

ESEA FLEXIBILITY PART B MONITORING REPORT

MONITORING VISIT INFORMATION	
State Educational Agency (SEA)	Florida Department of Education (FLDOE)
Request Approved	February 9, 2012
Request Amended	N/A
ESEA Flex Monitoring Activity	Part B Desk Monitoring
Monitoring Review Date(s)	December 11 and 12, 2013
Exit Conference	January 10, 2014
Interviews Conducted	Juan Copa, Ed Croft, Tammy Duncan, Holly Edenfield, Chane Elpin, Adeola Fayemi, Jane Fletcher, Sam Foerster, Kathy Hebda, Cyndi Holleman, Shannon Houston, Michael McAuley, Eileen McDaniel, Sonya Morris, Angelia Rivers, Andre Smith, Pam Stewart, Mary Jane Tappen, Vince Verges, Monica Verra-Tirado
U.S. Department of Education (ED) Monitors	Victoria Hammer Tahira Rashid Ruth Ryder Christine Pilgrim

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 processes 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:

- The Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) streamlined the plans required of its lowest performing schools (*i.e.*, schools rated as “F” on the Florida A-F school and local educational agency [LEA] grading system and labeled as Priority Schools under ESEA flexibility) and the schools with the largest gaps (*i.e.*, schools rated as “D” on the Florida A-F school and LEA grading system and labeled as Focus Schools under ESEA flexibility) to help reduce burden and facilitate a more targeted and strategic approach to addressing the needs of students. The plans include the requirements under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) for school-wide and targeted assistance plans. Schools submit these plans, called School Improvement Plans (SIPs), electronically and receive ongoing and real time feedback prior to approval.
- FLDOE’s Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services (responsible for programs that address the needs of students with disabilities) and the Bureau of School Improvement (implements the processes that Florida has in place for requiring Priority and Focus Schools to address the needs of their students—Priority Schools through implementation of a turnaround model and Focus Schools through targeting the needs of students that persistently miss performance targets) proactively collaborate to support schools and districts.
- FLDOE has a comprehensive system for collecting and reporting a wide variety of student, school, district, and performance indicators to ensure transparency and provide information for its five Regional Executive Directors (REDs) and schools and districts to help guide their efforts at improving the performance of all students and student subgroups.

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF ESEA FLEXIBILITY

SEA Systems & Processes

Element	Status
Monitoring (EDGAR 80.40 and 2.G)	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 (1.C)	Not 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)	Not Meeting Expectations
Focus Schools (2.E)	Meeting Expectations
Other Title I Schools (2.F)	Meeting Expectations
State and Local Report Cards (§1111 of the ESEA; 2.B and Assurance 14)	Not Meeting Expectations

Principle 3

Element	Status
Teacher Evaluation and Support Systems (3.B)	Meeting Expectations
Principal Evaluation and Support Systems (3.B)	Meeting Expectations

Elements requiring Next Steps

Principle 1

Element	Develop and Administer High-Quality Assessments
Summary and Status of Implementation	<p>FLDOE has not demonstrated that this element is carried out consistent with its approved ESEA flexibility request and the principles and timelines outlined in the document titled <i>ESEA Flexibility</i>. In accordance with the requirements of ESEA flexibility, States are required to develop and administer annual, statewide, aligned high-quality assessments no later than 2014–2015. FLDOE initially fulfilled this requirement by participating in the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) consortium. FLDOE subsequently indicated that it will determine in March 2014 the annual, statewide, aligned high-quality assessments to be administered no later than 2014–2015. As part of doing so, the State released an Invitation to Negotiate in October 2013, received proposals in December 2013, and reviewed these proposals in December 2013 and early 2014.</p>
Next Steps	<p>Through the ESEA flexibility extension process, FLDOE must amend its approved ESEA flexibility request to reflect this change in its plan to meet the requirement under ESEA flexibility that a State develop and administer annual, statewide, aligned high-quality assessments no later than 2014–2015. As part of this amendment, FLDOE must provide a high-quality plan (defined in the document titled <i>ESEA Flexibility Request</i> as including the following: key milestones and activities, a detailed timeline, party or parties responsible, evidence, resources, and significant obstacles) to describe how it will develop and administer annually, beginning no later than the 2014–2015 school year, statewide aligned, high-quality assessments that measure student growth in reading/language arts and in mathematics in at least grades 3-8 and at least once in high school in all LEAs, as well as set academic achievement standards for those assessments.</p>

