



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY

March 19, 2012

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
New York State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo:

I am writing in response to New York's request to amend its approved Race to the Top grant project. Between November 30, 2011 and March 15, 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 project D1, Advanced Placement Professional Development for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Teachers, adjust timeframes for the beginning of vendor delivery of professional development from October 31, 2011, to March 31, 2012. The State experienced delays in the implementation of this contract, in part due to issues surrounding procurement and subcontracting. This change in timeframes is accompanied by a shift of funding; rather than spending \$1,250,000 in each of Years 1-4, the State will now spend \$1,666,667 in each of Years 2-4. This change does not impact performance measures.
- For project E6, Virtual Schools/Digital Learning: Development of High Quality Digital Courses, adjust timeframe for award from October 2011 to fall 2012. The State requested this adjustment because the New York State Education Department (NYSED) has had to prioritize

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implementation work and the staff members with expertise in this area have been focusing on the rollout of the Common Core State Standards. This change in timeframes is accompanied by a shift of funding; the State will move \$2,400,000 out of Year 1 and \$250,000 out of Year 2, adding \$2,325,000 to Year 3 and \$325,000 to Year 4. This change does not impact performance measures.

- For project E7, Virtual Schools/Digital Learning: Technical Assistance Center, adjust timeframe for award from December 2011 to early 2013. With the delay in the State's Education Data Portal, NYSED needed to reprioritize its implementation work associated with all of the technology-related initiatives funded by Race to the Top. This change in timeframes is accompanied by a shift of funding; the State will move \$5,000,000 out of each of Years 1 and 2 and add those funds to Years 3 and 4. This change does not impact performance measures.
- For project I1, Early Learning Tools for Parents/Caregivers, shift funding from Year 1 into Years 2-4, moving \$442,610 out of Year 1 and adding \$219,122 to Year 2; \$110,093 to Year 3; and \$113,395 to Year 4. This shift occurred when the State postponed the rollout of QUALITYstarsNY from October 31, 2011, as proposed in the Scope of Work, to January 2012, due to a delay in finalizing an inter-agency Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) related to management of this project. In February 2012, the State submitted a final MOA that clearly outline terms of the agreement, budget, allowable activities, reporting requirements, and annual milestones. This change does not impact performance measures.

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,

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

cc: Dr. John B. King, Jr., Commissioner of Education
 Rebecca Kennard, Executive Director, Race to the Top Performance Management Office
 John Delaney, Director of Operations, Office of P-12 Education