



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY

February 1, 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. On January 15, 2011, 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 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:

- In the "Overall program and grant management" project budget, Massachusetts will use \$336,600, formerly allocated to program evaluation in Years 1 and 2, for contracts for consulting services, which will provide support in the areas of program/project management, communications strategy, and grant review. This change reflects the State's updated estimate of the cost of program evaluation and the State's updated understanding of its need in these areas.
- In the "Improve teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance" project budget, Massachusetts will use \$197,559 of the funds allocated for a contract to develop a statewide evaluation framework and tools for a new contract plus associated indirect costs. The new contract will allow Massachusetts to bring in a Strategic Data Fellow from Harvard's Strategic Data Project, who will fulfill a core function of the work envisioned for the original contract.

www.ed.gov

400 MARYLAND AVE., SW, WASHINGTON, DC 20202

The Department of Education's mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.

- In the “Provide effective support to teachers and principals” project budget, Massachusetts will move \$3,287,912 from contracts to salaries, fringe benefits, and associated indirect costs. This change reflects Massachusetts’ new understanding that the literacy specialists and mathematics specialists at the District and School Assistance Centers (DSACs) must be State employees, instead of contract employees. The DSAC contract activity will retain \$392,728 to provide additional professional development services through the DSACs.

- In order to more easily manage its project budgets, Massachusetts will:
 - Move “Improved recruitment tools and resources” from the “Ensure equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals” project budget to the “Improve teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance” project budget. This change returns the activity budget to its place in the approved application, superseding, per the State’s request, the amendment approved on January 12, 2011;
 - Move the budget associated with the competency tracking system from the “Expand implementation of proven secondary school programs, policies, and incentives” project budget to the “Create a unified PreK-12 teaching and learning system” project budget.

- In the “Overall program and grant management” project budget, \$120,000 in conference hosting costs will move from “other” to “travel.” This change facilitates Massachusetts’ alignment of the budget with its State accounting system.

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,

//ss//

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

cc: Commissioner Mitchell Chester
Carrie Conaway