



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES



June 29, 2015

Susan
Susan Perry-Manning
Executive Director, Delaware Office of Early Learning
820 North French Street, 5th Floor
Wilmington, DE 19801

Dear Ms. Perry-Manning:

This letter is in response to Delaware's request to amend its approved Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant, including revisions to the project period to implement a portion of its plan. On June 1, 2015, the Delaware Office of Early Learning sent an amendment request to its Project Officers indicating the grantee would like to extend its grant period by one year by reallocating unspent funds in the amount of \$6,793,197 from its Year 4 budget to Year 5.

As you are aware, the Departments have 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 March 3, 2015, the Departments 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 RTT-ELC application and approved Scope of Work would be reviewed and approved or denied. To determine whether approval could be granted, the Departments have applied the conditions noted in that document and compared it with RTT-ELC program requirements and conditions. In reviewing this request, project officers considered the State's explanation and plan for how the work will be sustained (or, if appropriate, completed) after the timeframe of the no-cost extension.

Based on the documentation submitted, Delaware has fulfilled the conditions specified. Under the approved amendment, the State will complete the implementation of the RTT-ELC grant by December 31, 2016. None of the changes proposed in this amendment change the scope or objectives of the grant.

The following no-cost extension amendment is approved, as described below:

Project 1 (Outreach to Promote Early Screening and Referral): Delaware will spend up to \$110,500 in Year 5 to complete activities related to early screening and referral, including support for parent educators who work with Early Intervention (IDEA Part C), continuation of the Health Ambassador outreach work in high needs communities, and continuation of the Help Me Grow 211 information and referral call service.

Project 2 (Strengthen Young Child Mental Health Services): Delaware will spend up to \$271,928 in Year 5 in order to continue the Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Service through the no-cost extension period.

Project 3 (Financial Incentive Program for Quality Improvement): Delaware will spend up to \$2,413,512 in Year 5 for the purpose of providing financial incentives to programs at the highest star and quality levels. These funds support staff development, materials, equipment, and compensation tied to programs serving the most vulnerable children.

Project 5 (Technical Assistance and Stars Plus): Delaware will spend up to \$2,014,545 in Year 5 for the purpose of implementing a technical assistance, verification, and assessment strategy for programs participating in its Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS), called Delaware Stars.

Project 6 (Nutrition and Health Living): Delaware will spend up to \$100,000 in Year 5 for the purpose of adding additional topics to its online Learning Management System in the area of health and nutrition.

Project 7 (Ages and Stages, Developmental Screener): Delaware will spend up to \$66,000 in Year 5 in order to provide additional trainings and materials on the Ages and Stages developmental screening tool for children birth through five years old.

Project 9 (Compensation, Retention, Education (CORE)): Delaware will spend up to \$511,000 in Year 5 in order to complete the implementation of CORE, a compensation system that has helped educators in Stars programs to increase their educational attainment and also increased the data that Delaware collects on individuals in the workforce.

Project 10 (Delaware Early Learner Survey): Delaware will spend up to \$283,500 in Year 5 to support the birth to preschool essential Stars standards for using a required assessment tool in early learning programs in higher tiers of quality. This funding will also support the costs of purchasing online student assessment portfolios, professional development costs, and materials needed to support the use of the tool with fidelity.

Project 11 (Delaware Early Learning Teams): Delaware will spend up to \$205,000 in Year 5 to support the ongoing work of the Delaware Readiness Teams.

Project 13 (QRIS Measurement Development): Delaware will spend up to \$150,000 in Year 5 in order to complete the development of a new tool in the measurement of quality of family child care. This extension will allow the research team to connect data collection efforts with classroom quality and child assessment data in North Carolina, and to align this data with Delaware's validation study.

Project 16 (Community Engagement): Delaware will spend up to \$146,775 in Year 5 for the purpose of supporting ongoing parent and community engagement efforts, including family outreach to increase awareness of the importance of quality early learning and the use of Stars ratings, as well as Delaware's website and monthly newsletter.

Project 17 (Leadership for System Development): Delaware will spend up to \$520,436 in Year 5 to support the staffing of the Delaware Office of Early Learning. This extension will allow for the management of the remaining projects through the end of the no-cost

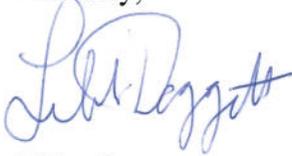
extension period as well as the annual Delaware Early Learning Summit meeting of partners and community and business supporters.

The Departments approve Delaware's request to obligate funds through December 31, 2016 for the purposes described in this letter. The State must request and receive approval to move forward with no-cost extensions for any additional projects.

It is our understanding that this amendment request will not change Delaware's overall RTT-ELC goals, plans, outcomes, or performance measures, but will ensure that Delaware can continue to make progress on its RTT-ELC scope of work activities. Please note that we expect grantees with no-cost extensions to liquidate all funds by March 31, 2017, given that by law all RTT-ELC funds revert to the U.S. Department of Treasury as of October 1, 2017. This letter will be posted to ED's website as a record of the amendments.

We are confident that Delaware will continue its comprehensive efforts towards building successful state systems of early learning. If you need any assistance regarding RTT-ELC, please do not hesitate to contact your Project Officer, Deborah Spitz, at (202) 260-3793 or Deborah.Spitz@ed.gov or your co-project officer Sonia Haynes, at (215) 861-4003 or Sonia.Haynes@acf.hhs.gov.

Sincerely,



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