



## UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

November 25, 2014

The Honorable Chris Christie  
Office of the Governor  
PO Box 001  
Trenton, NJ 08625

Dear Governor Christie:

I am writing in response to New Jersey's request to amend its approved Race to the Top grant project. Between August 2014 and November 2014, the State submitted amendment requests to the U.S. Department of Education (ED). ED 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, ED sent a letter and revised the "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, ED 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 approving the following amendments to the Instructional Improvement System (IIS) project:

In addition to the budget shifts detailed in the table below, New Jersey will hire three full-time employees (FTEs) to support implementation of the IIS. After implementation of an IIS pilot in spring 2014 and full implementation in 34 local educational agencies (LEAs) in fall 2014, New Jersey reports that it believes that on-the-ground implementation and content support are vital to the successful rollout of the IIS. New Jersey will hire two implementation managers who will manage a caseload of LEAs to provide direct support to administrators, principals, and teachers during the first years of IIS implementation. The State will also hire one content manager to organize, highlight, develop, and collect instructional, assessment, and professional development resources that will be uploaded to the IIS. The content manager will also serve as a liaison between the agency's academic division and learning systems office to provide expertise on curriculum and instruction. The employment period for all three positions is from January 1, 2015 to December 22, 2015, with the possibility for extension if the State requests and ED approves a no-cost extension.

It is ED's understanding that these amendments will not result in a change in your State's performance measures and outcomes, nor will they substantially change the scope and objectives of the work. Please note that this letter will be posted on ED's website as a record of the amendments.

400 MARYLAND AVE., SW, WASHINGTON, DC 20202  
<http://www.ed.gov/>

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

Page 2 – The Honorable Chris Christie

If you need any assistance or have any questions regarding Race to the Top, please do not hesitate to contact New Jersey's Race to the Top Program Officer, Ariel Jacobs at 202-453-7025 or [ariel.jacobs@ed.gov](mailto:ariel.jacobs@ed.gov).

Sincerely,

//s//

Deborah S. Delisle  
Assistant Secretary

Enclosure

cc: Acting Commissioner David Hesper  
James Palmer, Director of Performance Management  
Michael Giampietro, Race to the Top Manager

Grant project area affected	Specific project	Description of change <sup>1</sup>
(C)(3)	Instructional Improvement Systems (IIS)	<p>NJDOE shifts unexpended funds from Year 1 (\$15,000), Year 2 (\$2,064,062), and Year 3 (\$120,701) in the following categories: personnel, fringe, contracts, funding for involved LEAs, and supplemental funds for participating LEAs.</p> <p>The State reports that the personnel and fringe costs were unexpended as a result of vacancies in Years 2 and 3. The remaining categories of unexpended funds resulted from delays in the execution of the contract for the development, pilot, and launch of the IIS.</p> <p>New Jersey will shift these unspent funds to Year 2 (\$7,859), Year 3 (\$786,689) and Year 4 (\$1,358,331) as detailed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shift \$197,500 to Year 4 personnel and \$71,949 to Year 4 fringe to cover the additional costs of the three FTEs detailed in the letter above;</li> <li>• Shift \$276,668 to Year 3 and \$426,668 to Year 4 contractual to support the actual costs of licensure and service fees of the IIS;</li> <li>• Add \$37,236 to Year 2 (\$7,859), Year 3 (\$7,106), and Year 4 (\$22,271) to cover associated indirect costs;</li> <li>• Add \$618,145 in funding for involved LEAs in Year 3 (\$251,601) and Year 4 (\$389,943) to provide supplemental support to involved LEAs implementing the IIS;</li> <li>• Shift \$250,000 to Year 3 and \$250,000 to Year 4 in supplemental funding for participating LEAs to align to the revised timeline for IIS implementation; and</li> <li>• Shift \$46,885 to unallocated funds.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Due to personnel, fringe and contracts coming in under budget, New Jersey has an unallocated amount of \$46,885. New Jersey will submit an amendment in the near future once it has determined the best use for unallocated funds.