



# **2023-2024 Random Validation Handbook for Unsafe School Choice Option (USCO) USCO Policy**

**Federal Program Compliance Division**

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V 1.0 (07/06/2023)

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## Introduction

This Handbook is intended to assist LEAs in completing the 2023-2024 Random Validation process for the **USCO Policy**.

Although this document has been prepared for use by those LEAs that are selected to participate in the 2023-2024 Random Validation, LEAs that are not selected may still find the Handbooks useful as tools for conducting a self-check, to ascertain their own compliance status and to determine where improvements may be made.

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

## Unsafe School Choice Option (USCO) Random Validation Selected Requirement

<b>ESSA Statutory Requirement</b>	<b>USCO Policy</b>
<b>ESSA Statutory Citation and Language</b>	(Section 8532) Each State receiving funds under this Act shall establish and implement a statewide policy requiring that a student attending a persistently dangerous public elementary school, as determined by the State in consultation with a representative sample of local educational agencies, or who becomes a victim of a violent criminal offense, as determined by State law, while in or on the grounds of a public elementary school or secondary school that the student attends, be allowed to attend a safe public elementary school or secondary school within the local educational agency, including a public charter school.
<b>ESSA Program-Specific Provisions &amp; Assurances</b>	ESSA Provisions and Assurance, Item R  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].
<b>Compliance Report Program Compliance Self-Check Item</b>	Program Coordination/Integration (1)  The LEA, as a condition of receiving funds under the Every Student Succeeds Act, established and implements a policy requiring that a student who—

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• attends a persistently dangerous public elementary school or secondary school (as determined by the Texas Education Agency); or</li> <li>• 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—</li> </ul> <p>be 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.</p> <p>[Section 8532]</p>
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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 referenced in the table below in order to demonstrate compliance with the program requirement described above. TEA will utilize the following table to determine if the LEA submitted sufficient documentation to support LEA compliance. LEAs that submit sufficient documentation to support LEA compliance will be assigned a “Met Requirement” status for the requirement. LEAs that submit insufficient documentation will be assigned an “Improvement Needed” status for the requirement. LEAs with an “Improvement Needed” status will be provided technical assistance by their regional education service center (ESC). These LEAs will be required to resubmit documentation for the 2024–2025 school year by September 30, 2024, to ensure the program requirements are implemented correctly.

Type of Selected Documentation Required	Description of Acceptable Documentation
<p><b>1.1 Copy of policy approved as per LEA policies and procedures</b></p>	<p>Copy of policy approved as per LEA policies and procedures. The policy should include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Timelines and procedures under which parents are offered transfers generally within 14 calendar days of the incident.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• A description of the duration for which a transfer is approved and procedures for renewal of a transfer.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• A statement of assurance that the LEA will collect and maintain documentation to show that victims’ parents were offered the USCO transfer option.</li> <li>• A statement of assurance that documentation will be maintained reflecting when a transfer was requested and completed.</li> </ul>
<p><b>1.2 Documentation that any student who has been affected by either of the circumstances mentioned in the USCO Policy requirements has been offered the opportunity to transfer (If applicable)</b></p>	<p>Documentation that any student who has been affected by either of the circumstances mentioned in the USCO Policy requirements has been offered the opportunity to transfer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copy of written notification procedure;</li> <li>• Letters to parents of any student who has been affected by either of these circumstances, documenting the offer of the opportunity to transfer. <b>If not applicable</b>, the LEA assures that the following reason applies. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The LEA had no campuses identified as Persistently Dangerous schools and the LEA had no students who were victims of violent crime. <b>A statement including this language will suffice as documentation.</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## Instructions for Assembling Documentation

1. Assemble the requested material into **one PDF file**.
  - a. Ensure that the PDF file contains the required documentation as described in the 2023-2024 Unsafe School Choice Option (USCO) Random Validation Handbook.
  - b. Do not submit extraneous documentation.
  - c. 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 online WorkApp Details Form.

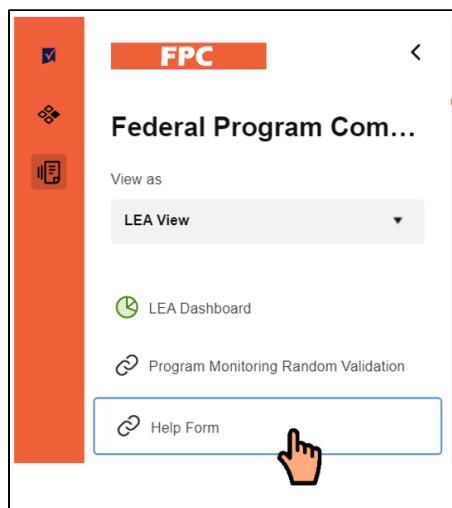
## Instructions for Submitting Documentation

### WorkApp System Access

Please note that the LEA staff submitting documentation will need access to the Department of Grant Compliance and Administration WorkApp System.

