to effectively and efficiently implement the grant, as well as provide greater support to the agency project leads and LEAs.
- For section (A)(2), reallocate \$626,514 in funding from the CSI project to reorganize and clarify State supports for participating LEAs. The “Developing Regional Capacity and Supporting Participating LEAs” project will be supported with \$626,514 in funding throughout grant Years 1 to 4 to support participating LEAs and build capacity to sustain reforms. Previously, ISBE had required these activities but had not organized this work into a discrete project.
 - For section (B)(3), in the “Learning Assessment Strategies” project, redistribute contractual funds from Years 1 to 4 to Years 1 to 3 to allow for more rapid development of resources to support the participating LEAs. All funds will remain in the contractual category.
 - For section (B)(3), in the “STEM Learning Exchanges, Pathways Resource Center, and Administrative Support” project, redistribute the Years 1 to 4 funding to reflect a budget that is a) based on calendar years and b) on a reimbursement cycle rather than a lump sum payment system.
 - For section (D)(2), in the “Performance Evaluation Implementation” project, transfer \$595,776 in funding from other Race to the Top projects (as described below) to increase funding for the State’s section (D)(2) Race to the Top leadership team.
 - Shift supplemental funding for participating LEAs in Years 1 and 2 (a total of \$1,300,000) to the Year 1 contractual category due to a revised implementation strategy for the PERA Pre-qualification Program. In its original application, the State planned to provide supplemental funding to participating LEAs for travel to in person training sessions on the PERA Pre-qualification Program. The State now will develop an online training program to make the training more accessible to a larger number of educators across the State and allow for more consistent dissemination of information to educators.

- Reallocate \$1,000,000 from the CSI project to this project's budget to ensure that all evaluators can be trained in Year 1. The State originally committed to competitively bidding for training slots if the funding did not cover all evaluators in Year 1, but asserts that the training will have a greater impact if all educators are covered.
- For section (D)(3), in the "Redesign Teacher Preparation Programs" project, delay the activities related to the teacher preparation programs by one semester in order to provide additional time to develop increased interest from teacher preparation programs, more knowledge and buy-in from faculty, and to further develop program designs. This change does not affect the performance measures for (D)(3), as this change will shift graduation of teacher preparation program candidates from January to June 2015, and the State has indicated that it is unlikely that a large number of students graduating in January would have been placed in schools mid-year. Specifically, shifts for key activities are:
 - Two month shift for the solicitation and four month shift for the selection of teacher preparation programs to receive incentives for developing programs aligned with CCSS -- from solicit and select by June 2012 to solicit by August 2012 and select by October 2012. The State has indicated that it will have a better response if it delays the release of the request for sealed proposals (RFSP) to later in the summer when the administrative regulations for the teacher preparation programs are closer to being finalized and the teacher preparation programs are back from summer break and preparing for a new year.
 - Eight month (one semester) shift in when the first cohort of students begins the revised teacher preparation program -- from January 2013 to September 2013. This adjustment aligns with the timeline for finalizing the administrative rules (fall 2012) and the start of the school year.
- For section (D)(5), in the "Teacher and Principal Induction and Mentoring" project, redistribute the Supplemental Funding allocation across all four years of the grant to align with how the LEAs will use the funds. The revised distribution of funds reflects the LEAs reimbursement payment schedule, their use of fiscal year rather than calendar year budgets, and the timeline for implementation.
- For section (A)(2), refine the performance measures related to the Rising Star program to align with the expectations of the Rising Star continuous improvement system and ensure high quality plan development. See *Appendix 2: (A)(2) Performance Measures* for the revised measures, baselines, and targets.
 - Revise the roll-out timeline for participating LEA's to assess, prioritize and plan for all the Rising Star mandatory system indicators from the end of school year (SY) 2012-2013 to the beginning of SY 2014-2015. The revised timeframe ensures that participating LEAs can focus their

attention and time on creating high quality plans through a thoughtful process throughout the course of the grant. The relevant performance measure baseline and targets are adjusted accordingly.

