



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY

September 25, 2014

The Honorable Steve Beshear
700 Capitol Avenue, Suite 100
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601

Dear Governor Beshear:

I am writing in response to Kentucky's request to amend its approved Race to the Top grant project. Between January 31, 2014, and August 27, 2014, the State submitted amendment requests and clarifying documentation 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. 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 am pleased to approve the following amendments:

- Budget: In the Continuous Instructional Improvement Technology System (CIITS) project budget, shift \$598,802 of unexpended funds from Year 2 contractual to Year 3 contractual. The State reports that this shift is due to a change in the billing periods for the CIITS contract. The total amount of funds allocated for this project has not changed and project tasks have been accomplished as described in the Scope of Work.
- Performance Measures:
 - 1) Clarify that performance measures in the annual performance report (APR) related to ACT college benchmarks in English, reading, and mathematics are measuring the increase in the percentage of students meeting benchmarks rather than measuring the increase in the number of students meeting benchmarks. Similarly, performance measures related to closing the ACT college benchmark achievement gaps in English, reading, and mathematics are measuring the percentage of students meeting the benchmarks not the number of students meeting the benchmarks. Based on this clarification, the State has resubmitted APR data for this measure for school years (SY) 2011-2012 and 2012-2013. (See Appendices A and B)

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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.

- 2) Clarify that the performance measure in the APR reflects the State's intent to close the ACT college benchmark achievement gaps in English, reading, and mathematics among students in select subgroups (Black, Hispanic, low-income (eligible for National School Lunch Program), students with disabilities, and English learners) and "all students." In the State's Race to the Top Phase 3 application, it described closing the achievement gap between low-income and non-low income students; Black and white students; Hispanic and white students; students with disabilities and students without disabilities; and English learners and non-English learners. Based on this clarification, the State has resubmitted APR data for this measure for SYs 2011-2012 and 2012-2013. (See Appendix B)
- 3) Add a performance measure to the APR for college- and career-readiness achievement gap closure. The State believes that its college- and career-readiness measure is a more accurate measure of its efforts related to preparing students for college and career than data currently reported in the APR. The State has provided a SY 2013-2014 target for college- and career-readiness and actual data for SYs 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 to be included in the APR. (See Appendix C)

Sincerely,

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Patrick Rooney
Acting Director, Policy and Program Implementation
Implementation and Support Unit

Appendix A - Revised ACT performance measures and actual data for SY 2011-2012 and SY 2012-2013

Appendix B - Revised ACT gap measures, gap targets for SY 2013-2014, and actual data for SY 2012-2012 and SY 2012-2013

Appendix C - College/Career Readiness achievement gap measure, actual data for SY 2011-2012 and SY 2012-2013, and target for SY 2013-2014

cc: State Superintendent Terry Holliday
David Cook, Kentucky Race to the Top Lead

Appendix A - Revised ACT performance measures and actual data for SY 2011-2012 and SY 2012-2013

Revised performance measure: Increase the percentage of all students that meet the ACT college benchmark in English.

	2011-2012 Actual	2012-2013 Actual
ALL Students - % reaching Benchmark	52.2	53.1

Revised performance measure: Increase the percentage of all students that meet the ACT college benchmark in mathematics.

	2011-2012 Actual	2012-2013 Actual
ALL Students - % reaching Benchmark	38.6	39.6

Revised performance measure: Increase the percentage of all students that meet the ACT college benchmark in reading.

	2011-2012 Actual	2012-2013 Actual
ALL Students - % reaching Benchmark	41.9	44.1

Appendix B - Revised ACT gap measures, gap targets for SY 2013-2014, and actual data for SY 2012-2012 and SY 2012-2013

Revised English performance measure: Decrease the ACT English achievement gap, as measured by the percent of students meeting the ACT English benchmark, between select student subgroups - Black, Hispanic, Limited English Proficient (ELL), low-income (NSLP), and , children with disabilities - and all students.

Group	2011-2012 Actual	2012-2013 Actual	2013-2014 Target
ALL/Black	23.9	23.6	18.3
ALL/Hispanic	14.6	12.2	10.8
ALL/ELL	48.3	50.1	37.8
ALL/NSLP	14.5	14.3	10.7
ALL/Disabilities	41.1	40.1	32.0

Revised mathematics performance measure: Decrease the ACT mathematics achievement gap, as measured by the percent of students meeting the ACT mathematics benchmark, between select student subgroups - Black, Hispanic, Limited English Proficient (ELL), low-income (NSLP), and , children with disabilities - and all students.

Group	2011-2012 Actual	2012-2013 Actual	2013-2014 Target
ALL/Black	19.9	21.5	15.9
ALL/Hispanic	8.2	10.1	6.6
ALL/ELL	29.4	30.3	23.5
ALL/NSLP	13.8	13.9	11.1
ALL/Disabilities	31.7	29.9	25.4

Revised reading performance measure: Decrease the ACT reading achievement gap, as measured by the percent of students meeting the ACT reading benchmark, between select student subgroups - Black, Hispanic, Limited English Proficient (ELL), low-income (NSLP), and , children with disabilities - and all students.

Group	2011-2012 Actual	2012-2013 Actual	2013-2014 Target
ALL/Black	22.6	19.3	18.1
ALL/Hispanic	12.3	8.7	9.8
ALL/ELL	39.1	38.3	31.3
ALL/NSLP	12.4	9.5	9.9
ALL/Disabilities	29.7	26.7	23.7

Appendix C - College/Career Readiness achievement gap measure, actual data for SY 2011-2012 and SY 2012-2013, and target for SY 2013-2014

Performance measure: Decrease the college and career readiness gap, as measured by percent of graduates who meet the State's definition of being college and/or career ready¹, between select student subgroups - Black, Hispanic, Limited English Proficient (ELL), low-income (NSLP), and , children with disabilities - and all students.

Group	2011-2012 Actual	2012-2013 Actual	2013-2014 Target
ALL/Black	21.8	21.9	13.4
ALL/Hispanic	11.9	12.4	7.6
ALL/ELL	44.6	49.8	19.7
ALL/NSLP	17.5	13.8	9.5
ALL/Disabilities	33.3	38.3	16.5

All data taken from Kentucky State Level School Report Card for 2012-13, "Gap Delivery Targets"
<http://applications.education.ky.gov/src/>

¹ . Graduates who meet the Kentucky Council of Postsecondary Education Systemwide ACT benchmarks for English, mathematics, and reading or pass the Compass or KY Online Testing Exam (KYOTE) are considered college ready. Graduates who met benchmarks for the Career-Ready Academics (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB), ACT WorkKeys), Career-Ready Technical (KY Occupational Skills Standards Assessment (KOSSA) or received an industry-recognized career certificate) are considered career ready.