



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY

August 25, 2014

The Honorable John Kasich
Office of the Governor
Riffe Center, 30th 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, including revisions to the project period to implement a portion of its plan. Between January 28, 2014, and August 20, 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. In March 2013, the Department issued "Amendment Requests with No-cost Extension Guidance and Principles" indicating the process by which amendments containing requests to provide additional time for a grantee to accomplish the reform goals and deliverables it committed to in its Race to the Top application and approved Scope of Work would be reviewed. To determine whether approval could be granted, the Department has applied the conditions and elements specific to no-cost extensions noted in the document, and compared it with Race to the Top program *Principles* included in the "Grant Amendment Submission Process" document issues to Governors of grantee States in October 2011.

I approve the following amendments, including extensions to the time period for implementation of several projects, as described below.

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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 the “Strengthen Assessment Leadership” project:
 - Shift \$191,539 from differences identified between actual and estimated costs in Year 4 contractual to Year 5 personnel and related cost categories to fund the Associate Director for formative assessment work through June 30, 2015.ⁱ The State reports that it will use the extended project period to continue to review formative assessment resources and include these materials in the model curriculum on the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) website as well as the Instructional Improvement System (IIS). In addition, the State plans to analyze formative assessment data and support additional statewide conferences on this work.
 - Shift \$180,000 from differences identified between actual and estimated costs in Year 4 other to Year 5 other to continue mini-grants for local educational agencies (LEAs) to develop growth measures for non-tested grades and subjects through June 30, 2015. The State will use the extended project period to fund an additional round of grants for participating LEAs to develop value-added measures on non-tested grades and subjects.

- In the “Engage Stakeholders in Implementation” project, shift \$149,351 from differences identified between actual and estimated costs from the “Personalize Learning through Formative Instruction” project to Year 5 personnel and related cost categories to fund the Director for the Ohio Education Research Center (OERC) through June 30, 2015. The State reports that the OERC Director will continue to oversee the research and evaluation support for sub-grants to LEAs on the growth measures for non-tested grades and subjects, as identified above.

- In the “Personalize Learning Through Formative Instruction” project:
 - Shift a total of \$915,839 from differences identified between actual and estimated costs in the IIS work stream (\$208,916) as well as the “Improve Access to Student Data” (\$706,923) project to Year 5 contractual and supplemental funding. The State will use these funds to make system upgrades and support schools to develop additional assessment items and educational resources for the IIS through June 30, 2015. In addition, the State reports that the extended performance period will provide time for LEAs to phase out pre-existing systems.
 - Increase Year 4 contractual by \$793,852 in the IIS work stream to pay for licensing fees for the State IIS and vendor-developed Formative Assessment Item Bank for participating LEAs. This funding results from differences between actual and estimated costs for other activities in the Year 4 contractual cost category of this project. The State reports that these funds will allow the State to pay in advance for the school year (SY) 2014-2015 licensing fees for these systems.
 - Shift a total of \$937,259 from differences identified between actual and estimated costs in the Formative Instructional Practices (FIP) work stream (\$128,000) as well as the “Provide Curriculum to Support Teachers” (\$809,259) project to Year 5 contractual. The State will use these funds to

enhance and expand online learning modules and resources as well as provide professional development on assessment literacy.ⁱⁱ

- In the “Redesign Educator Performance Management Systems” project:
 - Shift \$1,000,000 from differences identified across project-level budgets in the Great Teachers and Leaders areaⁱⁱⁱ between actual and estimated costs to Year 5 contractual to maintain and provide upgrades to the electronic Teacher and Principal Evaluation System (eTPES) through June 30, 2015. Of this amount, \$622,000 will shift from Year 4 training stipends for the TeachOhio work stream due to the reduced cost of TeachOhio activities in Year 4 as a result of credentialing teachers in groups, rather than individually, at a discounted rate.
 - Shift \$500,000 from differences identified across project-level budgets in the Great Teachers and Leaders area between actual and estimated costs to Year 5 funding for involved LEAs to provide stipends to assist LEAs to implement the Beginning Principal Mentorship Program (BPMP) through June 30, 2015. The State will use these funds to create another cohort of lead mentors for beginning principals and collect additional data on the BPMP model to inform statewide replication.

- In the “Support Educators Through Evaluation Results” project, extend the performance period for the alternative compensation grant for the Educational Service Center of Central Ohio (ESCCO) to June 30, 2015. Shift \$307,000 from differences identified between actual and estimated costs in Year 4 contractual to Year 5 contractual. The State will use these funds to provide performance-based compensation for teachers in the ESCCO consortium based on SY 2013-2014 student growth and achievement data, which is slated to be released in fall 2014. The State reports that the extended performance period is needed due to the lag in releasing student growth data.