- Remove the performance measures related to Rising Star's non-mandatory indicators. The State initially planned to hold participating LEAs accountable for assessing, prioritizing, and planning for 75% of the system's non-mandatory indicators. After further consideration of the Rising Star expectations and the vast amount of work participating LEAs will be undertaking during this time, the State affirms that at this time, this optional performance measure is not a meaningful indicator of performance.
- For section (B)(3), clarify and adjust the performance measures to align with the State's implementation timeline and updated information. See *Appendix 2: (B)(3) Performance Measures* for the revised measures, baselines, and targets.
 - Revise the State's performance measures related to aligning curriculum to Common Core State Standards (CCSS), implementing assessment systems, and participation in network activity to develop assessments to align with the State's CCSS implementation timeline by replacing zeroes with N/A in the relevant years.
 - Revise the State's Programs of Study (POS) & science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) implementation targets. The State updated the targets for the number of students enrolled in POS to reflect an updated conceptual understanding of POS in the field, the time and effort to establish programs, the Race to the Top timeline for implementation, and the number of programs that will be available to most students.
 - Revise the targets for the percentage of 8th graders in participating LEAs completing an education and career plan to align with the implementation timeline of participating LEAs piloting these plans in SY 2013-2014 and fully implementing in SY 2014-2015.
- For section (D)(2), clarify and adjust the performance measures to align with the State's implementation timeline and updated definitions. See *Appendix 2: (D)(2) Performance Measures* for the revised measures, baselines, and targets.
 - Update the State's performance measures related to qualifying evaluation systems to reflect that measurement of student growth and implementation of qualifying evaluation systems will take place on the following timeline: Chicago Public Schools in SY 2013-2014, LEAs whose student performance ranks in the lowest 20 percent among all school districts of their type (e.g., elementary, high school) in the State in SY 2014-2015, and the remainder of participating LEAs SY 2015-2016. The State's application stated that participating LEAs would measure student growth

and implement qualifying evaluation systems one year ahead of the timeline required by Illinois's Performance Evaluation Reform Act (PERA) (Senate Bill 315; Public Act 96-0861). Due to the staggered implementation timeline outlined in the law, the State was unable to set firm targets for the percentage of participating LEAs implementing qualifying evaluation systems in a given year and instead put in estimates and an assurance to update these measures once the final list was known. As of June 2012, the State had finalized its list of 36 participating LEAs. In addition, the State has indicated that 100% of participating LEAs will measure student growth in SY 2015-2016 for all grades/subjects identified above and expects that many of the LEAs will measure student growth faster than the required timeline.

- Revise the targets for the percentage of participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems that are used to inform human capital decisions to align with the State's implementation timeline. A qualifying evaluation system must be in place before a State would be able to report meaningful data on the use of that system. The State also updated its optional performance measures disaggregated by teachers and principals. As Illinois will use qualifying evaluation data to inform human capital decisions for principals on an earlier timeline than for teachers, the State's optional *teacher* performance measures are the same as the required aggregate measures. See *Appendix 2: Optional D2 Performance Measures* for the revised measures, baselines, and targets for principals.
- For section (D)(3), revise targets for the distribution of educators within rating categories to align with the State's implementation timeline and reflect the State's updated thinking around the anticipated distribution. As indicated above, as a qualifying evaluation system must be in place before a State would be able to report meaningful data on the use of that system. The State now anticipates that 10% of educators will be rated as excellent, 50% as proficient, 30% as needs improvement, and 10% as unsatisfactory. See *Appendix 2: (D)(3) Performance Measures* for the revised measures, baselines, and targets.
- For section (D)(5), clarify and adjust the targets for participating LEA's teacher and principal mentoring and induction programs to align with the timeline for implementation. The State's participating LEAs are required to establish a two-year teacher induction and mentoring program and a one-year principal mentoring and induction program by the end of SY 2012-2013. For principal programs, the State anticipates that a few LEAs will implement a principal mentoring and induction program in SY 2012-2013 (ahead of schedule), and the rest in SY 2013-2014. For teacher programs, the State anticipates a couple of early adopters will start in SY 2012-2013 and complete the two-year program in SY 2013-2014, and all others will start in SY 2013-2014 and complete in SY 2014-2015.

See *Appendix 2: (D)(5) Performance Measures* for the revised measures, baselines, and targets.

Please note that this letter will be posted on the Department's website as a record of the amendments.

I am confident that Illinois 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 Illinois's Race to the Top Program Officer, Rebecca Zazove, at 734-223-7745 or Rebecca.Zazove@ed.gov.

