



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY

April 26, 2011

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 March 22 and April 18, 2011, the State provided information to the U.S. Department of Education (Department) regarding this amendment request. 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 January 6, 2011, the Department sent a letter and "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 am pleased to approve the amendment to the North Carolina Teacher Corps, a (D)(3) initiative that will recruit teachers to serve in the high needs areas of mathematics, science, and special education in rural middle and high schools. This amendment includes:

- A revision to the overall project's theory of action from a stand-alone program designed and implemented by a single contractor to a collaborative effort managed by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI). The State now plans to bring together various State organizations to design and implement program components aligned with their areas of content or programmatic specialty. The State believes that this approach will boost the quality of the Teacher Corps candidate pool as well as the quality of the training and support provided to corps members.
 - The first cohort of NC Teacher Corps will now be recruited in school year (SY) 2011-12 to begin service in SY 2012-13. The State will use the upcoming year to further refine project plans and undertake a targeted recruitment strategy with in-state institutions of higher education.
 - The State's four-year grant period target of 250 corps members remains. However rather than three cohorts of 50, 100, and 100, respectively, during the grant period, the State will now have a SY 2012-13 cohort of 100 and a SY2013-14

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cohort of 150. The State recognizes that its targets for the first two years of the program are highly ambitious.

- To manage this work, the State will build on its existing capacity in NCDPI's Educator Recruitment and Development Division with three new positions: program director, program consultant, and program assistant. This staff will manage the overall statewide collaborative strategy including coordination and communication with local educational agencies, university partners, and contractual service and support providers.
- The \$5.1 million four-year project budget remains. However, rather than budgeting all funds to contracts, the State's new approach budgets \$4,206,637 for contracts in years three and four of the grant period and shifts \$893,363 from the contractual budget line to personnel, fringe, travel, equipment, and supplies to support three internal staff positions in years two to four.

North Carolina acknowledges that this will be innovative and difficult work for the State Education Agency (SEA) to undertake and internalize, and believes that the potential to build capacity and invest in a teacher pipeline aligned to the State's needs necessitates this approach.

NCDPI staff agreed that the State will develop additional milestones and deliverables for this project and provide this information to the Department within four months of this approval. It is our understanding that this amendment will not result in a change in your State's final performance measures and outcomes, nor will it substantially change the scope of work. The State must notify the Department immediately if unanticipated circumstances impact the State's ability to carry out this project as described above.

Please note that this letter will be posted on the Department's website as a record of the amendment.

I am confident that North Carolina will continue its bold, comprehensive reform efforts. 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
Deputy Director, Implementation and Support Unit

cc: June Atkinson
William Harrison
Adam Levinson