



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY

June 3, 2014

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. Between February 21, 2014 and June 3, 2014, the State held conversations with and 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 amendments to the State's approved budget:

- For section (A)(3) in the "Engage Stakeholders in Implementation" project, shift \$632,250 from Year 3 to Year 4 contractual to cover funds encumbered in contracts but not expended in Year 3 due to the contractual payment schedules.
- For section (B)(3) in the "Strengthen Assessment Leadership" project, shift \$1,408,285 from Year 3 to Year 4 contractual to cover funds encumbered in contracts but not expended in Year 3 due to the contractual payment schedules.

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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.*

- For section (B)(3) in the “Provide Curriculum Resource to Support Teachers” project, shift \$1,491,557 from Year 3 to Year 4 contractual to cover funds encumbered in contracts but not expended in Year 3 due to the contractual payment schedules.
- For section (C)(2) in the “Expand Value Added Statewide” project, shift \$883,780 from Year 3 to Year 4 contractual to cover funds encumbered in contracts but not expended in Year 3 due to the contractual payment schedules.
- For section (C)(2) in the “Improve Access to Student Data” project, shift \$1,459,828 from Year 3 to Year 4 contractual to cover funds encumbered in contracts but not expended in Year 3 due to the contractual payment schedule. In addition, the shift is due to the State using other local sources of funds to develop the student data linkage systems in Year 3. The State reports that grant funding will be used to pay for this work in Year 4.
- For section (C)(3) in the “Personalize Learning Through Formative Instruction” project, shift \$7,223,168 from Year 3 to Year 4 contractual due to project delays in the implementation of the State’s instructional improvement system (IIS) as well as project delays in the integration of Ohio’s iLearn resource bank with the IIS. In addition, this shift will cover funds encumbered in contracts but not expended in Year 3 due to the contractual payment schedules.
- For section (D)(2) in the “Support Educators Through Evaluation Results” project, shift \$2,946,940 from Year 3 to Year 4 contractual and \$2,829,850 from Year 3 to Year 4 funding for involved LEAs to cover funds allocated but not expended by local educational agencies (LEAs) in Year 3.
- For section (D)(2) in the “Redesign Educator Performance Management Systems” project, shift \$1,894,030 from Year 3 to Year 4 contractual to cover funds encumbered in contracts but not expended in Year 3 due to the contractual payment schedules. Furthermore, in order to provide additional support for the new teacher and principal evaluation systems, the State will allocate \$974,000 from unspent Year 3 funds from other projects to Year 4 funding for involved LEAs. The State reports that these funds will be used to provide online support materials for statewide teacher and principal evaluation models as well as prepare and credential trainers for the teacher evaluation model.
- For section (D)(3) in the “Ensure Equitable Distribution of Educators” project, shift \$513,460 from Year 3 to Year 4 contractual and \$841,122 from Year 3 to Year 4 funding for involved LEAs to cover funds allocated but not expended by LEAs in Year 3. This shift also accounts for low LEA participation in the teacher incentive program but the State reports that it is working to increase LEA participation in Year 4 and expects to expend all funds.

- For section (D)(3) in the “Expand Effective Educator Preparation Program” project, shift \$1,407,933 from Year 3 to Year 4 training stipends cost category to cover funds encumbered in contracts but not expended in Year 3 due to the contractual payment schedules. In addition, in order to cover higher than projected administrative program costs for the TeachOhio program, the State will allocate \$803,397 from unspent Year 3 funds from other projects to Year 4 funding in the other cost category. The State reports that these funds will support Education Service Centers (ESCs) in continuing to implement TeachOhio.
- For section (D)(5) in the “Support Educators to Increase Student Growth” project, shift \$1,737,739 from Year 3 to Year 4 contractual to cover funds encumbered in contracts but not expended in Year 3 due to the contractual payment schedules, In addition, this shift accounts for the State’s use of other funding sources to complete Race to the Top activities.
- For section (E)(2) in the “Turn Around Ohio’s Lowest-Achieving Schools” project, shift \$7,851,286 from Year 3 to Year 4 contractual to cover funds allocated but not expended by participating LEAs in Year 3. The State reports that this shift is also due to delays in implementation of the innovation grants, high staff turn-over, and the use of other funding sources to complete Race to the Top activities.

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. The Department expects that unspent Year 3 funds will also be shifted to Year 5 pending the State’s submission of the Year 5 budget documentation for its no cost extension request. The Department will review that request and supporting documentation upon submission and make a determination on whether to approve the request. Also, 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, Megan Oberst, at 202-453-5673 or [megan.oberst@ed.gov](mailto:megan.oberst@ed.gov).

Sincerely,

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

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