

ESEA FLEXIBILITY PART B MONITORING REPORT

DESK MONITORING INFORMATION	
State Educational Agency (SEA)	<i>Minnesota Department of Education (MDE)</i>
Request Approved	<i>November 14, 2011</i>
Request Amended	<i>February 9, 2012</i>
ESEA Flex Monitoring Activity	<i>Part B Desk Monitoring</i>
Monitoring Review Date(s)	<i>September 26 & 27, 2013</i>
Exit Conference	<i>November 20, 2013</i>
Interviews Conducted	<i>Jessie Montano, Deputy Commissioner</i> <i>Steve Dibb, Assistant Commissioner</i> <i>Stephanie Graff, Federal programs</i> <i>John Moorse, Title I</i> <i>Leigh Schleicher, EL, Title III, Title I</i> <i>Jennifer Dugan, Assessment</i> <i>Greg Keith and Tyler Livingston, Educator Evaluation</i> <i>Beth Aune, Standards</i> <i>Barb Troolin and Eric Kloos, Special Education</i> <i>Kara Arzamendia, Data Analytics</i>
U.S. Department of Education (ED) Monitors	<i>Sue Rigney, Shevine Holeman</i>

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:

- The SEA is carrying out its monitoring process and providing feedback to LEAs and schools that is being used to make continuous improvement in implementation of ESEA flexibility activities. Advocates assigned to each priority and focus school meet weekly for training and progress reports shared with an SEA oversight committee.
- The SEA is making sure that parents, including parents of students with disabilities and English learners, understand the implications of the SEA's ESEA flexibility plan for LEAs, schools, teachers, and students (e.g., school identification and/or rating criteria and resulting activities). With a family forum in 2012, the state sought feedback from a diverse group of stakeholders on barriers to parent participation in school activities, and has used the results to identify goals and activities for family engagement.
- Minnesota has implemented a communications protocol to route questions/issues from schools to the appropriate SEA contact. As a result, schools receive a direct response from SEA staff to school question/concern within 48 hours.
- The SEA has implemented a new system to provide data on non-academic risk factors to high schools to support improved graduation rates. Minnesota also participates in the Grad Nation program (America's Promise Alliance).

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 (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)	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)	MDE's Principle 3 guidelines are under review and have not yet been approved.
Principal Evaluation and Support Systems (3.B)	MDE's Principle 3 guidelines are under review and have not yet been approved.

ELEMENTS REQUIRING NEXT STEPS

None.

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.

- Minnesota has made substantial progress in the area of parent engagement. The current program involves offices across the SEA and stakeholder feedback has been an integral part of program planning. We encourage Minnesota to continue its efforts to support parent engagement activities that are sensitive to the cultural values of local parent groups.
- To support its emphasis on the use of data to support continuous improvement, Minnesota has created a data analytics team within the SEA to provide professional development for schools and MDE staff in the strategic use of data to support improved teaching and learning. We encourage Minnesota to provide the staffing and resources sufficient for the data analytics team to satisfy the ongoing need for training in this area.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

None.