



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

MAR 12 2014

The Honorable Jesús Aguirre
State Superintendent of Education
Office of the State Superintendent of Education
810 First Street, NE, 9th Floor
Washington, DC 20002

Dear Superintendent Aguirre:

On December 3 and 5, 2013, a team from the U.S. Department of Education's (ED's) Office of Elementary and Secondary Education conducted Part B monitoring of the District of Columbia's implementation of its approved Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA) flexibility request. Part B monitoring aims to continue the collaborative relationship that began during the request approval process, provide ED with a deeper understanding of each State educational agency's (SEA's) goals and approaches to implementing ESEA flexibility, and ensure that the SEA has the critical elements of ESEA flexibility in place to continue implementation of its plan.

The review focused on the following ESEA flexibility elements:

- SEA Systems and Processes, including Monitoring, Technical Assistance, Data Collection and Use, and Family & Community Engagement and Outreach
- Transitioning to and Implementing College-and Career-Ready Standards
- Adopting English Language Proficiency Standards
- Developing and Administering High-Quality Assessments
- Developing and Administering Alternate Assessments
- Developing and Administering English Language Proficiency Assessments
- Annually Reporting College-going and College-Credit Accumulation Rates
- Developing and Implementing a State-Based System of Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support
- Reward, Priority, Focus, and Other Title I Schools
- State and Local Report Cards, and
- Teacher and Principal Evaluation and Support Systems

Enclosed is a summary report based upon this review. The report includes highlights of the District of Columbia's implementation of ESEA flexibility and, for each indicator, a snapshot of the District of Columbia's progress in implementing ESEA flexibility. If appropriate, the report also includes "next steps" that were discussed with the SEA during an exit conference conducted on January 8, 2014, to ensure that the District of Columbia implements flexibility consistent with its approved request and the timelines and principles of ESEA flexibility. The District of Columbia should respond to the "next steps" through the ESEA flexibility extension process. This report will be posted on the ESEA

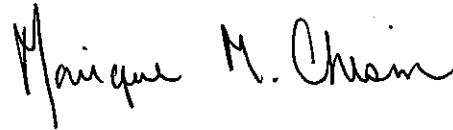
www.ed.gov
400 MARYLAND AVE., SW, WASHINGTON, DC 20202

flexibility website. Additionally, in the coming months ED will issue a comprehensive summary of each SEA's implementation of ESEA flexibility that includes information gathered through the Part B monitoring process and provides more detail about the innovative practices and common challenges that States are facing as they engage in the effective implementation of ESEA flexibility.

I want to thank you and your staff for the hard work you have undertaken to implement ESEA flexibility. If you have any questions or there are ways that ED staff can provide you additional support as you move forward in implementing your ESEA flexibility request, please feel free to reach out to your SEA's ESEA flexibility contact.

I look forward to continuing our work with you as you implement your ESEA flexibility request. Thank you for your commitment to the District of Columbia's children.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Monique M. Chism". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Monique" being larger and more prominent than the last name "Chism".

Monique M. Chism, Ph.D.
Director
Student Achievement and
School Accountability Programs

Enclosure

cc: Iris Bond-Gill, Interim Assistant Superintendent of Elementary and Secondary Education

ESEA FLEXIBILITY PART B MONITORING REPORT

MONITORING VISIT INFORMATION	
State Educational Agency (SEA)	Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE)
Request Approved	July 11, 2012
Request Amended	N/A
ESEA Flex Monitoring Activity	Part B Onsite Monitoring
Monitoring Review Date(s)	December 3 & 5, 2013
Exit Conference	January 8, 2014
Interviews Conducted	Jesús Aguirre, Jose Alvarez, Heidi Beeman, Iris Bond-Gill, Desiree Brown, Jessica Mellen Enos, Sharon Gaskins, Sheryl Hamilton, Swea Hart, Amy Maisterra, Antoinette Mitchell, Jeff Noel, Cedric Thompson, Kortne Edogun, David Hendrie
U.S. Department of Education (ED) Monitors	Jessica Skrebes, Sue Rigney, Ariel Jacobs, Lisa Pagano

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:

- OSSE demonstrated strong collaboration across its Divisions of Elementary and Secondary Education and Specialized Education to address the learning needs of students with disabilities. Using performance data on IDEA and ESEA indicators, OSSE has grouped its LEAs into seven clusters with differentiated technical assistance and professional development needs. The State provides technical assistance to the LEAs in conducting a root cause analysis of LEA-specific factors that are affecting successful outcomes for students with disabilities. The results of the analyses are used to inform the State's technical assistance and professional development activities. OSSE reported that all professional development activities it conducts with LEAs involve a component that addresses the learning needs of students with disabilities.
- OSSE has developed a strong, collaborative relationship with the District of Columbia's Public Charter School Board (PCSB) in an effort to ensure consistent implementation of the components of the District's ESEA flexibility plan. OSSE has instituted bi-weekly meetings with the PCSB Superintendent to facilitate timely communication and decision-making on the support and guidance provided to the District's charter schools.

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)	Not 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)	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

Element	Monitoring (EDGAR 80.40 and 2.G)
Summary and Status of Implementation	OSSE 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> . OSSE committed to ensuring that priority and focus schools implement interventions to improve student achievement and close achievement gaps. However, OSSE's monitoring was insufficient to ensure that these schools were implementing the required interventions in accordance with OSSE's approved ESEA flexibility request.
Next Steps	Through the process for extending OSSE's ESEA flexibility request, OSSE must provide evidence that it is monitoring the principles of ESEA flexibility (including the implementation of interventions in priority and focus schools). Additionally, OSSE must amend its approved ESEA flexibility request to accurately reflect its monitoring process.

