



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY

September 5, 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 July 18, 2012 and August 28, 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:

- Revise the State's student outcomes goals and targets under Race to the Top for school year (SY) 2013-2014 to align with the State's Elementary and Secondary Education (ESEA) Flexibility request, which was approved on February 9, 2012. See Appendix Table A for the specific performance goals and targets. Goals and targets not referenced in Appendix Table A remain unchanged.
- Make a technical correction to the State's performance measures in (D)(2) to align with the State's plan for implementation of the evaluation system, which is unchanged. The State's plan and its (D)(2) performance measure regarding the percentage of participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems for teachers and for principals indicated that 4.4% of participating LEAs were expected to have qualifying evaluation systems in school year (SY) 2011-2012. Thus, the targets for percentages of participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation

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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.

systems that are used to inform various human capital decisions also should have been set at 4.4%. See the Appendix Table B for the specific performance measures and targets.

- For the project area of Turning Around the Lowest Achieving Schools, make the following changes:
 - Shift \$469,025 from the contractual and indirect budget cost categories from Year 2 to Year 3. During Year 2, the Massachusetts' Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) issued a request for response to identify school turnaround operators to support turnaround work in level 4 schools. The procurement process went beyond the original schedule, into Year 3. The State also chose to wait for preliminary school year 2011-2012 State assessment results in order to provide the correct scale and geography for the school turnaround operator capacity.
 - Shift \$479,400 of Year 4 contractual funds to Year 3. Based on the proposals ESE received from school turnaround operators, the costs for organizational infrastructure, human capital recruitment, and summer professional development and programming costs in Year 3 will be higher than anticipated. According to the State, shifting a portion of funds from Year 4 to Year 3 will not decrease support in Year 4, but rather it will enable stronger planning and delivery of support from school turnaround providers in Year 3.

It is our understanding that these amendments will not 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, Bridget Kelly, at 202-453-5534 or Bridget.Kelly@ed.gov.

Sincerely,

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

cc: Commissioner Mitchell Chester
Carrie Conaway
Helene Bettencourt
Saeyun Lee

Appendix

Table A: Revised State Assessment Goals and Targets

State Assessment Achievement Goals

The State will halve the statewide proficiency gap, as measured by the Composite Performance Index (CPI), overall and by subgroup, by 2017. The baseline proficiency gaps are established by using a subgroup's 2011 CPI in comparison to total proficiency (CPI of 100) for that subgroup alone. In the CPI, a student's score of "Proficient or better" is represented as 100 points; Needs Improvement High" is represented by 75 points; "Needs Improvement Low" is represented by 50 points, "Warning/Failing High" is represented by 25 points, and "Warning/Failing Low" is represented by zero points. The CPI for an LEA, school, or student group is calculated by dividing the total number of points by the number of students in the group.

State Assessment - English Language Arts

Group	SY 2013-2014 CPI
All students	90.40
American Indian or Alaska Native	82.60
Asian	92.70
Black or African American	83.10
Hispanic or Latino	80.70
White	93.20
Children with Disabilities	76.20
Limited English Proficient	74.70
Low Income	82.80

State Assessment - Mathematics

Group	SY 2013-2014 CPI
All students	84.90
American Indian or Alaska Native	79.53
Asian	92.10
Black or African American	73.80
Hispanic or Latino	73.30
White	88.20
Children with Disabilities	68.30
Limited English Proficient	71.50
Low Income	75.50

State Assessment Achievement Gap Goals

The State will halve the statewide proficiency gap (as measured by the CPI), overall and by subgroup, by 2017. The revised targets aim to close gaps in relation to total proficiency, in place of closing gaps

between historically high and low performing subgroups. For specific targets for SY 2013-2014, see subgroup targets above.

Graduation Rate Goals

All students and individual subgroups will attain either a four-year cohort graduation rate of 80% or a five-year cohort graduation rate of 85% for SY 2013-2014.

Student Group	Four-year cohort graduation rate	Five-year cohort graduation rate
All students	80%	85%
American Indian or Alaska Native	80%	85%
Asian	80%	85%
Black	80%	85%
Hispanic	80%	85%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	80%	85%
White	80%	85%
Children with Disabilities	80%	85%
Limited English Proficient	80%	85%
Low Income	80%	85%

Table B
(D)(2): Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance.

Criteria	Performance Measure	SY 2010- 2011	SY 2011- 2012	SY 2012- 2013	SY 2013- 2014
(D)(2)(i)	Number of participating LEAs that measure student growth (as defined in the Race to the Top application)	100%	100%	100%	100%
(2)(ii)	Number of participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems for teachers	0%	4.4%	100%	100%
(D)(2)(ii)	Number of participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems for principals	0%	4.4%	100%	100%
(D)(2)(iv)	Number of participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems that are used to inform:				
(D)(2)(iv)(a)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher and principal development 	N/A	4.4% <i>(prior: 100%)</i>	100%	100%
(D)(2)(iv)(b)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher and principal compensation 	N/A	4.4% <i>(prior: 100%)</i>	100%	100%
(D)(2)(iv)(b)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher and principal promotion 	N/A	4.4% <i>(prior: 100%)</i>	100%	100%
(D)(2)(iv)(b)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retention of effective teachers and principals 	N/A	4.4% <i>(prior: 100%)</i>	100%	100%
(D)(2)(iv)(c)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Granting of tenure and/or full certification (where applicable) to teachers and principals 	N/A	4.4% <i>(prior: 100%)</i>	100%	100%
(D)(2)(iv)(d)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removal of ineffective tenured and untenured teachers and principals 	N/A	4.4% <i>(prior: 100%)</i>	100%	100%