



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY

November 21, 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 October 20, 2011, the State submitted amendment requests to the U.S. Department of Education (Department); the State then provided additional clarification as requested. 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:

- For the project area of Program Management and Evaluation, add \$943,636 in funds for district reviews to ensure effective implementation of Race to the Top plans by local educational agencies (LEAs). Such reviews, which are conducted on-site and span three to four days, are a component of the State's Race to the Top subrecipient monitoring plan, but were not originally budgeted for in the Race to the Top plan. Funds come from the teacher preparation program expansion grants, the online mentoring project, and funds from the National Board Certification project (see below). Approximately five district reviews will be conducted with State funds and approximately 11 district reviews will be conducted with Race to the Top funds.
- For the project area of Great Teachers and Leaders, the State makes the following changes:
  - The State shifts \$840,000 from consulting services for developing the statewide evaluation framework and tools to supplemental funding for participating LEAs in the form of grants to support districts in implementing the educator evaluation framework. The "early adopter" LEAs will adopt or adapt early versions of the State's model educator evaluation system. A second group of

LEAs will work on specific elements of implementation, such as data management tools and resources, to ensure that the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) is effectively supporting LEAs. This change reflects the State's belief that these funds would be more effectively spent supporting evaluation system implementation at the local level.

- The State reduces the Year 1 budget for the competitive grant fund for teacher preparation program expansion grants by \$300,000, which shifts to the district review work described above. The State has indicated that this slight reduction in funding will not impact the outcomes of the grant program, which aims to support expansion of proven models of success in recruiting and preparing effective teachers. The State also will redistribute the remaining Year 1 funds, in the amount of \$575,000, over Years 2 through 4, reflecting the fact that the State's scope of work indicated that the grants would be provided starting in Year 2.
- The State will no longer allocate \$250,000 in State funds to supporting National Board Certification. The State has indicated that LEAs are using Race to the Top LEA funds to participate in this training, and there is not a need for State funds to meet the objectives of the project. The State notes that the administrator portion of the program is provided to Massachusetts educators free of charge. The State remains committed to ensuring that 200 educators in high-needs schools obtain National Board Certification, and the project manager will continue to monitor and track district and school enrollment in the program. The funds will be used to support district reviews.
- The State reduces the budget from \$1,250,000 to \$250,000 for developing online courses for mentors of teachers of English as a Second language (ESL), special education, and science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). The State has indicated that the original budget reflected an error related to changes made in this project from Phase I to Phase II of the Race to the Top competition. The State initially had a larger vision for the program, but the program was revised for the Phase II application, and the budget was not adjusted appropriately. The State indicated that it will be able to meet its objective of building online courses for mentors of teachers of ESL, special education, and STEM. The State also addresses another budgeting error by shifting the \$250,000 that remains in this project from supplemental funding for participating LEAs to the appropriate budget categories of travel, equipment, and contracts. The other funds shift as follows: \$393,636 to district reviews (described above), and \$606,364 to support staff and operations for projects in the Great Teachers and Leaders area (described below).
- The State expands the scope of the superintendent induction program to include a focus on supervision, evaluation, and human capital development. The program has seen early successes and the State believes that its expansion will help support implementation of the educator evaluation framework. Additionally, the State believes that it would be valuable for the State to assume a greater share of the cost of the program, to facilitate the participation of Level 1 and Level 2 districts. In total, the State will add \$984,999 in funds in this area, which come from the change related to educator incentives, described in the amendment approval letter dated September 9, 2011.

- The State will reallocate \$1,558,141 in salary, fringe, and indirect costs in Years 2 through 4 to support staff who are working on Race to the Top grant projects in the Great Teachers and Leaders project area to ensure equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals and to improve the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs. The funds come from \$608,534 in salary and fringe benefits that were not expended in Year 1 in the Great Teachers and Leaders project area, funds from the change in educator incentives, and funds from the online mentoring project (described above). The State plans to hire additional individuals to support some of the Title II-A work formerly conducted by these staff.
- The State will conduct the National Staff Development Council survey, formerly planned for Year 1, in Year 2. This change is due to delays in hiring the State's professional development coordinator. There is no budget implication.

Additionally, the Department approves the State's request to add Helene Bettencourt, the Race to the Top program manager, as key personnel for the grant. Additionally, the State will remove Karla Baehr from the key personnel, as she has retired from State service, and will add the following key personnel: Jeff Wulfson, lead for Innovation Schools and information technology and data projects, Lynda Foisy, lead for turning around the lowest-achieving schools projects, and Claudia Bach, lead for projects relating to improving teacher and principal effectiveness, ensuring equitable distribution, and improving educator preparation programs.

It is our understanding that these amendments will not result in a change in outcomes, nor will they substantially change the scope of work.

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](mailto:bridget.kelly@ed.gov).

Sincerely,

//s//

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

cc: Commissioner Mitchell Chester  
Carrie Conaway  
Helene Bettencourt