



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY

July 17, 2013

The Honorable Bobby Jindal  
Office of the Governor  
PO Box 94004  
Baton Rouge, LA 70804

Dear Governor Jindal,

I am writing in response to Louisiana's request to amend its Race to the Top grant project. On July 10, 2013, the State submitted amendment requests to the U.S. Department of Education. 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 posted on its website a revised "Grant Amendment Submission Process" document indicating the process by which amendment 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:

Project 2B (B)(3)AP Initiative

- Eliminate task 2.3, "LA Virtual School AP Academy - Expansion of Current Course Offerings and task 2.4 LA Virtual School AP Academy - Expansion of Course offerings" from the Scope of Work because Louisiana Virtual Schools has been discontinued as the vehicle for its online courses. Instead the State will use outside vendors and procure courses that can be accessed via the Course Choice online registration system. None of the funds originally allocated to support expanding Louisiana Virtual School course offerings have been expended. A total \$686,442 will be reallocated to support an increase, by 20 percent, of the number of teachers and administrators attending AP Summer trainings.

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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.*

The State reports that an investment in AP teacher professional development will result in an increase of the number of available AP courses for students and thus, an increase in student enrollment in AP courses. State funds will be used to support the change in strategy. Additionally, the State assures the Department that additional AP courses will be made available and it remains committed to meeting its STEM goals, as STEM AP courses will be a focus when selecting teachers and administrators to attend the AP training.

#### Project 6 High Performance LEAs Initiative

- Alter the timeline by which the State will make awards to support new charter schools. The State has explained that this project has experienced increased interest from many top national charter operators. The State would like to meet this demand by increasing the number of awards made in year three; and by being able to provide larger, more competitive contracts by increasing the amount of the awards. The State will reallocate \$500,000 designated to support new charter schools in year four to year three as well as carryover \$75,000 allocated for new charter schools but not spent in year two to year three. This would result in an additional \$575,000 in year three for new awards. Finally, the State will establish a minimum award amount of \$50,000 and not place a cap on the maximum award amount<sup>1</sup>.

The State has indicated the change the timeline and award amount would not adversely impact performance for this activity and has increased the target for the number of charter schools to be awarded over the life of the project by 20. The number of new charter schools to be established at the end of the SY 2013-2014 would be 127 (increasing current target by 10) and 137 at the end of the SY 2014-2015 (increasing current target by 10). The Department believes that this amendment not only capitalizes on the interest of top national chart operators, but also provides the State with a longer time period to monitor implementation and provide support and technical assistance to new charter schools.

It is our understanding that these amendments will not substantially change your State's scope and objectives of the work. Please note that this letter will be posted on the Department's website as a record of the amendments.

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<sup>1</sup> The current approved budget indicates that awards would be \$200,000-\$500,000 per procurement.

If you need any assistance or have any questions regarding Race to the Top, please do not hesitate to contact Louisiana's Race to the Top Program Officer, Karen Dorsey at (202) 453-6695 or [Karen.dorsey@ed.gov](mailto:Karen.dorsey@ed.gov).

Sincerely,

//s//

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

cc: Superintendent John White  
Kunjan Narechania, LDOE Chief of Staff  
Stephen J. Osborn, Assistant Superintendent, LDOE Office of Student Programs  
Hattie Arrington, LDOE Race to the Top Lead