- In the “Support Educators to Increase Student Growth” project:
 - Shift \$348,985 from adjustments between actual and estimated costs for the Advanced Placement (AP) work stream from Year 4 contractual to Year 5 contractual, personnel and related cost categories. Of this amount, the State will use \$98,985 to fund an AP coordinator through June 30, 2015. The State reports that the AP coordinator will continue to support professional development for AP teachers in Year 5. The State will use the remainder of these funds (\$250,000) to create an additional round of mini-grants for LEAs to develop new AP courses and/or professional development opportunities for AP teachers in participating LEAs with high populations of underrepresented students through June 30, 2015. The State reports that the work supported by the AP coordinator and mini-grants will better prepare educators to teach AP courses.
 - Shift a total of \$425,000 from differences identified between actual and estimated costs in the Literacy and Math Design Collaborative (LDC/MDC) work stream (\$300,000) as well as the “Provide Curriculum

to Support Teachers” (\$125,000) project to Year 5 contractual in the LDC/MDC project. In addition, extend the performance period for the LDC/MDC to June 30, 2015. The State is extending the project period to draw down unspent funds due to project delays experienced in Year 4 and train a second cohort of educators within the Ohio Schools that Work (HSTW) network, as well as those within “building in school improvement” status, to use College Ready Tools (CRTs). In addition, the State plans to train a portion of cohort one participants to serve as CRT coaches. The State reports that this method will expand Ohio’s capacity to train teachers on CRTs statewide.

- In the “Turn Around Lowest Achieving Schools” project:
 - Shift \$632,000 from differences identified between actual and estimated costs in the Early College High School (ECHS) work stream from Year 4 to Year 5 contractual to continue to fund 10 ECHS grants through June 30, 2015. The State reports that LEAs will use the extended project period to draw down unspent funds and continue work on ECHS innovative models.
 - Shift \$2,943,000 from unexpended funds Year 4 contractual to Year 5 contractual to support the work of Innovation Grants through June 30, 2015. The State reports that this shift is due to delays in implementation of the Innovation Grants. The extended project period will provide additional time to draw down funds in participating LEAs and work towards the performance targets in this project.
 - Shift \$922,300 from differences identified between actual and estimated costs in Year 4 contractual to Year 5 contractual to fund four Transformation Specialists (\$500,000) and three Innovation Specialists (\$219,915) through June 30, 2015. The remaining \$202,415 will be used to fund contracted purchased services (*e.g.*, website maintenance, communications, and administrative work). The State reports that Transformation Specialists will continue to provide technical assistance to and support improving student achievement in persistently lowest-achieving schools (PLAs). Innovation Specialists will continue to provide technical assistance and monitor the fidelity of implementation for Innovation Grants.

- In the “Leverage STEM Capacity” project, shift \$760,000 from differences identified between actual and estimated costs in this project (\$547,000) as well as the “Turn Around Ohio’s Lowest Achieving Schools” project (\$213,000) to Year 5 contractual to fund the Ohio STEM Learning Network (OSLN) work through June 30, 2015. The State will use these funds to continue to provide technical assistance, support and train educators on STEM/ECHS strategies through partnerships with STEM-oriented ECHS training center sites, offer professional development opportunities for STEM educators and administrators, and support Cohort 1 and 2 of the STEM Leaders Academy.

As described in a March 27, 2014, amendment approval letter, the Department indicated that it generally approves the State's process to review LEA sub-grant requests to obligate and liquidate funds after September 23, 2014. Prior to June 30, 2014, the State submitted a record of each participating LEA project approved by the State for a no-cost extension and the total funding approved for LEAs' Year 5 Scopes of Work.

It is our understanding that these amendments and no-cost extensions 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 we expect grantees with no-cost extensions to liquidate all funds by September 1, 2015, given that by law all Race to the Top funds revert to the U.S. Department of Treasury as of October 1, 2015. The State must request and receive approval to move forward with no-cost extensions for any additional projects. 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.

Sincerely,

Patrick Rooney
Acting Director, Policy and Program Implementation
Implementation and Support Unit

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

ⁱ The differences between actual and estimated costs include those resulting from the State's use of other sources of funding or leveraging allocations in duplicative line items to support Race to the Top activities and projects in the fourth year of implementation.

ⁱⁱ The State will use the extended performance period that was approved for Formative Instructional Practices (FIP) in the June 24, 2014 amendment letter to implement this work.

ⁱⁱⁱ The Great Teachers and Leaders area includes the "Support Educators Through Evaluation Results," "Redesign Educator Performance Management Systems," "Ensure Equitable Distribution of Educators," "Support Educators to Increase Student Growth," and "Expand Effective Educator Preparation Programs" projects.