

ESEA FLEXIBILITY PART B MONITORING REPORT

MONITORING VISIT INFORMATION	
State Educational Agency (SEA)	Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (MDESE)
Request Approved	June 29, 2012
Request Amended	N/A
ESEA Flex Monitoring Activity	Part B Desk Monitoring
Monitoring Review Date(s)	September 25-26, 2013
Exit Conference	December 19, 2013
Interviews Conducted	MDESE Staff: Stephen Barr, Shawn Cockrum, Dennis Cooper, Julie Cowell, Leigh Ann Grant-Engle, Sharon Helwig, Melissa Hensley, Paul Katnik, Susan Newbold, Craig Rector, Jocelyn Strand, Tim Wittmann, Margie Vandeven
U.S. Department of Education (ED) Monitors	Dave English, Francisco Lopez

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.

- MDESE has implemented school-based data teams of teachers of core subjects and SEA staff at all priority and focus schools that develop school accountability plans and meet regularly to analyze and discuss student progress in English language arts (ELA) and math, as measured by performance on formative assessments, and share best instructional practices.
- MDESE partnered with the National Institute for School Leadership to launch the Missouri Leadership for Excellence, Achievement and Development program which focuses on enhancing leadership skills of principals and district staff working in focus schools. Training occurs from January 2013 - July 2014 and focuses on developing systemic processes for sustained school improvement, empowering instructional leadership teams, building collaborative learning and decision-making cultures and coaching teachers on the use of outcome data to drive instructional improvements.
- MDESE posted model curricula and sample formative assessments for all K-12 grade levels in math and ELA to support educators and students with the transition to college- and career-ready (CCR) standards.

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)	Not 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)	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)	Under review.
Principal Evaluation and Support Systems (3.B)	

ELEMENTS REQUIRING NEXT STEPS

Element	Monitoring
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> and the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) 80.40.</p> <p>MDESE has a process for monitoring the implementation of interventions in priority and focus schools (Principle 2); however, MDESE did not provide evidence that it has processes for monitoring the implementation of CCR standards (Principle 1) or the implementation of teacher and leader evaluation systems (Principle 3).</p> <p>To support the implementation of college- and career-ready standards, the SEA conducted a voluntary survey of leaders and teachers in 2013 to inform</p>

Element	<i>Monitoring</i>
	<p>implementation. While the survey is an initial step, MDESE will need to expand or develop a process that allows the SEA to monitor the implementation of CCR standards across all districts.</p> <p>MDESE requires local educational agencies (LEAs) to submit an annual checklist addressing factors in the LEA's implementation of teacher and principal evaluation systems. However, the check list does not provide sufficient information to enable the SEA to determine whether LEAs are implementing teacher and principal evaluations systems that are consistent with ESEA flexibility.</p>
Next Steps	<p>As part of its ESEA flexibility extension request MDESE must submit an amendment that describes the process it will use to monitor implementation of CCR standard and how it will monitoring implementation of teacher and principal evaluation and support systems in 2013-2014 and beyond using a process that is sufficiently robust to enable them to make determinations about LEA implementation consistent with the requirements of ESEA flexibility.</p>

Element	<i>Transition to and Implement College- and Career-Ready Standards</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>, which states that "...an SEA must demonstrate that it has college- and career-ready expectations for all students in the State by adopting college- and career-ready standards in at least reading/language arts and mathematics, [and] transitioning to and implementing such standards Statewide for all students and schools...", by the 2013-2014 school year.</p> <p>MDESE did not provide evidence that it communicated the required timeline for adoption of ELA CCR standards (2013-2014 school year for all students) to its LEAs. Various guidance materials, including documents posted to the State's website, indicate that "full implementation" of CCR standards is required by the 2014-2015 school year, without further explanation regarding the requirement to teach to ELA standards in classrooms by 2013-2014. Without evidence of formal communication of or guidance regarding this timeline to LEAs by the SEA, it is unclear how LEAs will understand the requirement to implement all standards by the 2013-2014 school year.</p>
Next Steps	

Element	<i>Transition to and Implement College- and Career-Ready Standards</i>
	As part of its ESEA flexibility extension request, the SEA will provide evidence that it has communicated to all LEAs the requirement, under ESEA flexibility, that all schools have transitioned to and are implementing CCR standards Statewide for all students by the 2013-2014 school year.

