



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION
ACADEMIC IMPROVEMENT AND TEACHER QUALITY PROGRAMS

January 12, 2011

The Honorable Deval Patrick
Office of the Governor
State House, Room 360
Boston, Massachusetts 02133

Dear Governor Patrick:

I am writing in response to Massachusetts' request to amend its approved Race to the Top grant project. Between December 15, 2010 and January 5, 2011, the State submitted amendment requests to the Department of Education (Department). As you are aware, the Department has the authority to approve amendments to an application and budget, provided that such a change does not alter the scope or objectives of the approved proposal. On January 6, 2011, the Department sent a letter and "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 am pleased to approve the following amendments:

- Grants to local educational agencies (LEAs) in Year 1 will be \$10,059,835, and the remainder of the LEA allocation will be divided evenly over the following three years: \$38,313,388 in Years 2 and 3 and \$38,313,389 in Year 4. This change reflects the actual LEA request for funds in Year 1.
- Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School is added as a participating district. Whittier requested to withdraw from Race to the Top during the LEA scope of work process but after the November 22, 2010 scope of work submission deadline, requested to join, as the superintendent decided that Race to the Top should be a high priority for the district, given its priority for the state overall. Massachusetts would like Whittier to become a participating district, since the state would like to have a variety of districts involved so that it can see how the initiatives and programs work in different educational settings.
- In order to more easily manage its project budgets, Massachusetts will:

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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.

- Move the budget for Innovation Schools, formerly a stand-alone project budget, into the “Expand implementation of proven secondary school programs, policies, and incentives” project budget;
 - Move the budget associated with the ELAR/MEPID project from the “Improve the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs” project budget to the “Transform state data systems” project budget;
 - Combine the four turnaround-related budgets into one overall turnaround project budget, “Turn around the lowest performing schools”; and
 - Move the “Improved recruitment tools and resources” from the “Improve teacher and leader effectiveness based on performance” project budget to the “Ensure equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals” project budget.
- In the project “Develop, attract, and manage lead partners and turnaround operators to execute the restart model at Level 4 and 5 schools,” Massachusetts now plans to do more direct incubation of turnaround partners in Years 1 and 2, rather than relying early in the process on an external organization that could take a while to start its operations. Massachusetts does not anticipate having Level 5 schools until Year 4 of the grant, providing more time to complete the design work. Massachusetts will specifically:
 - Move \$100,000 in consulting design support from Year 1 to Year 2 of the budget, and adjust associated indirect costs;
 - Move \$150,000 in turnaround operator per-school costs from Year 3 to Year 2, and adjust associated indirect costs; and
 - There will be a total of three contracts in Year 3 so that the total indirect cost increases in that year by \$6,100. In Year 1, there will be one fewer contract, so indirect costs decrease by the same amount.
- In the “Improve teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance” project, the following activities, formerly scheduled for Year 1, will now take place in Year 2: “Review induction policies” and “Adopt regulations for tiered principal licensure system and career ladder.” This change is due to a delay in the start of the program.
- In the “Ensure equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals” project, the following activities, formerly scheduled for Year 1, will now take place in Year 2: “Expand aMAzing teachers recruitment website and revise Massachusetts Educators Career Center” and “Develop and implement recruitment and retention incentives for educators in high poverty and high minority schools.” This work supports Massachusetts’ turnaround activities, which mainly ramp up in the Year 2. Thus, the State feels it makes more sense to begin this work in Year 2.
- In the “Ensure equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals” project, the following activities, formerly scheduled for Year 1, will now take place in Year 2: “Develop online courses for mentors of ESL, special education, and STEM field teachers” and “Select the first class of 10 proven principals, engaging executive search experts.” This change is due to delays in bringing on staff to manage the work.

It is our understanding that the amendments will not result in a change in your State's performance measures and outcomes, nor will they substantially change the scope of work. Please note that this letter will be posted on the Department's website as a record of the amendments.

I am confident that Massachusetts 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 Massachusetts' Race to the Top Program Officer, Bridget Kelly, at (202) 453-5534 or bridget.kelly@ed.gov.

Sincerely,

//s//

Joseph C. Conaty, Ph.D.
Interim Director, Race to the Top Program

cc: Commissioner Mitchell Chester
Carrie Conaway