Sincerely,

//s//

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

cc: Christopher Koch
David Osta
Christi Chadwick

Appendix 1:ⁱ

Grant project area affected	Specific project	Description of change
(B)(3)	Local Assessment Strategy (LAS)	Delay the timeline for the RFP process and selection of a management entity for the LAS work by two months. Due to this delay, the RFSP for a purchasing contract by the LAS management entity will also be delayed by two to three months, and the convening of work groups delayed by six months. This will not result in substantial impact on future deliverables.
(B)(3)	Local Assessment Strategy (LAS)	Revise the State's approach to establishing advisory panels to ensure the LAS management entity has been selected so the entity can assist with the panel member selections and can complete the work in less time. This will result in a nine month delay of the start date and five month delay of the end date for establishing the panels, but not result in substantial impact on future deliverables.
(B)(3)	STEM Learning Exchanges, Pathways Resource Center, and Administrative Support	Delay the timelines for the RFP process for the STEM Lead Entities for planning and implementation clusters by four months, and the timeline for Lead Entities to begin implementation by one month. The State has indicated that it will be able to be more strategic in this work if it has additional time to continue ongoing planning conversations with the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council (PEAC) and investigate an anticipated collaboration with the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). This will not result in substantial impact on future deliverables.
(B)(3)	STEM Learning Exchanges, Pathways Resource Center, and Administrative Support	Delay the timelines for selecting and entering into an agreement with the lead organization to administer the Pathways Resource Center by four months and the timeline for development of plans and methods to support POS implementation and STEM Learning Exchanges by three months due to ongoing negotiations with the selected entity and contractor. This will not result in substantial impact on future deliverables.

Grant project area affected	Specific project	Description of change
(C)(3)	Illinois Collaborative for Education Policy Research (ICEPR)	Delay the timelines for selecting and entering into an agreement with a lead organization to administer the ICEPR by two months, and the timeline for formalization of ICEPR's organizational structure and research agenda by one month, due to ongoing negotiations with the selected entity. This will not result in substantial impact on future deliverables.

Appendix 2ⁱⁱ

Performance Measures (A)(2)	Actual Data: Baseline	End of SY 2011-2012	End of SY 2012-2013	End of SY 2013-2014	End of SY 2014-2015
Percentage of participating LEAs that have assessed, prioritized, and established plans for the full implementation of the mandatory indicators within Rising Star or an approved equivalent continuous improvement system.	19%	25%	50%	75%	100%
Percentage of participating LEAs utilizing Rising Star that have assessed, prioritized, and established plans for the full implementation of at least 75% of the non-mandatory district indicators within the district continuous improvement plan.	8%	0	40%	60%	80%
Performance Measures (B)(3)	Actual Data: Baseline	End of SY 2011-2012	End of SY 2012-2013	End of SY 2013-2014	End of SY 2014-2015
Aligning curriculum to CCSS					
% of participating LEAs implementing CCSS throughout all grade levels and applicable subject areas	N/A	N/A	25%	90%	100%
Implement assessment systems					
% of participating LEA teachers providing ELA instruction who use non-summative assessments that measure student learning over the course of the school year (through administration of the assessments multiple times per year) aligned to the CCSS in ELA	N/A	N/A	25%	90%	100%

Performance Measures (B)(3)		Actual Data: Baseline	End of SY 2011-2012	End of SY 2012-2013	End of SY 2013-2014	End of SY 2014-2015
% of participating LEA teachers providing Math instruction who use non-summative assessments that measure student learning over the course of the school year (through administration of the assessments multiple times per year) aligned to the CCSS in Math		N/A	N/A	25%	90%	100%
Participation in network activity to develop assessments						
% of teachers in participating LEAs participating in working groups that are contributing to the development of assessment frameworks and items for Type II and Type III assessments		N/A	N/A	5%	10%	N/A
Programs of Study & STEM Implementation						
% of high school students in participating LEAs currently participating in a STEM Program of Study		N/A	N/A	N/A	8%	15%
% of underrepresented high school students in participating LEAs currently participating in STEM Program of Study		N/A	N/A	N/A	8%	18%
% of participating LEA students currently in a STEM Program of Study participating in work-based learning experiences		N/A	N/A	N/A	10%	65%
% of 8 th graders in participating LEAs completing an education and career plan		2.67%	3%	3%	30%	65%

