

ESEA FLEXIBILITY PART B MONITORING REPORT

MONITORING VISIT INFORMATION	
State Educational Agency (SEA)	Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE)
Request Approved	February 9, 2012
Request Amended	Amendments submitted 10/29/13 and 11/22/13
ESEA Flex Monitoring Activity	Part B Desk Monitoring
Monitoring Review Date(s)	November 13-15, 2013
Exit Conference	November 25, 2013
Interviews Conducted	Erica Adametz, Helene Bettencourt, Erica Champagne, Rob Curtin, Alex Lilley, Simone Lynch, Ron Noble, Matt Pakos, David Parker, Julia Phelps, Joan Tuttle, Susan Whelple, Dan Wiener, Lise Zeig
U.S. Department of Education (ED) Monitors	Britt Jung, Laura Jimenez

OVERVIEW OF ESEA FLEXIBILITY MONITORING

The U.S. Department of Education (ED) is committed to supporting State educational agencies (SEAs) as they implement ambitious reform agendas through their approved ESEA flexibility requests. Consistent with this commitment, ED has designed a monitoring process to assess an SEA's implementation of the principles of ESEA flexibility and the State-level systems and processes needed to support that implementation.

Part B Monitoring

In Part B monitoring, SEA implementation of ESEA flexibility was reviewed across several key areas: State-level Systems and Processes, Principle 1, Principle 2, and Principle 3, as outlined in the *ESEA Flexibility Part B Monitoring Protocol*. In each broad area, ED identified key elements that are required under ESEA flexibility and are likely to lead to increased achievement for students. Through examination of documentation submitted by the SEA and interviews with SEA staff, ED assessed the effectiveness of implementation of ESEA flexibility by identifying the extent to which an SEA:

1. Is ensuring that implementation is occurring consistent with the SEA's approved request and the principles and timelines of ESEA flexibility;
2. Is continuing to review and make adjustments to support implementation;
3. Is establishing systems and process to sustain implementation and improvements.

The report contains the following sections:

- *Highlights of the SEA's Implementation.* This section identifies key accomplishments in the SEA's implementation of ESEA flexibility.
- *Status of Implementation of ESEA Flexibility.* This section indicates whether or not the SEA has met expectations for each element of ESEA flexibility.

- *Elements Requiring Next Steps.* When appropriate, this section identifies any elements where the SEA is not meeting expectations and includes “Next Steps” that the SEA must take to meet expectations.
- *Recommendations to Strengthen Implementation.* This section provides recommendations to support the SEA in continuing to meet the principles and timelines of ESEA flexibility and strengthening implementation.
- *Additional Comments.* When appropriate, this section includes any additional information related to the SEA’s implementation of ESEA flexibility not included elsewhere.

HIGHLIGHTS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF ESEA FLEXIBILITY

The SEA’s work includes the following key accomplishments relating to the implementation of ESEA flexibility and/or efforts to engage in a process of continuous review and analysis, particularly for those elements receiving a comprehensive review:

- ESE formally evaluates many aspects of its implementation and makes changes based on those evaluations. For example, based on annual evaluations of district implementation of ESE’s college- and career-ready standards, ESE released 66 curriculum modules and is currently conducting a more thorough evaluation of six districts which report a high level of success with implementation of these standards. ESE will make public these findings for the benefit of other districts. ESE has conducted these evaluations in areas such as standards implementation, school turnaround, data tools, and educator evaluation systems.
- ESE leverages its resources to benefit all students. For example, ESE won a grant from ED’s Office of Special Education Programs to provide professional development through ESE’s Statewide system of support. ESE utilized its partners (*e.g.*, the Federation for Children with Special Needs) to build this system to help solicit parental feedback on ESE’s plans to redesign its district and school accountability report cards.
- ESE uses its data system for teaching and learning (*i.e.*, EDWIN analytics) to produce customized reports for teachers based on their students’ performance. For example, EDWIN produces a report that correlates scores on the English language proficiency exam (ACCESS) with achieving a score of “proficient” on the Statewide assessments.
- ESE has a comprehensive approach to address the needs of priority schools (level 4 and 5 schools) that includes additional available resources, direct technical assistance, and quarterly oversight.

