



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY

May 16, 2013

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 February 26, 2013 and May 9, 2013, the State submitted amendment requests and clarifications 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 amendments, as described below, as well as the budget shifts in the amendments described in the attached table:

- In Federal Project 2: Sub-project B1.A: Transition to high quality standards and assessments, redeploy \$165,000 of Year 2 unspent funds from eight projects to support training for local educational agency (LEA) leaders and teachers in the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) standards and ACCESS assessment projects. The original goal of sub-project B1.A was to develop guidance documents and provide training to support LEAs as they transition to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Federal and State laws have been enacted requiring that English language learner (ELL) students be assessed annually to measure their proficiency in reading, writing, listening to, and speaking English, as well as the progress they are making in learning English.

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Additionally, beginning in SY 2012-2013, ELL students in the State were required to participate in the ACCESS assessment, which replaced the Massachusetts English Proficiency Assessment (MEPA). Therefore, the State is broadening its work in sub-project B1.A by developing internal capacity to provide guidance and training to LEA leaders and teachers to support their integration of the WIDA English Language Development (ELD) standards into curriculum across subjects and grades in order to improve instruction for ELL students. This activity supports the State's Rethinking Equity and Teaching for English Language Learners (RETELL) initiative.

- Approve the indirect costs to reflect the manner in which indirect costs are charged by the Executive Office of Education (EOE) and the ESE for Race to the Top projects. In particular:
  - Since the EOE does not have an approved indirect cost rate agreement with the Department, the ESE may charge, based on OMB Circular A-87, Attachment A, Paragraph G, a 10 percent indirect cost rate for expenditures in both the personnel and contractual budget categories. The EOE has indicated that an indirect cost rate proposal will be submitted to the Department. Once the EOE has an indirect cost rate approved by the Department, the approved rate may be charged to subsequent expenditures.
  - The ESE may charge an unrestricted rate of 24.4% for the period ending June 30, 2013. The Department will need to perform a review of the indirect cost rate proposal submitted by the ESE before a determination can be made for the approved FY 2013-2014 indirect cost rate.

In addition to these amendments, I acknowledge the following delay in Massachusetts' timeline, as well as those described in the attached table:

- In Federal Project 11: Sub-project D5.A2: create a professional development (PD) system, the State is delayed in establishing performance criteria for providers to be on the preferred provider list and subsequently publishing the list along with sharing findings regarding effective PD. The State had originally planned to publish the performance criteria in Year 2 and publish the preferred provider list in Years 3 and 4. This work was delayed due to the amount of time needed to establish new PD standards. Additional time is also needed as Massachusetts indicated that it is developing a more robust PD delivery system that would allow the State to: 1) identify and communicate gaps in ESE PD offerings based on agency high-priority objectives; 2) create a comprehensive source for accessing state-sponsored PD; and 3) articulate a PD delivery system that provides clear mechanisms to roll out and implement state sponsored PD. It is our understanding that Massachusetts will still accomplish within the grant period all of the activities and deliverables articulated in its approved application.

It is our understanding that these amendments 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 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 Massachusetts' Race to the Top Program Officer, Cindy Savage, at 202-453-5998 or [cindy.savage@email.ed](mailto:cindy.savage@email.ed).

Sincerely,

//s//

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

cc: Commissioner Mitchell Chester  
Carrie Conaway  
Helene Bettencourt  
Saeyun Lee

