



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY

January 7, 2014

The Honorable Bill Haslam
Office of the Governor
State Capitol
Nashville, Tennessee 37243-0001

Dear Governor Haslam:

I am writing with regard to the documentation that Tennessee submitted on August 30, 2013, and December 16, 2013, in response to the conditions included in U.S. Department of Education's April 29, 2013, and November 14, 2013, amendment approvals related to the "Scope of Work Supplemental Fund." In conformance with the conditions, Tennessee submitted a description of the evidence it expects local educational agencies (LEAs) participating in this project to share with during the school years (SYs) 2012-2013, 2013-2014, and 2014-2015 demonstrating progress carrying out commitments related to educator evaluation, implementation of Common Core State Standards (CCSS), and student assignment.

Based on the documentation that Tennessee submitted, Tennessee has fulfilled the conditions specified. Under the approved amendments, LEAs participating in Tennessee's "Scope of Work Supplemental Fund" will implement the evaluation and CCSS activities in SY 2013-2014 and the student assignment activities in SY 2014-2015.

Between December 16 and 23, 2013, the State submitted documentation to and held conversations with the Department to support an additional amendment request for this project. 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 and approved or denied. 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

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compared them with the Race to the Top program *Principles* included in the “Grant Amendment Submission Process” document issued to Governors of grantee States in October 2011.

I approve the State’s request to extend the project period for the \$7,326,015 granted to the 82 LEAs that opted to participate in the “Scope of Work Supplemental Fund” project to June 30, 2015. According to the State, this additional time will allow LEAs to spend funds associated with this project to support implementation of student assignment in SY 2014-2015. It is the Department’s understanding that the State will review LEA requests for extensions of the budgets and activities associated with the “Scope of Work Supplemental Fund” in conjunction with LEA subgrant requests for no-cost extensions.

One LEA that initially committed to participate in the “Scope of Work Supplemental Fund” is no longer participating in the project. It is the Department’s understanding that the State will submit additional amendment(s) to redirect the \$673,985 initially allocated to this LEA to other project(s) in the State’s plan. Given that the funds in this project are from the State 50 percent of funding rather than the 50 percent allocated to LEAs, the State is not required to reallocate funds to the remaining LEAs opting to participate in this project. Based on the “Supplemental Scope of Work” amount described above and the total described in an amendment approved November 14, 2013, the State currently has \$2,902,253 in its overall budget that require additional amendment(s) for Department review.

As described in a July 12, 2013, amendment approval letter, the Department indicated that it generally approves the State’s process to review LEA subgrant requests to obligate and liquidate funds after September 23, 2014. It is the Department’s understanding that the State will record no-cost extensions granted for the “Scope of Work Supplemental Fund” as part of the documentation the State will submit by June 30, 2014, recording 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 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 amendment.

If you need any assistance or have any questions regarding Race to the Top, please do not hesitate to contact Tennessee's Race to the Top Program Officers, Jessie Harteis and Rachel Provencher, at 202-453-6651 and 202-453-6404 or Jessie.Harteis@ed.gov and Rachel.Provencher@ed.gov.

Sincerely,

//s//

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

cc: Kevin Huffman, Commissioner
Meghan Curran, Race to the Top Lead