Principle 2

Element	Priority Schools
Summary and Status of Implementation	<p>While FLDOE intervened in the requisite number of priority schools through its SIG schools, the State indicated that it released another list of Priority Schools at the time it released its school's grades based on 2012–2013 assessment data for elementary and middle schools and 2011–2012 assessment data for high schools. Thus, based on FLDOE's exit criteria, the following is not clear: (1) which schools exited priority status, (2) which schools did not exit priority status, and (3) the timeline of interventions for Florida's newly identified priority schools.</p>
Next Steps	<p>Through the ESEA flexibility extension process, FLDOE must clarify its process for identifying and requiring interventions in priority schools.</p>

Element	State and Local Report Cards
<p>Summary and Status of Implementation</p>	<p>Sections §1111(h)(1) and §1111(h)(2) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) require annual preparation and dissemination of State and local report cards. The statute specifies that the required information be reported in an “understandable” format. FLDOE has not demonstrated that this element is carried out consistent with the requirements of §1111(h)(1) and §1111(h)(2) of the ESEA. Specifically, while FLDOE includes all required information on its State and local report cards, the information needs to be more clearly labeled (<i>e.g.</i>, National Assessment of Educational Progress [NAEP]) to ensure that it can be understood and interpreted appropriately.</p>
<p>Next Steps</p>	<p>Through the ESEA flexibility extension process, FLDOE will submit its plan for revising its State and local report cards to comply with ED’s State and Local Report Cards Under Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as Amended Non-Regulatory Guidance, beginning with report cards based on 2013–2014 assessment results. The plan should include a draft template for the revised State and local report cards.</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.

- Florida’s statute requires all schools to describe how they will address the needs of all students and student subgroups that miss performance targets (including graduation rate targets). Further, Florida’s system requires certain actions in schools rated as “C” schools on the Florida A-F school and LEA grading system (*i.e.*, Florida’s “Other Title I Schools”). Both the school advisory council and district in which these schools reside review and approve the school improvement plans of these schools. Florida’s RED teams, in collaboration with the staff from Florida’s Bureau of School Improvement (BSI), monitor and support districts in which schools rated as “C,” “D,” and “F” on Florida’s school grade system reside. The RED teams and BSI implement a systematic and clearly articulated process for monitoring and providing technical assistance to schools rated “D” and “F.” Florida could enhance the monitoring and support of its schools rated as “C” by implementing a more systematic and clearly articulated process to help ensure that these schools implement fully the actions required of them and target the needs of students that consistently miss performance targets (including student achievement targets, graduation rate targets, and targets for other indicators).
- The Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services and the Bureau of School Improvement proactively collaborate to ensure that students with disabilities and the teachers that teach them receive the support that they need. Moving forward, ED recommends that FLDOE work to facilitate similar collaborative efforts involving the Bureau of Student Achievement through Language Acquisition with the work being implemented in the Title I office and the BSI.
- FLDOE reported that it plans to provide student and school performance data in a more accessible fashion for all stakeholders via “data dashboards” currently in development. ED

recommends that FLDOE complete work on and communicate broadly about these dashboards to allow schools, districts and other stakeholders to access and focus on key indicators of student and school performance.

- Some bureaus and offices across FLDOE conduct separate outreach to teachers, school leaders, parents, and other diverse communities. ED recommends that FLDOE develop and implement a strategic plan to ensure that it communicates and gathers input from teachers, parents, and other diverse communities in a comprehensive and connected manner.
- Florida currently administers the Comprehensive English Language Learning Assessment (CELLA) and is in the process of selecting the English Language Proficiency (ELP) assessment that it will administer beginning in the 2015–2016 school year. Florida has received permission to continue to administer the CELLA through the 2014–2015 school year. At the present time, the State has not yet adopted English Language Proficiency (ELP) standards that correspond to the State’s college- and career-ready standards (CCRS). Consistent with the requirements of ESEA flexibility, Florida must adopt such standards no later than the 2013–2014 school year (May 30, 2014). To help ensure that Florida does this, ED recommends that FLDOE develop and implement a high-quality plan for selecting and adopting ELP standards that correspond to the State’s CCRS. The plan should reflect any and all processes necessary to do so (*e.g.*, presentation to and voting on by the Florida State Board of Education).

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

- NA