



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY

January 7, 2013

The Honorable Beverly Perdue
Office of the Governor
20301 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-0301

Dear Governor Perdue:

I am writing in response to North Carolina's request to amend its approved Race to the Top grant project. Between November 8 and December 20, 2012, the State submitted documentation to and held conversations with the U.S. Department of Education (Department) to support amendment requests to its approved Race to the Top plan. 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 amendments outlined below:

- In the "Teacher and Principal Effectiveness" project, the State will shift a total of \$3,222,955 from Year 2 to Years 3 and 4 due to timing of billing, actual contractual costs, and expanded support for implementation of some activities.
 - The State entered into a contract with a vendor to develop and validate an academic growth factor in Year 2 in accordance with its plan. The State will shift \$130,574 from Year 2 contractual to Year 3 contractual to align its budget and project plan to enable continued advisement from the contractor during implementation in Year 3. Additionally, due to the actual cost for this contract being less than anticipated, the State will redirect \$125,000 from Year 2 contractual to Year 3 travel and personnel to provide additional support for implementation of Measures of Student Learning (MSLs). Of this total, \$5,000

www.ed.gov

400 MARYLAND AVE., SW, WASHINGTON, DC 20202

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

will be shifted to personnel to support teacher stipends for MSL item review during summer 2012 and \$120,000 will supplement the travel budget for additional educator engagement for developing MSLs for performance content areas (e.g., physical education) in Year 3.

- The State administered a student survey pilot in Year 2. Due to the timing of billing for survey administration and for analysis of school year (SY) 2011-2012 administration that continued into Year 3, the State will shift \$484,110 from Year 2 to Year 3 contractual. Additionally, due to the actual cost for this contract being less than anticipated, the State will redirect \$462,100 from Year 2 contractual for student surveys to Year 3 contractual for MSLs. These funds will expand contractual support for LEA administration and scoring, analysis of results, and creation and review of new items through hiring a psychometrician, social studies assessment specialist, and testing operations and policy consultant.
- The State will shift a total of \$745,785 from Year 2 to Year 3 within the MSL activity budget. Of this total, \$84,520 will shift in contractual due to the timing associated with billing for development activities completed in summer 2012 and an additional \$661,265 will shift in travel due to the timing of educators reviewing MSL items. The State initially planned for all items to be reviewed in summer 2012, but the State later determined that convening educators for two review sessions was more appropriate. The first review session took place in July 2012 and the second review session will take place in March 2013 for items that will be included in the spring 2013 MSL administration for middle and elementary schools.
- The State will shift \$1,230,395 from Year 2 to Year 4 contractual to better align the budget with the State's plan for MSL development, implementation, and refinement taking place during the entire grant period.
- In the "Educator Evaluation Tool" project, the State will shift a total of \$531,921 from Years 2 and 4 contractual into Year 3 contractual.
 - A total of \$478,937 will shift from Year 4 contractual into Year 3 contractual due to higher demand for expanded reporting dashboards and technical assistance for the teacher and principal evaluation tool in Year 3. The overall contract totals related to supporting and implementing the teacher principal evaluation tool statewide remain unchanged.
 - Additionally, the State will shift \$52,984 from Year 2 into Year 3 contractual due to the timing of billing for activities related to creating evaluation instruments

and processes for classifications other than classroom teachers and principals in Year 2.ⁱ

It is our 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 of Work. Please note that this letter will be posted on the Department's website as a record of the amendments.

If you need any assistance or have any questions regarding Race to the Top, please do not hesitate to contact North Carolina's Race to the Top Program Officer, Jessie Levin, at 202-453-6651 or Jessie.Levin@ed.gov.

Sincerely,

//s//

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

cc: Dr. June Atkinson, Commissioner
Dr. William Harrison, State Board Chairman
Adam Levinson, Race to the Top Lead

ⁱ Of this total, \$8,533 will shift from within the "Educator Evaluation Tool" budget and \$44,451 will shift from Year 2 "Teacher and Principal Effectiveness" budget due to an error coding expenditures for this activity.