



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY

September 9, 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 August 9, 2011, the State submitted an amendment request 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:

- For the project area of Great Teachers and Leaders, for the incentives for effective educators, reallocate \$1,221,759 of the \$2,550,000 budgeted for the incentives to the projects described below. The State will propose reallocation of the remaining \$1,328,241 in a future amendment request. This change reflects that the State was awarded a Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) grant from the Department after approval of the Race to the Top budget. The State planned to use the Race to the Top funds to provide recruitment and retention incentives for principals in the State's turnaround leader program, targeted at principals who would work in Level 4 or Level 5 schools (that is, persistently lowest-achieving schools; currently there are 35 Level 4 schools and no level 5 schools). The TIF grant includes funds devoted to recruitment bonuses and performance bonuses for principals in the 22 Level 4 schools in Boston and Springfield. The TIF grant also includes incentives for teachers in those Level 4 schools. As a result, TIF provides incentives for a broader set of effective educators than would have been funded under Race to the Top. This reallocation and any future reallocation are conditioned on the

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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.

State meeting the requirements of the TIF grant. The Implementation and Support Unit (ISU) will work with the State and the TIF team in the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education to ensure that the State is effectively implementing the TIF grant.

- For the project area of Data Systems to Support Instruction, for the data specialists housed in the District and School Assistance Centers (DSACs), change the budget for the positions from \$330,000 per year for three years and \$165,000 in year 4 to \$0 in year 1, \$614,512 in year 2, \$692,850 in year 3, and \$712,585 in year 4. Indirect costs and fringe benefits are also adjusted to reflect these budget changes. This amendment reflects the following: (1) The data specialists were funded through other sources in year 1; (2) a revised cost estimate of the salaries for the positions. The additional funds, totaling \$950,347, come from the reallocation described above.
- For the project area of Great Teachers and Leaders, add a Program Manager position for years 2 and 3 to monitoring the implementation plan for the educator evaluation framework. The individual will manage the contract and monitor the vendor that will develop the implementation of the educator evaluation framework. This work will include observing and analyzing the work of the vendor, identifying gaps and redundancies, making recommendations for changes and refinements to the plan, and serving as the liaison to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's information technology and data functions. The total cost of the position, \$271,412, includes fringe benefits and indirect costs over two years. The funds come from the reallocation described above.
- For the project area of Great Teachers and Leaders, change the budget for the Readiness Centers from \$750,000 per year for four years to \$0 in year 1, \$2,010,000 in year 2, \$540,000 in year 3, and \$450,000 in year 4. This reflects the State's difficulty establishing contracts in year 1, as well as a refined approach to ensuring sustainability of the Readiness Centers. The funds for year 2 will allow the Readiness Centers to support the executive directors and key staff in the first full year of the program. The year 2 funds will also support "seed funding" for local professional development activities. In future years, the Centers will seek additional funding to support the executive director and staff roles and also seek matching funds from regional partners to support professional development activities. The State believes that decreasing the allocations through Race to the Top in years 3 and 4 will increase ownership and responsibility on the part of regional partners.

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 your Race to the Top Program Officer, Bridget Kelly, at 202-453-5534 or bridget.kelly@ed.gov.

Sincerely,

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

cc: Commissioner Mitchell Chester
Carrie Conaway