

ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT OF 1965, AS AMENDED FLEXIBILITY PART B MONITORING REPORT

MONITORING VISIT INFORMATION	
State Educational Agency (SEA)	<i>Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE)</i>
Request Approved	<i>May 29, 2012</i>
Request Amended	<i>April 23, 2013</i>
Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA) Flex Monitoring Activity	<i>Part B Desk Monitoring</i>
Monitoring Review Date(s)	<i>August 5–6, 2013</i>
Exit Conference	<i>August 26, 2013</i>
Interviews Conducted	<i>Jessica Baghian, Stephen Osborn, Marie Henderson, Hannah Deitsch, Rebecca Kockler, Holly Reid, Hattie Arrington</i>
U.S. Department of Education (ED) Monitors	<i>Elizabeth Witt, Elizabeth Bailey, Karen Dorsey</i>

OVERVIEW OF ESEA FLEXIBILITY MONITORING

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 accomplishes the following:

1. Ensures that implementation is occurring consistent with the SEA’s approved request and the principles and timelines of ESEA flexibility
2. Continues to review and make adjustments to support implementation
3. Establishes 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:

- In response to comments from educators made during the initial implementation of the educator evaluation system, the LDOE has revised its principal evaluation to clarify expectations about two of the several competencies on which principals are evaluated: (1) observing teachers and providing feedback to them, and (2) fostering collaboration among teachers. The LDOE will also provide additional training for principals in these two areas during the upcoming school year.

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF ESEA FLEXIBILITY

SEA Systems and Processes

Element	Status
Monitoring (EDGAR 80.40 and 2.G)	Not Meeting Expectations
Technical Assistance (2.G)	Meeting Expectations
Data Collection and Use (§9304(a)(6))	Meeting Expectations
Family and Community Engagement and Outreach (Implementation Letter)	Not 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 Report College-Going and College-Credit Accumulation Rates (Assurance 5)	Meeting Expectations
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Principle 2

Element	Status
Develop and Implement a State-Based System of Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support (2.A)	Not 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)	Not 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)	Meeting Expectations

* This area will be resolved through amendment during the ESEA flexibility extension process.

ELEMENTS REQUIRING NEXT STEPS

Element	Monitoring (EDGAR 80.40) (2.G of ESEA Flexibility)
Summary and Status of Implementation	The SEA 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> . The LDOE did not provide documentation showing that it has a process for and is monitoring implementation of local educational agency (LEA) and school-level ESEA flexibility activities regarding implementation of differentiated recognition accountability and support systems (particularly LEA implementation of interventions in focus and other Title I schools, as described in Elements 2.E and 2.F below), as required by the approved ESEA flexibility request.
Next Steps	By completing the Next Steps described below in the <i>Focus Schools</i> and <i>Other Title I Schools</i> elements, the LDOE will address this Next Step.

Element	Family and Community Engagement and Outreach (ESEA Flexibility Implementation Letter)
Summary and Status of Implementation	The SEA has not demonstrated that this element is carried out in terms of outreach to the English Learner (EL) community. The State has not demonstrated that it has reached out to EL parents, advocates, or teachers about their particular needs and concerns regarding implementing the principles of ESEA flexibility.
Next Steps	Through its request for extension of its ESEA flexibility request, the LDOE must submit a detailed, high-quality plan for outreach to the EL community, including parents, advocates, and teachers. ED will review and approve the plan.

Element	Develop and Implement a State-Based System of Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support (2.A of ESEA Flexibility)
Summary and Status of Implementation	The SEA 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> . While the LDOE has implemented a system of differentiated recognition and accountability, it has not provided evidence that monitoring processes identify required supports and that those support are being provided. The LDOE’s support system is focused at the LEA level, and it is not clear that the LDOE has developed adequate systems of monitoring and support for all focus and other Title I schools in those LEAs, consistent with the requirements of ESEA flexibility.
Next Steps	By completing the Next Steps described below in the <i>Focus Schools</i> and <i>Other Title I Schools</i> elements, the LDOE will address this Next Step.

Element	Focus Schools (2.E of ESEA Flexibility)
Summary and Status of Implementation	The SEA 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> . As a result of the flawed monitoring system addressed in the Monitoring Element above, the SEA has not provided evidence that it ensured that LEAs implemented, consistent with the SEA’s approved request, interventions based on academic data targeted to the specific school need/student group performance in <i>each</i> focus school during the 2012–2013 school year.
Next Steps	Through its request for extension of its ESEA flexibility request, the LDOE must provide evidence that it ensured that LEAs implemented, consistent with the SEA’s approved request, interventions based on academic data targeted to the specific school need/student group performance in <i>each</i> focus school during the 2012–2013 school year.

Element	Other Title I Schools (2.F of ESEA Flexibility)
Summary and Status of Implementation	The SEA 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> . As a result of the flawed monitoring system addressed in the Monitoring Element above, the LDOE has not provided evidence that it is ensuring that incentives and supports (based on the SEA’s new annual measurable objectives (AMOs), graduation rates, and other measures) are provided to other Title I schools that are not making progress in improving student achievement and narrowing achievement gaps.
Next Steps	Through its request for extension of its ESEA flexibility request, the LDOE must provide evidence that it is ensuring that, consistent with the SEA’s approved flexibility request and ESEA Flexibility requirements, incentives, and supports (based on the SEA’s new AMOs, graduation rates, and other measures) are provided to other Title I schools that are not making progress in improving student achievement and narrowing achievement gaps.

Element	Ensure LEAs Implement Teacher Evaluation and Support Systems (3.B of ESEA Flexibility)
Summary and Status of Implementation	Subsequent to final approval of its request, the LDOE made and implemented changes to the teacher evaluation and support system based on feedback received from teachers and administrators during the 2012–2013 school year, which was the first full year of implementation. However, the LDOE has not formally amended its request to reflect these changes, so the approved request is not aligned with the LDOE’s current system for teacher evaluation.
Next Steps	Through its request for extension of its ESEA flexibility request, the LDOE must submit for review an amendment to its approved ESEA flexibility request that accurately describes its current teacher evaluation and support system.

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:

- Subsequent to final approval of its request, the LDOE substituted new activities for many of the activities described in its plan for transitioning to and implementing college- and career-ready standards and discontinued activities described in the approved plan. The LDOE believes the revised activities better ensure implementation of those standards in the 2013–2014 school year, for all schools and students, including students with disabilities and ELs, consistent with its approved ESEA flexibility request. The documentation the LDOE submitted regarding the new activities is consistent with the principles of ESEA flexibility. However, the LDOE has not formally amended its request to reflect the change in approach, so the approved request is not aligned with the LDOE’s current activities. Through its request for extension of its ESEA flexibility request, the LDOE is strongly encouraged to submit for review an amendment to its approved ESEA flexibility request that accurately describes its current plan and activities to transition to college- and career-ready standards.
- The LDOE should improve documentation of how it carries out flexibility-related activities, especially how it implements interventions in focus, priority, and other Title I schools.
- The LDOE should formulate and implement clear methods for monitoring and documenting that appropriate interventions aligned with the ESEA flexibility requirements take place in priority, focus, and other Title I schools.
- The LDOE should pay greater attention to the needs of the EL community. Outreach in this area is weak, both in terms of parents and teachers. The LDOE could benefit from a closer working relationship between SEA staff working on flexibility, the Network Support Teams, and the LDOE’s Title III staff. Formulating a plan focused on addressing the needs of EL students and teachers through flexibility implementation would be beneficial.