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF ESEA FLEXIBILITY

SEA Systems & Processes

Element	Status
Monitoring (EDGAR 80.40 and 2.G)	Not Meeting Expectations
Technical Assistance (2.G)	Meeting Expectations
Data Collection & Use (§9304(a)(6))	Meeting Expectations
Family & Community Engagement and Outreach (Implementation Letter)	Meeting Expectations

Principle 1

Element	Status
Transition to and Implement College- and Career-ready Standards (1.B)	Meeting Expectations
Adopt English Language Proficiency Standards (Assurance 2)	Meeting Expectations
Develop and Administer High-Quality Assessments (Assurance 3)	Meeting Expectations
Develop and Administer Alternate Assessments (Assurance 3)	Meeting Expectations
Develop and Administer English Language Proficiency Assessments (Assurance 4)	Meeting Expectations
Annually Reports College-going and College-credit Accumulation Rates (Assurance 5)	Meeting Expectations

Principle 2

Element	Status
Develop and Implement a State-Based System of Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support (2.A)	Meeting Expectations
Reward Schools (2.C)	Meeting Expectations
Priority Schools (2.D)	Meeting Expectations
Focus Schools (2.E)	Not Meeting Expectations
Other Title I Schools (2.F)	Meeting Expectations
State and Local Report Cards (§1111 of the ESEA; 2.B and Assurance 14)	Meeting Expectations

Principle 3

Element	Status
Teacher Evaluation and Support Systems (3.B)	Not Meeting Expectations
Principal Evaluation and Support Systems (3.B)	Not Meeting Expectations

ELEMENTS REQUIRING NEXT STEPS

Element	Monitoring
Summary and Status of Implementation	The SEA has not demonstrated that all aspects of this element are carried out consistent with the principles and timelines outlined in the document titled <i>ESEA Flexibility</i> . Under ESEA flexibility, States must have a process in place to ensure timely and comprehensive monitoring of and technical assistance for priority and focus schools. Based on the documentation that ESE provided and information that it reported during the monitoring call, the State does not have a process for monitoring all of its focus schools, ensuring that they are implementing interventions that address the reasons for identification.
Next Steps	ESE will describe its plan for monitoring all focus schools and ensuring that they are implementing interventions that address the reasons for identification through the ESEA flexibility extension process.

Element	Focus Schools
<p>Summary and Status of Implementation</p>	<p>The SEA has not demonstrated that this element is carried out consistent with the principles and timelines outlined in the document titled <i>ESEA Flexibility</i>. Specifically, under ESEA flexibility, States must have a process in place to ensure timely and comprehensive monitoring of and technical assistance for priority and focus schools. Based on the documentation that ESE provided and information that it reported during the monitoring call, the State has a mechanism to track the implementation of interventions in focus schools for those schools that partner with the District and School Assistance Centers. However, since this partnering is optional, ESE does not have a system to ensure that all focus schools are implementing interventions that address the schools’ reasons for identification.</p>
<p>Next Steps</p>	<p>ESE will describe its plan for monitoring all focus schools and ensuring that they are implementing interventions that address the reasons for identification through the ESEA flexibility extension process.</p>

Element	Teacher and Principal Evaluation and Support Systems
<p>Summary and Status of Implementation</p>	<p>The SEA has not demonstrated that these elements are carried out consistent with the principles and timelines outlined in the document titled <i>ESEA Flexibility</i>. Specifically, under ESEA flexibility, in determining educators’ performance levels, States must implement teacher and principal evaluation and support systems that include data on student growth for all students as a significant factor. ESE’s current system will provide educators with two separate ratings, a “summative performance rating” and a “student impact rating” (student growth) that never intersect to produce a single rating that includes student growth as a significant factor, and that subsequently provides educators with feedback that guides professional development and is used to inform personnel decisions.</p>
<p>Next Steps</p>	<p>ESE has submitted an amendment request related to its teacher and principal evaluation and support systems, which is currently under review.</p>

RECOMMENDATIONS TO STRENGTHEN IMPLEMENTATION

The following recommendations are provided to support the SEA in continuing to meet the principles and timelines of ESEA flexibility and strengthening implementation through continuous improvement and the establishment of systems and processes to sustain implementation and improvement.

- ESE’s approved ESEA flexibility request does not include some of the detail of what ESE, districts, and schools are undertaking as part of ESEA flexibility implementation. It is therefore difficult to understand the comprehensive approach that ESE is undertaking in many areas, such as college- and career-ready expectations for all students, differentiated recognition, accountability and support (*e.g.*, a description of the services and supports provided to urban districts by the urban district support teams), and effective teachers and leaders simply by reading the approved request. ED recommends that, in drafting its ESEA

flexibility extension request, ESE conduct a thorough review of the approved ESEA flexibility request and provide revisions and updates, as appropriate, so that the approved request provides readers with a more comprehensive and accurate picture of the reforms being implemented in Massachusetts.

- ESE demonstrated its efforts to engage with families and communities based on current activities, new policies, and needs. However, there is not a comprehensive strategy designed to meet the needs of families, teachers, and all other stakeholders. ED recommends that ESE consider developing a Statewide strategy that aligns the singular elements of ESE's current family and community engagement strategies into a comprehensive strategy.