



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY

February 3, 2012

The Honorable Lincoln Chafee
Office of the Governor
State House
Providence, Rhode island 02903-1196

Dear Governor Chafee:

I am writing in response to Rhode Island's request to amend its approved Race to the Top grant project. Between November 29, 2011 and January 26, 2012, the State submitted documentation to the U.S. Department of Education to support amendment requests to its approved Race to the Top plan. 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, as described below:

- For the "Multiple Pathways to Learning" project, expand the availability of the modules to all students, with a continued focus on low-performing students, and revise the subscription fee structure. In an April 8, 2011 letter, the Department approved Rhode Island to move forward with the "Multiple Pathways through Virtual Learning" project to replace the unfunded State Board Exams project. The Virtual Learning Math Modules will now be available to all students, including students in earlier grades, in a web-based setting to promote proficiency in foundational math skills, rather than being available to students in eleventh grade as a remedial tool. In addition, the modules will be available to local educational agencies (LEAs) at a flat rate, rather than per student, allowing for more students to gain access.

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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.

The Department acknowledges the timeline delay and missed milestones related to this project prior to the shift in approach. It is our understanding that Rhode Island will still accomplish all of the activities and deliverables articulated in its approved application within the grant period.

- The Greene School and Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts are added as involved LEAs. During the 90 day period of Rhode Island's LEA Scope of Work process in 2010, both schools were just beginning their first year as a charter school and therefore, did not sign on to participate in Race to the Top. Having had successful first years, these schools recognize the systemic supports available to Race to the Top LEAs and have asked to join Rhode Island's Race to the Top work, specifically in the areas of standards transition, educator evaluation, and supports for beginning teachers. At this time, Rhode Island would like to add these schools as involved LEAs. Rhode Island will shift \$86,500 from its supplemental funding for participating LEAs budget category in the State and Local Capacity project to support these involved LEAs over Years 2-4.

It is our understanding that the amendments will not result in a change in your State's performance measures and outcomes, nor will they substantially change the scope of 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 your Race to the Top Program Officer, Monika Bandyopadhyay, 202-260-2531 or monika.bandyopadhyay@ed.gov.

Sincerely,

//s//

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

cc: Commissioner Deborah Gist
Mary-Beth Fafard
Carolyn Dias