Performance Measures (D)(2)		Actual Data: Baseline	End of SY 2011-2012	End of SY 2012-2013	End of SY 2013-2014	End of SY 2014-2015
(D)(2)(i)	Percentage of participating LEAs that measure student growth	N/A	N/A	2.78%	35%	65%
(D)(2)(ii)	Percentage of participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems for teachers.	N/A	N/A	N/A	2.78%	47%

(D)(2)(iii)	Percentage of participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems for principals.	N/A	N/A	100%	100%	100%
(D)(2)(iv)	Percentage of participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems that are used to inform:					
(D)(2)(iv) (a)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing teachers and principals 	N/A	N/A	N/A	2.78%	47%
(D)(2)(iv) (b)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compensating teachers and principals 	N/A	N/A	N/A	0%	0%
(D)(2)(iv) (b)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting teachers and principals 	N/A	N/A	N/A	0%	0%
(D)(2)(iv) (b)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retaining effective teachers and principals 	N/A	N/A	N/A	0%	0%
(D)(2)(iv) (c)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Granting tenure and/or full certification (where applicable) to teachers and principals 	N/A	N/A	N/A	0%	0%
(D)(2)(iv) (d)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removing ineffective tenured and untenured teachers and principals 	N/A	N/A	N/A	2.78%	47%

Optional Performance Measures (D)(2)		Actual Data: Baseline	End of SY 2011-2012	End of SY 2012-2013	End of SY 2013-2014	End of SY 2014-2015
(D)(2)(iv)	Percentage of participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems that are used to inform:					
(D)(2)(iv) (a)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing principals 	N/A	N/A	100%	100%	100%

(D)(2)(iv) (b)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compensating principals 	N/A	N/A	2.78%	2.78%	2.78%
(D)(2)(iv) (b)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting principals 	N/A	N/A	0%	0%	0%
(D)(2)(iv) (b)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retaining effective principals 	N/A	N/A	0%	0%	0%
(D)(2)(iv) (c)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Granting tenure and/or full certification (where applicable) to principals 	N/A	N/A	N/A	2.78%	2.78%
(D)(2)(iv) (d)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removing ineffective tenured and untenured principals 	N/A	N/A	100%	100%	100%

Performance Measures (D)(3)	Actual Data: Baseline	End of SY 2011-2012	End of SY 2012-2013	End of SY 2013-2014	End of SY 2014-2015
Percentage of teachers in schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both who are highly effective.	N/A	N/A	N/A	10	12
Percentage of teachers in schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both who are highly effective.	N/A	N/A	N/A	14	16
Percentage of teachers in schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both who are ineffective.	N/A	N/A	N/A	12	10
Percentage of teachers in schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both who are ineffective.	N/A	N/A	N/A	10	8
Percentage of principals leading schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both who are highly effective.	N/A	N/A	10	12	15
Percentage of principals leading schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both who are highly effective.	N/A	N/A	14	16	18

Percentage of principals leading schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both who are ineffective.	N/A	N/A	14	12	9
Percentage of principals leading schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both who are ineffective.	N/A	N/A	10	8	6

Performance Measures (D(5))	Actual Data: Baseline	End of SY 2011-2012	End of SY 2012-2013	End of SY 2013-2014	End of SY 2014-2015
% 2 nd year teachers in participating LEAs completing a 2-year induction and mentoring program	N/A	N/A	0%	20%	80%
% of beginning teachers completing a 2-year induction and mentoring program that, for the final school year of the program, achieve an overall summative performance evaluation rating of either proficient or excellent	N/A	N/A	N/A	40%	42%
% of beginning teachers rated "needs improvement" in their first year of teaching who, after completing a 2-year induction and mentoring program, achieve an overall summative performance evaluation rating of proficient or excellent	N/A	N/A	N/A	35%	40%
% of beginning principals participating in a one-year mentoring program that achieve an overall summative performance evaluation rating of either proficient or excellent for the school year in which they participated in the program	N/A	N/A	35%	35%	40%

ⁱ This chart reflects budgetary shifts that exceed \$500,000 and therefore require Department approval.

ⁱⁱ The following set of charts reflects changes to the State's performance measure baseline data and annual targets.