



2021-2022 Random Validation Handbook for Unsafe School Choice Option USCO Policy

Federal Program Compliance Division

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Introduction

This Handbook is intended to assist LEAs in completing the 2021-2022 Random Validation process for the **Unsafe School Choice Option - USCO Policy**. It should be used in conjunction with the 2021-2022 Random Validation Submission Packet for the same requirement.

Although these documents have been prepared for use by those LEAs that are selected to participate in the 2021-2022 Random Validation, LEAs that are not selected may still find them useful as tools for conducting a self-check, to ascertain their own compliance status and to determine where improvements may be made.

The Submission Packets and the Handbooks are available on the Federal Program Compliance Division’s web page under “Division Resources.”

Unsafe School Choice Option

Unsafe School Choice Option Statutory Requirement	USCO Policy
ESSA Statutory Citation and Language	<p>The LEA, as a condition of receiving funds under the Every Student Succeeds Act, must establish and implement a policy requiring that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a student attending a persistently dangerous public elementary school or secondary school (as determined by the Texas Education Agency), or • a student who becomes a victim of a violent criminal offense, while in or on the grounds of a public elementary or secondary school that the student attends, <p>is offered and allowed to attend a safe public elementary or secondary school within the local educational agency, including a public charter school.</p> <p>Note: If another campus is not available within the LEA, the policy should provide for other types of services to ensure the safety of the student. In addition, the LEA is encouraged to attempt to secure a cooperative agreement with another LEA to accept transfers when reasonable and appropriate. [Section 8532]</p>
ESSA Program-Specific Provisions & Assurances	ESSA Provisions and Assurances, Section R

	<p>The local educational agency certifies that it shall establish and implement a policy requiring that a student attending a persistently dangerous public elementary school or secondary school, as determined by TEA, or who becomes a victim of a violent criminal offense, while in or on the grounds of a public elementary or secondary school that the student attends, be allowed to attend a safe public elementary or secondary school within the local educational agency, including a public charter school [Section 8532].</p>
<p>Compliance Report— Program Compliance Self- Check</p>	<p>1. The LEA, as a condition of receiving funds under the Every Student Succeeds Act, established and implemented a policy requiring that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a student attending a persistently dangerous public elementary school or secondary school (as determined by the Texas Education Agency), or • a student who becomes a victim of a violent criminal offense, while in or on the grounds of a public elementary or secondary school that the student attends, <p>is offered and allowed to attend a safe public elementary or secondary school within the local educational agency, including a public charter school.</p> <p>Note: If another campus is not available within the LEA, the policy should provide for other types of services to ensure the safety of the student. In addition, the LEA is encouraged to attempt to secure a cooperative agreement with another LEA to accept transfers when reasonable and appropriate. [Section 8532]</p> <p>2. The LEA notified parents that their student(s) may transfer and attend a safe public elementary or secondary school within the local educational agency, including a public charter school, for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students who are enrolled in a persistently dangerous school (Notification was made within 14 calendar days of notification from TEA) • Students who are victims of a violent criminal action (Notification was made within 14 calendar days of the incident.)

Documenting overall compliance for a program requirement may require several forms of documentation to be maintained locally and available upon request by TEA and/or an auditor. To ensure overall compliance with program requirements, LEAs should refer to the Program Guide and/or other program-related resources that reference the multiple forms of documentation required to be maintained locally. The documentation requested for submission during the random validation process may not include all forms of documentation that are required to be maintained locally.

Please include the following selected documentation with the completed submission packet in order to demonstrate compliance with the program requirement described above:

Type of Selected Documentation Required	Description of Acceptable Documentation
USCO Policy	<p>Copy of policy approved as per LEA policies and procedures. The policy should include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timelines and procedures under which parents are offered transfers generally within 14 calendar days of the incident. • Timelines and procedures for processing and approving transfer requests within 14 calendar days of the date the request for transfer is made known to the LEA. • A description of the duration for which a transfer is approved and procedures for renewal of a transfer. • A statement of assurance that collection and maintenance of victim data information (for example, incident date, incident number, and identity of perpetrator, if known) will be maintained for a minimum of five years for auditing and validation monitoring purposes. • A statement of assurance that the LEA will collect and maintain documentation to show that victims’ parents were offered the USCO transfer option. • A statement of assurance that documentation will be maintained reflecting when a transfer was requested and completed.