Element	Priority Schools (2.D)
Summary and Status of Implementation	OSSE 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 its approved ESEA

Element	Priority Schools (2.D)
	<p>flexibility request, OSSE planned to institute a process to review each non-SIG priority school improvement plan and provide feedback on these plans. Additionally, according to OSSE's approved ESEA flexibility request, the SEA would analyze data and conduct monitoring reviews to assess each school's success in implementing the required interventions, and develop an annual progress report for all priority schools.</p> <p>As of the monitoring visit, OSSE had not implemented these activities. OSSE had a process for tracking implementation of Indistar indicators as part of the school improvement plans at a high level; however, because OSSE did not conduct an initial review of these plans, OSSE did not have a method of verifying that these indicators aligned with the turnaround principles. Additionally, OSSE did not develop an annual progress report for all priority schools. As a result, OSSE was unable to demonstrate that its non-SIG priority schools began implementing all of the turnaround principles in the 2012-2013 school year, consistent with the timeline in its approved ESEA flexibility request.</p>
Next Steps	<p>Through the ESEA flexibility extension process OSSE must submit an amendment with: 1) an updated timeline for three years of full implementation in all priority schools clarifying which schools are implementing all turnaround principles and therefore are in year 1 or 2 of implementation, and which schools have not yet implemented all turnaround principles and therefore would begin full implementation in the 2014-2015 school year; and 2) an updated high quality plan for ensuring that all priority schools are implementing interventions aligned with all turnaround principles no later than the 2014-2015 school year.</p>

Element	Focus Schools (2.E)
Summary and Status of Implementation	<p>OSSE 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>. OSSE has developed a strong review process for examining focus schools' proposed interventions and the relationships between these interventions and the reasons for identification. However, OSSE did not require focus schools to submit these plans until December 2012, and OSSE did not approve these plans until Spring 2013. Accordingly, OSSE's process does not ensure that focus schools begin interventions no later than the end of the first semester of the first year in which these schools are identified.</p>
Next Steps	<p>Through the process of extending OSSE's ESEA flexibility request, OSSE must submit a high-quality plan that describes OSSE's process for ensuring that all focus schools implement interventions targeting the reason for identification no later than the end of the first semester of the first year in which these schools are identified. Additionally, OSSE must amend its approved ESEA flexibility request to reflect this process.</p>

Element	Other Title I Schools (2.F)
Summary and Status of Implementation	OSSE 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> . Specifically, OSSE's approved ESEA flexibility request states that LEAs with schools that did not meet AMOs for two consecutive years will reserve 20 percent of the LEA's Title I funds to implement interventions and supports necessary to improve student achievement. OSSE did not require DCPS to reserve 20 percent of its Title I funds to support these schools, choosing instead to instruct DCPS to direct these funds to priority and focus schools.
Next Steps	Through the ESEA flexibility extension process OSSE will amend its request to accurately reflect the interventions and supports it is providing to all Title I schools that fail to meet the same AMO for two consecutive years, including those in DCPS.

Element	State and Local Report Cards (§1111 of the ESEA) (2.B and Assurance 14 of ESEA Flexibility)
Summary and Status of Implementation	<p>OSSE is required to report annually on its State report card, and ensure that LEAs annually report on their local report cards, all required information. OSSE 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>.</p> <p>OSSE provided electronic copies of its 2012-2013 State report card, which it made publicly available through its learnDC.org website. However, this report card does not address all required elements. Specifically, the 2012-2013 State Report card does not include: the number of recently arrived English Learner students exempt from the reading/language arts assessment; student achievement data for science assessments; the comparison between actual achievement and OSSE's AMOs in reading/language arts and mathematics; whether the AMOs were met or not met; the graduation rate goal or target, and whether the goal or target was met or not met; the targets for OSSE's other academic indicator, whether these targets were met or not met; the names or priority, focus, and reward schools; the professional qualifications of all elementary and secondary school teachers in the State; the percentage of elementary and secondary school teachers with emergency or provisional credentials; or the total number of students earning a regular high school diploma.</p> <p>OSSE also provided electronic copies of its 2012-2013 local report cards, which are missing required elements. Specifically, the local report cards do not include: the number of recently arrived English Learner students exempted from the reading/language arts assessment; student achievement data for science assessments; percentage of each achievement level in the State on State NAEP in reading and mathematics for grades 4 and 8; participation rates for students with disabilities in the State on State NAEP; annual achievement against AMOs</p>

Element	State and Local Report Cards (§1111 of the ESEA) (2.B and Assurance 14 of ESEA Flexibility)
	for reading/language arts and mathematics; whether the AMOs were met or not met; the graduation rate goal or annual target, and whether the goal or target was met or not met, the targets for OSSE's other academic indicator and whether these targets were met or not met; LEA other academic indicator compared with the State average for the indicator; the names of schools identified as reward, priority or focus schools; the professional qualifications of all elementary and secondary school teachers in the State; the percentage of all elementary and secondary school teachers with emergency or provisional credentials; and the percentage of classes in core academic subjects not taught by highly qualified teachers.
Next Steps	Through the ESEA flexibility extension process, OSSE will submit a plan for ensuring that its State and local report cards are consistent with ED's February 8, 2013 report card guidance and will submit evidence that it has updated its template for 2013-2014 State and local report cards.

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.

- OSSE should consider further revising its consolidated application to align with its ESEA flexibility request, and to encourage LEAs to effectively leverage all funding sources to improve student achievement.
- OSSE should develop a tracking system to better understand who is attending the SEA's professional development sessions, and use this information to target outreach efforts and to provide support to teachers throughout the State.