



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY

February 9, 2012

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 October 20, 2011 and January 27, 2012 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 Standards and Assessments, adjust the State's approach for interim assessments. The State initially proposed to develop interim assessments. Through stakeholder input, the State has determined that it should provide tools and training to allow LEAs to develop and/or modify interim assessments. For example, the Teaching and Learning System ("System") will include a bank of assessment items to enable LEAs to create their own interim assessments within the System. The State will also continue to develop formative assessments. This change does not have a budget implication. An optional performance measure has been adjusted to align with these changes (see Appendix, Table A).

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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.

- For the project area of Standards and Assessments, adjust timeframes for curriculum maps. The State will create at least one curriculum map for English language arts (ELA) math, history/social studies, and science in Year 2 and publish the maps prior to the beginning of school year 2012-2013. Previously the State had planned to build curriculum maps in Year 1 (school year 2010-2011) and publish curriculum maps in year 2 (school year 2011-2012). Massachusetts has clarified that, in the Year 1 Annual Performance Report, it only reported on progress in developing model curriculum units for “the percentage of grades and subjects with curriculum maps and at least one model curriculum unit,” an optional performance measure in the State’s approved Race to the Top plan. This optional performance measure has been revised by the State. Specifically, the State has split this measure into two measures to allow for clearer, more transparent reporting on progress in completing curriculum maps and model curriculum units (Appendix, Table A).
- Additionally, the State clarified that, given that the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) performance measures included in its Race to the Top plan did not align with the NAEP test administration calendar, the NAEP performance measures needed to be revised to align with that schedule. That is, the prior 2014 targets are now identified as 2013 targets, and the prior 2016 targets are now identified as 2015 targets (see Appendix, Tables B and C.) The State also clarified its NAEP achievement gap goal, described in its original Scope of Work as “Reduce NAEP achievement gaps for each low-performing subgroup by 25%,” by providing for target numbers that represent that 25% in terms of 2009 gaps by subgroup (see Appendix, Table D). This chart also serves to replace an incorrect chart submitted through the Year 1 Annual Performance Report Process.

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

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, Rachel Gibson, at 202-453-5545 or Rachel.Gibson@ed.gov.

Sincerely,

//s//

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

cc: Commissioner Mitchell Chester
Carrie Conaway
Helene Bettencourt

Appendix

**Table A
Optional Performance Measures: Curriculum Maps**

The State has removed one optional performance measure related to interim assessments which is no longer applicable. The State has also split this measure into two measures to allow for clearer, more transparent reporting on progress in completing curriculum maps and model curriculum. It has also clarified in its revised Scope of Work that it will publish model curriculum maps (one for each content area: ELA, math, science, history/social studies):

Previously:

| Performance Measures | Actual Data: Baseline | End of SY 2010-11 | End of SY 2011-12 | End of SY 2012-13 | End of SY 2013-14 |
|--|----------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| % of grades and subjects with curriculum maps and at least one model curriculum unit | 0% | 25% | 50% | 75% | 100% |
| Number of interim assessment forms completed for English and math | n/a | 72 | 90 | 90 | 90 |

Approved Amendment:

| Performance Measures | Actual Data Baseline: | End of SY 2010-11 | End of SY 2011-12 | End of SY 2012-13 | End of SY 2013-2014 |
|--|----------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| % of grades and subjects with at least one model curriculum unit | 0% | 25% | 50% | 75% | 100% |
| Number of published curriculum maps | 0 | 0 | 4 | 8 | 12 |

Table B: NAEP Reading Proficiency Targets

Tables B and C clarify that the prior 2014 targets (as listed in the State’s application) are now identified as 2013 targets, and the prior 2016 targets are now identified as 2015 targets.

NAEP Reading - Approved Amendment

| Category | Grade 4 Proficiency NAEP Scale Score | | | | Grade 8 Proficiency NAEP Scale Score | | | |
|-------------------------------|---|--------|------|------|---|--------|------|------|
| | Baseline | Target | | | Baseline | Target | | |
| | 2009 | 2011* | 2013 | 2015 | 2009 | 2011* | 2013 | 2015 |
| All students | 239 | 244 | 248 | 251 | 274 | 276 | 277 | 278 |
| Male | 237 | 242 | 247 | 251 | 270 | 273 | 275 | 278 |
| Female | 241 | 246 | 250 | 254 | 279 | 281 | 282 | 283 |
| Asian Pacific Islander | 249 | 254 | 258 | 262 | 284 | 285 | 286 | 288 |
| Black | 213 | 222 | 230 | 240 | 255 | 259 | 263 | 269 |
| Hispanic | 213 | 222 | 230 | 240 | 253 | 258 | 262 | 268 |
| White | 245 | 250 | 254 | 258 | 279 | 281 | 282 | 283 |
| ELL | 210 | 219 | 227 | 236 | 237 | 243 | 249 | 258 |
| Free & Reduced lunch eligible | 217 | 226 | 234 | 243 | 258 | 262 | 266 | 272 |
| Students with disabilities | 218 | 226 | 233 | 241 | 247 | 252 | 257 | 264 |

