



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY

September 24, 2013

The Honorable John Kasich  
Office of the Governor  
Riffe Center, 30<sup>th</sup> Floor  
77 South High Street  
Columbus, OH 43215-6108

Dear Governor Kasich:

I am writing in response to Ohio's request to amend its approved Race to the Top grant project. On Between May 28, 2013 and September 18, 2013, the State submitted amendment requests to the U.S. Department of Education (Department). 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 amendment:

- For section (D)(4), amend the timelines for collecting and reporting annual metrics for educator preparation programs to align with when the data is available, and adjust the budget to reflect this timeline.
  - In its original application, the State described an annual cycle for collecting and reporting data from all teacher and leadership preparation programs, collecting data by June and publishing a public report and begin evaluating effectiveness by September of each year. The State requests to shift this timeline to align with the expectation that preparation programs report each fall on the previous September 1-August 31 timeframe. Under this proposed timeline, the State would collect data from September-December and publish a public report and begin evaluating effectiveness by December 31 of each year.

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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.*

- In addition, the approved budget included a \$750,000 allocation in the State's Race to the Top budget Year 3 for incentive funding for effective educator preparation programs. Based on the original timeline, these funds were anticipated to be disbursed in fall 2013 (Ohio's Race to the Top budget Year 3). With the revised timeline, the State will now disburse these funds in winter 2013-2014 and thus requests to shift these funds into the Year 4 allocation.<sup>i</sup>

In addition, I approve the following amendment with the condition specified:

- For section (D)(4), amend the approach outlined in the *Performance-Based Funding* and *Expand Excellence* work streams of Ohio's approved Scope of Work to implementing performance funding for preparation programs.

In its original application, the State committed to piloting and implementing a performance-based funding protocol for educator preparation programs to hold programs accountable for graduate success, based on teacher and principal effectiveness ratings, and use these measures to inform State funding and program approval processes. Due to a delay in executing a contract to lead the development of the protocol, the State did not finalize and approve a performance-based funding protocol until July 2013, seven months after the approved December 2012 deadline. In addition, the State's final model included a requirement that incentive funding be based on multiple metrics, including some that are determined using a five-year rolling average. Due to the seven-month delay in finalizing the funding model and the recommendation to use multiple years of effectiveness data for certain metrics to inform funding decisions, the State requests to amend its commitment to implement the performance funding model utilizing only those metrics for which performance data are available and multi-year trend data are not required. The State anticipates providing performance-based funding annually based on available data points, starting in winter 2013-2014.

The Department acknowledges timeline delays and missed milestones related to this part of the State's Scope of Work prior to this change in approach. It is our understanding that Ohio will still accomplish within the grant period the commitment to pilot and implement a performance-based funding protocol for educator preparation programs articulated in its approved application.

This amendment approval is conditioned on the State submitting to the Department by March 1, 2014 evidence of implementation of this revised approach to implementing the performance-based funding protocol for educator preparation programs.

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 and objectives of the 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 Ohio's Race to the Top Program Officer, Rebecca Zazove, at 202-260-1425 or Rebecca.Zazove@ed.gov.

Sincerely,

/s/

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

cc: Richard Ross, Superintendent  
Scott Spears, Director, Race to the Top

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<sup>1</sup> Ohio had \$750,000 already allocated for Year 4 for incentive funding for effective educator preparation programs. Based on this new timeline, these funds would not be disbursed until winter 2014-2015, which is beyond the current grant period. The State will come in for a future amendment request to clarify how it plans to spend this funding within the grant period (before September 26, 2014), or to request a no-cost extension for these funds.