

ESEA FLEXIBILITY PART B MONITORING REPORT

MONITORING VISIT INFORMATION	
State Educational Agency (SEA)	<i>Texas Education Agency (TEA)</i>
Request Approved	<i>September 30, 2013</i>
Request Amended	<i>N/A</i>
ESEA Flex Monitoring Activity	<i>Part B (Desk Monitoring)</i>
Monitoring Review Date(s)	<i>January 12 and January 15, 2015</i>
Exit Conference	<i>February 23, 2015</i>
Interviews Conducted	<i>Kalese Hammonds; Sally Partridge; Mark Baxter; Michael Greenwalt; Shannon Housson; Gloria Zyskowski; Criss Cloudt; Monica Martinez; Shelly Ramos; Yolanda Rodriguez; Teresa Smith-Hollis; Lacey Hamilton</i>
U.S. Department of Education (ED) Monitors	<i>Erin Shackel; Michael Wells</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, and Principle 2. The State's Principle 3 guidelines underwent peer review in fall 2014 and as a result additional information that was not collected regarding the State's implementation of Principle 3 during this monitoring event. 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:

- TEA has an exemplary family engagement strategy that includes a conference in which educators and parents attend together to learn with each other and jointly construct action steps.
- Texas’ accountability intervention system (TAIS) was established to provide extra support and resources plus extra monitoring for any local educational agency (LEA) with a school that misses one or more targets in achievement, graduation rate, participation rate or use of alternate assessments. TAIS was originally built three years ago to support the lowest performing schools but now is used in many schools, some districts use it with all schools in the district. Some non-Title I schools identified by the Texas State accountability system as low performing utilize TAIS as well.
- TEA is conducting case studies on some of the high progress/high performance schools so that TEA, its LEAs, and others can learn from these successes.

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
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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)	Not Meeting Expectations

Principle 3

Element	Status
Teacher Evaluation and Support Systems (3.B)	TEA’s guidelines under review
Principal Evaluation and Support Systems (3.B)	TEA’s guidelines under review

ELEMENTS REQUIRING NEXT STEPS

Element	State and Local Report Cards (§1111 of the ESEA; 2.B and Assurance 14)
Summary and Status of Implementation	<p>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> or §1111 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA).</p> <p>TEA’s most recently published State and local report cards did not include the following required components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participation rate by gender and by migrant status • number of recently arrived English learners exempted from the reading/language arts assessment • most recent two-year trend data on State ESEA assessments for reading/language arts, mathematics, and science at each tested grade level for the all students group • the reward school list on the local report card. <p>At the time of Part B monitoring of TEA, mid-January 2015, the above noted required report card elements were missing from Texas’ SY2012–2013 report card. On January 30, 2015, the SY2013–2014 report cards were posted on TEA’s website. Upon review it was noted that the new report cards address two of the four missing components identified above:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participation rate by gender and by migrant status • most recent two-year trend data on State ESEA assessments for

Element	State and Local Report Cards (§1111 of the ESEA; 2.B and Assurance 14)
	<p>reading/language arts, mathematics, and science at each tested grade level for the all students group</p> <p>During the technical comment process, ED became aware that TEA will not include the number of recently arrived English learners exempted from the reading/language arts due to the fact that the test participation procedures for the STAAR assessment program require that recent immigrant LEP students in their first year of enrollment in U.S. schools be assessed on the STAAR Reading/ELA test. Therefore, there are no ELL students who are exempted from the reading/language arts assessments to report on the State and local report cards.</p>
Next Steps	<p>The reward school list is the fourth missing element on the report card. TEA is aware of the requirement to post the reward school list on the local report card and has indicated the reward school list will be incorporated in the release of the SY2014–15 report cards.</p> <p>TEA must continue to include all of the required components on its State and local report cards, in one central location, as specified in the <i>State and Local Report Cards Non-Regulatory Guidance</i>, updated February 8, 2013: (http://www2.ed.gov/programs/titleiparta/state_local_report_card_guidance_2-08-2013.pdf) beginning 2014–2015.</p>

Element	<i>Principal and Teacher Evaluation and Support Systems (3.B)</i>
Summary and Status of Implementation	<p>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>. On October 15 and December 4, 2014, two expert peers reviewed TEA’s Principle 3 guidelines for teacher and principal evaluation and support systems. In a January 7, 2015, letter from ED to TEA, Assistant Secretary Deb Delisle indicated that TEA has not yet adopted guidelines for teacher and principal evaluation and support systems that meet all requirements of ESEA flexibility, nor does it have a process for ensuring that each district in Texas develops, adopts, pilots, and implements teacher and principal evaluation and support systems consistent with those guidelines as required by ESEA flexibility.</p>
Next Steps	<p>As indicated in ED’s January 7, 2015, letter, through the process for renewing the SEA’s ESEA flexibility request, TEA must submit to ED an amended request incorporating final guidelines for teacher and principal evaluation and support systems consistent with all requirements for these systems under Principle 3 of ESEA flexibility and consistent with the renewal requirements pertaining to Principle 3 described in the document titled <i>ESEA Flexibility Guidance for Renewal Process</i> (Nov. 13, 2014).</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.

- As it completes the next step in this report around ensuring the State and local report cards contain all of the required elements, TEA should consider improving the accessibility of the report cards for parents, teachers, and other stakeholders by consolidating the information or display and offering the report card in languages other than English.
- LEAs can learn from the case studies TEA is conducting on the high progress/high performance schools. ED encourages TEA to share the findings with its LEAs as technical assistance with their implementation efforts.
- TEA should consider noting in some fashion on the State and local report cards that no ELL students are exempted from the reading/language arts assessments due to the fact that TEA's test participation procedures for the STAAR assessment program require that recent immigrant LEP students in their first year of enrollment in U.S. schools be assessed on the STAAR Reading/ELA test.