* The 2011 numbers in Table B represent projected targets provided by the State in its application. For actual 2011 NAEP numbers, see the annual performance report data display at <http://rtt-apr.us/>

Table C: NAEP Mathematics Proficiency Targets

NAEP Mathematics - Approved Amendment

| Category | Grade 4 Proficiency NAEP Scale Score | | | | Grade 8 Proficiency NAEP Scale Score | | | |
|-------------------------------|---|--------|------|------|---|--------|------|------|
| | Baseline | Target | | | Baseline | Target | | |
| | 2009 | 2011* | 2013 | 2015 | 2009 | 2011* | 2013 | 2015 |
| All students | 252 | 259 | 265 | 271 | 299 | 306 | 312 | 318 |
| Male | 253 | 260 | 266 | 272 | 300 | 307 | 314 | 320 |
| Female | 251 | 258 | 265 | 271 | 298 | 305 | 312 | 318 |
| Asian Pacific Islander | 264 | 271 | 278 | 284 | 314 | 321 | 328 | 335 |
| Black | 236 | 246 | 255 | 265 | 272 | 283 | 294 | 306 |
| Hispanic | 232 | 242 | 252 | 263 | 271 | 282 | 293 | 306 |
| White | 258 | 265 | 271 | 277 | 305 | 312 | 319 | 325 |
| ELL | 221 | 232 | 243 | 255 | 238 | 253 | 267 | 285 |
| Free & Reduced lunch eligible | 237 | 247 | 256 | 266 | 278 | 289 | 299 | 311 |
| Students with disabilities | 237 | 246 | 255 | 264 | 271 | 282 | 293 | 305 |

* The 2011 numbers in Table C represent projected targets provided by the State in its application. For actual 2011 NAEP numbers, see the annual performance report data display at <http://rtt-apr.us/>

Table D: NAEP Achievement Gap Targets By Subgroup

The table below clarifies that the prior 2014 targets (as listed in the State’s application) are now identified as 2013 targets, and the prior 2016 targets are now identified as 2015 targets. In addition, in its original Scope of Work, the State listed its goal as: “Reduce NAEP achievement gaps for each low performing subgroup by 25%.” The clarification here provides for target numbers that represent the 25% in terms of 2009 gaps by subgroup.

| Grade 4 Mathematics Gap in NAEP Scale Scores | | | | |
|---|------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| | 2009 Actual | 2011 Target* | 2013 Target | 2015 Target |
| Gender (Female/Male) | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| Black/White | 21 | 19 | 16 | 12 |
| Hispanic/White | 26 | 23 | 19 | 14 |
| SPED/Non-SPED | 18 | 16 | 14 | 10 |
| ELL/Non-ELL | 33 | 29 | 25 | 19 |
| Low-Income/Non Low-Income | 23 | 20 | 17 | 13 |

| Grade 8 Mathematics Gap in NAEP Scale Scores | | | | |
|---|------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| | 2009 Actual | 2011 Target* | 2013 Target | 2015 Target |
| Gender (Female/Male) | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| Black/White | 33 | 29 | 25 | 19 |
| Hispanic/White | 34 | 30 | 25 | 19 |
| SPED/Non-SPED | 29 | 26 | 22 | 16 |
| ELL/Non-ELL | 63 | 55 | 47 | 35 |
| Low-Income/Non Low-Income | 33 | 29 | 25 | 19 |

| Grade 4 Reading Gap in NAEP Scale Scores | | | | |
|---|------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| | 2009 Actual | 2011 Target* | 2013 Target | 2015 Target |
| Gender (Male/Female) | 4 | 4 | 3 | 2 |
| Black/White | 32 | 28 | 24 | 18 |
| Hispanic/White | 32 | 28 | 24 | 18 |
| SPED/Non-SPED | 25 | 22 | 18 | 14 |
| ELL/Non-ELL | 30 | 26 | 22 | 17 |
| Low-Income/Non Low-Income | 29 | 26 | 22 | 17 |

| Grade 4 Reading Gap in NAEP Scale Scores | | | | |
|---|------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| | 2009 Actual | 2011 Target* | 2013 Target | 2015 Target |
| Gender (Male/Female) | 10 | 9 | 7 | 5 |
| Black/White | 24 | 21 | 18 | 14 |
| Hispanic/White | 26 | 23 | 20 | 15 |
| SPED/Non-SPED | 22 | 20 | 17 | 13 |
| ELL/Non-ELL | 38 | 33 | 28 | 21 |
| Low-Income/Non Low-Income | 32 | 28 | 24 | 18 |

** The 2011 numbers here represent projected targets provided by the State. For actual numbers, see the annual performance report data display at <http://rtt-apr.us/>*