



March 2008

**TO:** Superintendents of Public School Districts  
State Aid Designees  
District Superintendents (For Information)

**FROM:** Andrea Hyary, Bureau Chief, Office of State Aid  
Carl Thurnau, Director of Facilities Planning

**SUBJECT:** EXCEL (Expanding our Children's Education and Learning):  
**Changing the EXCEL amount for a project and the Total Cost Check**

**1. Changing the requested EXCEL amount after project approval / before SA-139 submission**

A district can request an increase<sup>1</sup> or decrease in EXCEL funding for a project after Facilities Planning has approved the project and before the SA-139 (notification to State Aid that the construction contract has been signed.) has been submitted to SED. To do this, submit an FPMI to the Office of Facilities Planning for approval.

**2. Changing the requested EXCEL amount after SA-139 submission**

A district can request an increase or decrease in EXCEL funding for a project after the SA-139 has been submitted to State Aid, as long as SED has not yet certified to DASNY the EXCEL amount on the original SA-139. To check if the EXCEL amount requested on a submitted SA-139 has been certified, please contact the Building Aid Unit in the Office of State Aid:

*a) If the requested amount of EXCEL has been certified, the district cannot request that it be increased, even if the certified amount does not represent the district's entire maximum EXCEL allocation. In this situation, the district can access the remaining portion of its total EXCEL allocation by initiating a new project. (Please note that EXCEL can be applied to EXCEL eligible projects that are wholly funded with cash and for which total costs do not exceed \$100,000. EXCEL also can be applied to EXCEL eligible emergency projects.)*

Neither can the district request that the certified amount be decreased, and/or that part of the certified amount be assigned to another project.

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<sup>1</sup> Requested increases must never cause EXCEL funding to exceed the district's maximum EXCEL allocation. And the project expenditures generating the increase in EXCEL funding may not be expenditures made from the proceeds of long term borrowings.

NOTE: The EXCEL amount for a project must not be changed on any FPFIs submitted to the Office of Facilities Planning after an EXCEL amount has been certified to DASNY. The Office of Facilities Planning will not process FPFIs on which the EXCEL amount has been changed post-certification.

Following are the circumstances under which an exception will be made and the EXCEL amount for a project may be recertified or decertified after initial certification:

1. SED made an error in the processing of an EXCEL building project that caused the certification to DASNY of an erroneous EXCEL amount.
2. The project had to be abandoned/cancelled. In this case, the originally requested EXCEL can be reassigned to another project, if the district so chooses.
3. Exigent circumstances beyond the district's control, to be reviewed on a case by case basis

*b) If the requested amount has not been certified, the district can request to change the EXCEL amount by notifying the Office of State Aid immediately not to certify the EXCEL amount on the original SA-139, then submitting an FPMI to the Office of Facilities Planning for approval AND submitting a revised SA-139 to the Office of State Aid.*

### **3. Final Total Cost Check and EXCEL Overpayments**

The EXCEL statute provides that total Building Aid for the project plus the EXCEL amount may not exceed the total project cost. At a point in time after the final cost report has been approved by the Office of Facilities Planning, SED will determine whether the combination of Building Aid and EXCEL disbursements exceeds the final total project cost. If the total project cost has been exceeded, the total amount of the excess will be recouped by the State pursuant to EXCEL statute.

The total cost check / EXCEL overpayment process has not yet been implemented. The State Aid Office will provide additional information to districts before this process begins.

The certified EXCEL amount for a project will not be increased or decreased based on finalized project data.

#### Contact information:

Assigned Fiscal Associate, Office of Facilities Planning , 518-474-3906

Caylyn Agans, State Aid Office, Building Aid Unit, 518-474-2977, [caylyn.agans@nysed.gov](mailto:caylyn.agans@nysed.gov)

Dormitory of the State of New York , 518-257-3120, [apgrants@dasny.org](mailto:apgrants@dasny.org)