Table

<b>Project</b>	<b>Description of Change/Budget Implication</b>
A2.A: Project Management	Shift \$1,350,659 of unspent Year 2 contractual funds to Years 3 and 4. In addition, shift \$551,462 in unspent project funds (across various budgetary categories) to support other projects (B3.A3, B1.A, and E2.D). The contractual funds in A2.A are budgeted to support program evaluation contracts. Since several projects were delayed, this caused the evaluation contracts to also be delayed.
A2.D: Grants to Participating LEAs	Shift \$17,058,701 of Year 2 funds in the Supplemental Funds to Participating LEAs category to Year 3 and Year 4. Delays in several State Race to the Top projects caused LEAs to delay spending of local funds.
B3.A1: Model Curriculum maps and units	Redeploy \$1,700,000 from other projects (D2.A1, D2.A, D3.I, and B3.A4) to the Year 3 contractual category in B3.A1. These funds will be used to fund the cost of copyrighted materials that are integrated into the State-created model curriculum units. The copyrights will cover five years and include permissions for written materials, videos, and primary source documents.
B3.A3: Interim and formative assessment system	Shift \$1,567,655 of Year 2 contractual funds to Year 3 and Year 4 contractual. This project experienced a change in staffing during the half of Year 2 (Fall 2011) and the contract to support this work was not awarded in Year 2 as originally planned. This caused the project to be somewhat delayed, thus necessitating the shift of unspent contractual dollars to Year 3. In addition, redeploy \$375,308 of Year 2 unspent funds from project A2.A and \$114,692 of unspent personnel funds from within the project to cover additional costs to tag assessment items in project B3.A3. In order for the Edwin Teaching and Learning system to be used successfully by educators for formative and interim assessment purposes, it must provide users with a wide variety of high-quality assessment items tagged to current standards and other information that render the items useful for instructional and administrative purposes. These funds will be used for costs associated with the preparation of released MCAS items. These are additional costs that were not identified during the original budget estimation process.
B3.A-IT: Teaching and Learning system – Tech side IT	Shift \$1,355,922 of Year 2 project funds (various categories) to Years 3 and 4. The State experienced delays in securing the contract to support this work. This is a joint procurement with Ohio that will provide a series of on-line tools and resources for Massachusetts teachers.

Project	Description of Change/Budget Implication
C2.A2-IT: ELAR/MEPID updates	Shift \$683,875 in contractual funds from Year 2 to Years 3 and 4. These funds were unspent in Year 2 due to some delays caused by turnover of project management staffing, as well as the dependency on activities in the longitudinal data system grant.
C2.A3-IT: Enhanced Web IT	Shift \$888,714 in contractual funds from Year 2 to Years 3 and 4. These funds were unspent in Year 2 due to some delays caused by turnover of project management staffing, as well as the dependency on activities in the longitudinal data system grant. In addition, this project was also on hold during the first half of Year 2 while the ESE waited for the timeline for the conversion of the public website to the Mass.gov format. This is a statewide initiative to convert all agency website to a uniform Mass.gov format. Until ESE knew the timeline of this other initiative, they could not plan accordingly for this project to enhance their public website.
C2.A-IT: Educator Data Warehouse capacity IT	Shift \$609,316 in unspent personnel costs to Years 3 and 4. These funds were unspent in Year 2 due to some delays caused by turnover of project management staffing, as well as the dependency on activities in the longitudinal data system grant.
C2.B: Schools Interoperability Framework (SIF) Implementation	Shift \$1,199,373 in supplemental funding for participating LEAs from Year 2 to Years 3 and 4. Due to the State's shifting to a different SIF vendor and the delay in finalizing the SIF State architecture, the State did not make supplemental grants to LEAs in Year 2. The Department acknowledges the change in timeline related to this part of the State's scope of work.
D2.A1: Eval Framework and Implementation - Program (Non-IT)	Shift \$987,231 in contractual funds from Year 2 to project B3.A1. In Year 2, funds for D2.A1 have not been spent at the anticipated rate due to lower than expected demand for State-provided professional development on the evaluation framework. (Many LEAs chose to provide their own professional development.) In addition, the contractor for this work was delayed in submitting invoices for work completed in Year 2.
D2.C: Improve Licensure System	Shift \$500,000 in contractual funds from Year 2 to Year 3 and a small amount (\$51,035) to project B1.A. These funds were unused in Year 2 due to a delay in the award of a contractor. The contract was awarded in summer 2012.

<b>Project</b>	<b>Description of Change/Budget Implication</b>
D3.I: SPED/ELL courses-Grants	As described in an amendment approval letter to the State on April 19, 2013, in project D3.I, the State will redeploy \$3,600,000 of supplemental funding for participating LEAs category in Years 2 through 4 to support various work (as detailed in that letter). The remaining \$1,097,681 not detailed in the April 19 letter will be redeployed as follows: shift \$4,964 to project E2.D, \$640,023 to project E2.F, \$56,265 to project B1.A, and \$396,429 to project B3.A1.
D5.A2: Professional Development - staff and ops	Shift \$1,705,656 in contractual funds from Year 2 to Years 3 and 4. The Year 2 funds were unspent because of a delay in deploying these funds under an interagency agreement with the Readiness Centers.
E2.F: Restart Operators for Level 5 Schools	Repurpose \$900,000 of unspent funds from projects C2.B and D3.I to the Years 3 and 4 contractual and indirect cost categories in project E2.F. These unspent Year 2 funds will support additional restart operators to implement Level 5 school interventions. These funds will help support implementation of interventions in an additional two schools (totaling ten schools in 2013-14).