Element	<i>Focus Schools</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>, which states that SEAs must work to close achievement gaps by “ensuring that each LEA implements interventions...in each of these [focus] schools based on reviews of the specific academic needs of the school and its students.”</p> <p>MDESE has not implemented a monitoring process of sufficient quality to ensure that improvement activities selected to address reasons for identification of focus schools are implemented. A sample of LEA accountability plans and implementation status reports submitted by MDESE are not adequately aligned with each other; specifically, in a majority of the submitted implementation status reports (i.e., “running records”) implementation status progress notes do not consistently address the respective action steps or measures of implementation status identified in accountability plans. Documentation of implementation status does not include feedback regarding adjustments needed to accountability plans (e.g., adjustments to timelines) based on monitoring results.</p>
Next Steps	As part of its ESEA flexibility extension request, MDESE will submit a high-quality plan for adjusting its school improvement processes to facilitate the determination of whether its focus schools are implementing selected improvement activities and interventions aligned to the reason for focus school identification.

Element	<i>Other Title I Schools</i>
Summary and Status of Implementation	The SEA has not demonstrated that this element has been carried out consistent with the requirements of ESEA flexibility. SEAs are required to provide incentives and supports to ensure continuous improvement in all other Title I schools that, based on the SEA’s new annual measurable objectives (AMO) for proficiency and graduation rate targets approved in its accountability workbook, are not making progress in improving student achievement and narrowing achievement gaps. SEAs and LEAs must ensure that no Title I school is permitted to miss proficiency or graduation rate AMOs or targets for a number

Element	<i>Other Title I Schools</i>
	<p>of years for one or more ESEA subgroups without identification for and implementation of interventions or specific strategies designed to improve the performance of those subgroups.</p> <p>MDESE was originally approved to use “risk factors” to identify other Title I schools, pending its determination of a specific identification methodology.</p> <p>MDESE has proposed to identify two different categories of other Title I schools: all Title I high schools with a graduation rate below 72 percent for three consecutive years and all Title I schools that meet the following criteria: (1) ranking among the lowest five percent of all non-priority, non-focus Title I schools in overall proficiency and (2) having at least two “risk factors”, defined as a subgroup ranking among the lowest 10 percent of all schools based on proficiency rate or graduation rate. Thus, those schools performing in the highest 95 percent of all Title I schools based on overall proficiency may be excluded from identification if only a single subgroup is underperforming. Furthermore, high schools with graduation rates above 72 percent but not meeting escalating graduation rate targets above 72 percent may not be identified.</p>
Next Steps	<p>As part of its ESEA flexibility request, MDESE must submit an amendment to its approved ESEA flexibility request to require that, moving forward, all non-priority, non-focus Title I schools, regardless of proficiency and graduation rates of the all students group, that do not meet a particular ESEA subgroup’s proficiency AMO or graduation rate target, as approved in its accountability workbook, over a number of years, must implement interventions targeted at the subgroup(s).</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.

- MDESE should increase accessibility of resources on the SEA’s website to support teachers of students with disabilities and English Learners in the transition to CCR standards; for example, post training materials on instructional shifts aligned with Universal Design for Learning principles on the “Special Education Information” section of SEA’s website and feature related training videos more prominently
- MDESE should create targeted guidance for teachers to support differentiated instruction for special populations, specific to grade level and subject, to supplement model curricula posted to its website

- MDESE should revise educator guidance materials regarding the data team process, such as those posted to the SEA website, to specifically direct data teams to analyze disaggregated ESEA subgroup data (not only data describing combined subgroups), in order to ensure that LEAs are meeting expectations regarding intervention selection in focus schools
- MDESE should standardize, document and disseminate, to LEAs and Area Supervisors, monitoring protocols for tracking implementation status of interventions in focus schools, including clarification on the utilization of classroom observation and interviews with school leadership
- MDESE should adjust and standardize templates for monitoring reports (e.g., “running records”) to facilitate closer alignment of implementation action steps, measures of implementation status, and implementation status data, to ensure that monitoring reports explicitly address interventions in response to reasons for identification of focus schools
- MDESE should conduct capacity-building exercises for Area Supervisors regarding the effective use of SIP resources in focus schools, particularly around the accurate completion and updating of accountability plans and running records, to ensure accurate tracking of implementation status of planned improvement activities
- MDESE should prioritize the development of systems to ensure the annual reporting of college-credit accumulation rates, beginning in the 2014-2015 school year, consistent with ESEA flexibility requirements
- MDESE should prioritize planning to support the implementation, during the 2014-2015 school year, of additional recognition and practice-sharing activities for all rewards schools, as described in approved ESEA flexibility request