



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY

August 29, 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 27, 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 \$42,198 from differences identified between actual and estimated costs in Year 4 contractual to Year 5 contractual to support the statewide implementation of the Early Childhood Comprehensive Assessment System (EC-CAS) through June 30, 2015. The State reports that it will use these funds to evaluate the assessment and make adjustments to implementation.
 - Shift \$200,000 from differences identified between actual and estimated costs in Year 4 contractual to Year 5 contractual to continue to support the High School – Higher Education (HS-HE) Alignment Initiative through June 30, 2015.ⁱ The State reports that it will use the extended project period to complete the development of a digital toolkit that includes resources and strategies to align high school courses to higher education entry requirements. In addition, the State will continue to fund professional development on best practices for HS-HE alignment and conduct a statewide gap analysis to identify remaining issues.

- In the “Provide Curriculum Resources to Support Teachers” project, shift \$50,000 from differences identified between actual and estimated costs in Year 4 contractual to Year 5 contractual. The State reports that it will use these funds to provide additional resources and professional development on the new standards and assessments through June 30, 2015. In addition, the extended project period will prepare educators to implement the new assessments in school year (SY) 2014-2015.

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,

//s//

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

cc: Dr. Richard Ross, Superintendent of Public Instruction
Doug Carpenter, 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 to support Race to the Top activities and projects in the fourth year of implementation.