



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY

December 17, 2013

The Honorable Martin O'Malley  
Office of the Governor  
Maryland State House  
100 State Circle  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Governor O'Malley:

I am writing in response to Maryland's request to amend its approved Race to the Top grant project. Between July 30 and December 4, 2013, the State submitted amendment requests 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 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 amendment with the condition outlined below:

- For the project area Standards and Assessments, in the project "Formative Assessments" (3/2), shift \$1.2 million from Year 2 to Year 4 contractual for the purchase of formative assessment professional development modules for educators. The State plans to pilot the courses in summer 2014 and make the courses available for educators in fall 2014.

The Department approves this request under the condition that the State submits a no-cost extension request describing how it will support educators implement formative assessments in the classroom throughout SY 2014-2015.

It is our understanding that this amendment will not result in a change in your State's performance measures and outcomes, nor will they substantially change the Scope of Work.

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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 Department notes that it is currently reviewing additional amendments submitted by Maryland that include substantial timeline and strategy shifts. The Department is concerned with the lack of progress and strategy shifts related to the State's technology projects. Therefore, the Department may take appropriate enforcement action which may include placing the State on high-risk status under 34 CFR 80.12.

Please note that this letter will be posted on the Department'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 me.

Sincerely,

//s//

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

cc: Dr. Lillian Lowery, State Superintendent of Schools  
Penelope Thornton-Talley, Esq.  
Mary Gable