



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

The Honorable Larry Hogan  
Office of the Governor  
Maryland State House  
100 State Circle  
Annapolis, MD 21401

May 27, 2015

Dear Governor Hogan:

I am writing with regard to the documentation that Maryland submitted between June 23, 2014, and May 7, 2015, in response to the conditions in the U.S. Department of Education's (ED) May 1, 2014, Race to the Top amendment approval related to the "Educator Instructional Improvement Academies" (Project 41/24). Maryland submitted the following: 1) a scope and sequence that outlines the State's objectives and desired outcomes of the summer 2014 Governor's Academy and subsequent topical convenings for the Principal Pipeline; 2) documentation and analysis of participant feedback from the summer 2014 Governor's Principals' Academy; and 3) an assessment, with evidence, of the State's progress to date and how the Maryland State Department of Education plans to use this information to inform its implementation moving forward. Based on the documentation provided, Maryland has fulfilled the conditions specified.

I also am writing in response to Maryland's request to amend its approved Race to the Top grant projects. Between April 7 and May 5, 2015, the State submitted documentation to and held conversations with ED to support amendment requests to its approved Race to the Top plan. 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 amendments:

- In the "Develop the Overall Technology Infrastructure to Support Race to the Top Initiatives" (Project 8/11), shift a total of \$1,160,162 to Year 5 from project funds primarily from the equipment and contractual cost categories that remained unexpended at the end of

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Year 4 (\$442,721) and unexpended funds identified from other projects (\$717,441).<sup>1</sup> The completion of the decentralized security infrastructure will enable Maryland to make available all content in its related kindergarten through grade twelve (K-12) Longitudinal Data System (LDS) dashboards to local educational agencies (LEAs). Maryland originally planned to complete its decentralized security infrastructure by September 2014; however, as a result of timeline delays due to technology challenges and the need for additional resources in Year 5 to continue to support previously approved work, Maryland will now complete its decentralized security infrastructure by July 31, 2015.

- In the “Expand Educator Information System (EIS)” (Project 30/49), shift a total of \$972,809 to Year 5 from project funds that remained unexpended at the end of Year 4 (\$427,105) and unexpended funds identified from other projects (\$545,704) to continue the development and implementation of the State’s EIS in Year 5. The unexpended project funds are available primarily due to actual equipment and contractual expenditures being lower than originally budgeted. Maryland originally planned to complete this system by December 31, 2014; however, due to technical challenges, the State will now complete the State’s EIS by June 30, 2015.

As described in an April 9, 2014, amendment approval letter, ED indicated that it generally approves Maryland’s process to review LEA subgrant requests to obligate and liquidate funds after September 23, 2014. On June 30, 2014, Maryland submitted a record of each participating LEA project approved by the State for a no-cost extension and the total funding approved for LEAs’ Year 5 Scopes of Work.

It is ED’s 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 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. This letter will be posted on ED’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 Jamila Smith of my staff at [OSS.Maryland@ed.gov](mailto:OSS.Maryland@ed.gov).

Sincerely,

/s/

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

cc: Dr. Lillian Lowery, State Superintendent of Schools  
Penelope Thornton-Talley, Esq.  
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<sup>1</sup> During Maryland’s budgetary review, the State identified Race to the Top project funds not yet spent or not on-track to be spent during Year 5. Maryland’s Race to the Top leadership made determinations about the best use of these funds during Year 5, which in some cases resulted in shifting funds to other project budgets as described throughout this letter.