Note:

1. Validation requirements will receive a designation of “Met Requirement” or “Improvement Needed” during the validation review.

Instructions for Completing Submission Packet

Use the 2021-2022 Validation Checklist in the Submission Packet to review the LEA's compliance with the **Unsafe School Choice Option - USCO Policy** documentation requirement. In the left-hand column write the page number where the requirement(s) is addressed in the LEA's documentation. Be as specific as possible in order to facilitate the auditor's review process.

Please leave the two right-hand columns blank, as these will be completed by TEA staff during their review of the documentation submitted.

Do not submit extraneous documentation.

Instructions for Uploading Documentation

Follow these steps to submit your Random Validation Submission Packet and supporting documentation, as applicable, through the secure *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Reports* application via TEAL.

1. Complete the *2021-2022 Random Validation Submission Packet* for Unsafe School Choice Option - USCO Policy as a Word file (**Response Document**).
2. Assemble the requested documentation material into **a separate PDF file** (**Supporting Document**):
 - a. Required documentation as described in the 2021-2022 Random Validation Handbook for Unsafe School Choice Option - USCO Policy.

Note: When compiling the pdf file for submission, please ensure that—

- the pages are not compressed or reduced in size;
- any landscape pages are oriented with their right-hand edge at the top;
- the documentation pages included are numbered consecutively in the lower right corner. These page numbers, which may be hand-written if that is most convenient, should be the ones referenced in the left-hand column of this guidance document.

3. Log on to the TEA Login ([TEAL](#)).
4. Select *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Reports* application.
5. Select "Upload Response Documents" tab.

Submission of the *2021-2022 Random Validation Submission Packet* for Unsafe School Choice Option - USCO Policy

From the dropdown menus:

6. Response Template Title: Select "Unsafe School Choice Option - USCO Policy."

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7. School Year: Select “2021-2022.”
8. Response Doc Type: Select “**Response Document.**”
9. Click “Choose File” to browse for the file location on your computer. **(Please upload the Word document and not a pdf of the document.)**
10. Click “Upload Document” button.

(Sample Screen Shots of ESSA Reports)

ESSA Reports

View Reports & ISD Responses | Download Response Templates | **Upload Response Documents**

Response Template Title: Unsafe School Choice Option – USCO Policy

School Year: 2021-2022

Response Doc Type: Response Document

Choose File No file chosen

Upload Document

Note: Maximum allowable file size is 10 MB.

Submission of the 2021-2022 Unsafe School Choice Option - USCO Policy Documentation

From the dropdown menus:

11. Repeat steps 4-7 referenced above.
12. Response Doc Type: Select “**Supporting Document.**”
13. Click “Choose File” to browse for the file location on your computer. **(Please upload a pdf document.)**
14. Click “Upload Document” button.

(Sample Screen Shots of ESSA Reports)

ESSA Reports

View Reports & ISD Responses | Download Response Templates | **Upload Response Documents**

Response Template Title: Unsafe School Choice Option – USCO Policy

School Year: 2021-2022

Response Doc Type: Supporting Document

Choose File No file chosen

Upload Document

Note: Maximum allowable file size is 10 MB.

Unsafe School Choice Option - USCO Policy Random Validation Timeline

Task	Due Date
Email initial notification to LEA administrator regarding program selection. ESC will be copied.	December 1, 2021
ESC staff will contact LEA to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> confirm receipt of initial notice; confirm access to ESSA Reports on TEAL for appropriate staff; offer technical assistance. 	Contact within 3 business days after notification to LEA. Technical assistance through January 13, 2022
Deadline to upload documentation on ESSA Reports.	January 14, 2022
TEA program staff complete preliminary reviews.	March 11, 2022
TEA contacts ESC regarding LEAs that receive “Improvement Needed” status for ESC review and comment before TEA notifies LEAs.	March 12–April 8, 2022
Notification to LEA administrator of validation results for. ESCs will be copied.	April 26, 2022
ESC technical assistance deadline if LEA receives “Improvement Needed” status regarding any items.	September 29, 2022
ESC provides documentation on ESSA Reports that technical assistance was offered/provided.	September 29, 2022
If the LEA receives “Improvement Needed” status on a program requirement, the LEA will be required to <u>submit documentation for 2022-2023 for the same requirement</u> . The documentation must be uploaded on ESSA Reports.	September 30, 2022