Currently, the superintendent, chief financial officer, and federal program director listed in AskTED have been given access to the system. To add or change the individuals with access to the system, **someone with existing access** must request access for the new individual via the Help Form in the Federal Program Compliance Program Monitoring Random Validations WorkApp as referenced below. The additional staff to be added to the system must agree to certain security requirements.

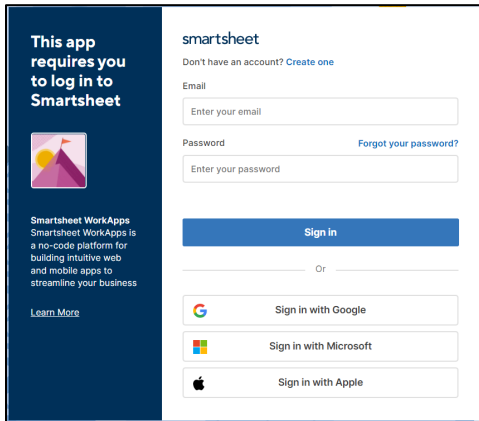
NOTE: Each LEA is only guaranteed a certain number of access accounts at this time.



## Submitting Documentation

Please note that some of the screen captures referenced in the steps below will show information that is specific to a Title I, Part A program requirement. When you log in to the system, the information referenced will include the information specific to the program and requirement for which your LEA was selected to submit documentation.

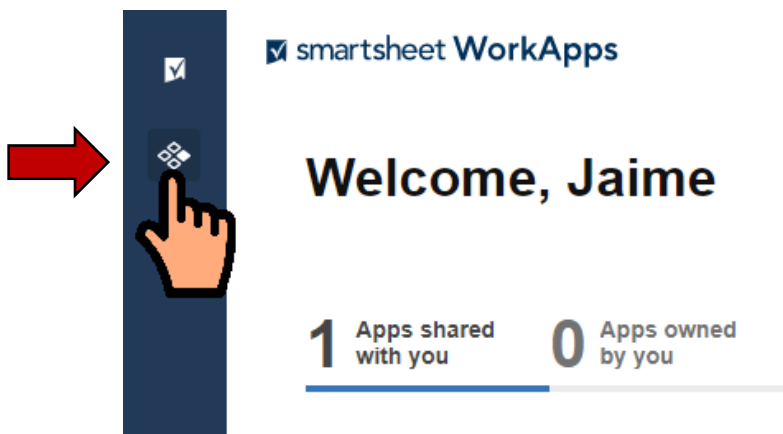
1. Login to the Department of Grant Compliance and Administration WorkApp System: <https://workapps.smartsheet.com/>.



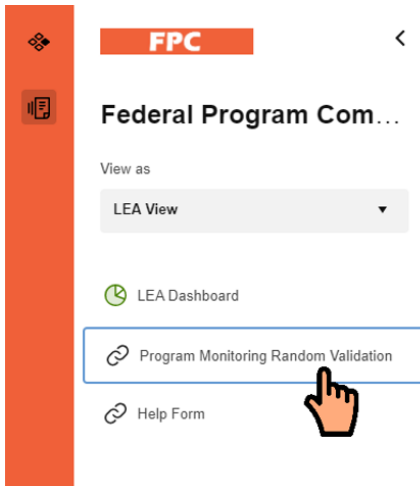
2. Click on the Federal Program Compliance Division WorkApp Tile.



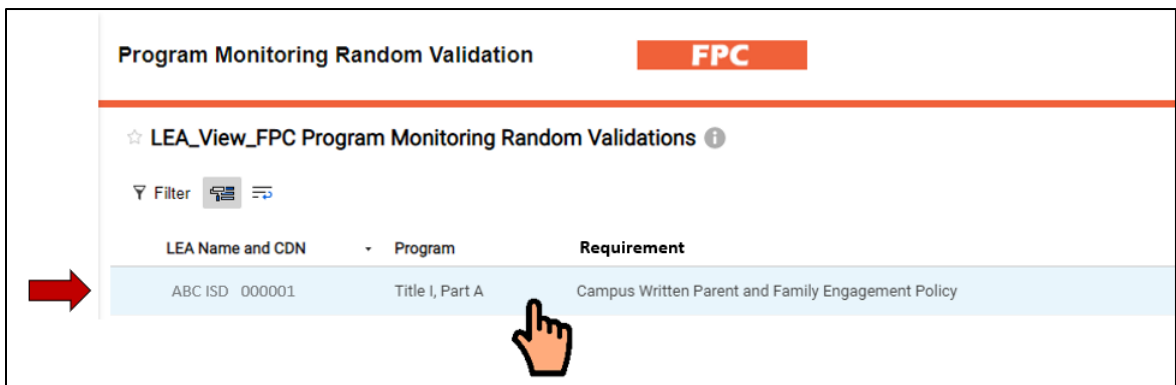
Tip: If the FPC WorkApp Tile is not showing, click on the menu icon to display all the Apps.



3. Click on the Program Monitoring Random Validation Link.



4. Click on the Random Validation Line to access the Details Form – Data & Attachments Tabs.





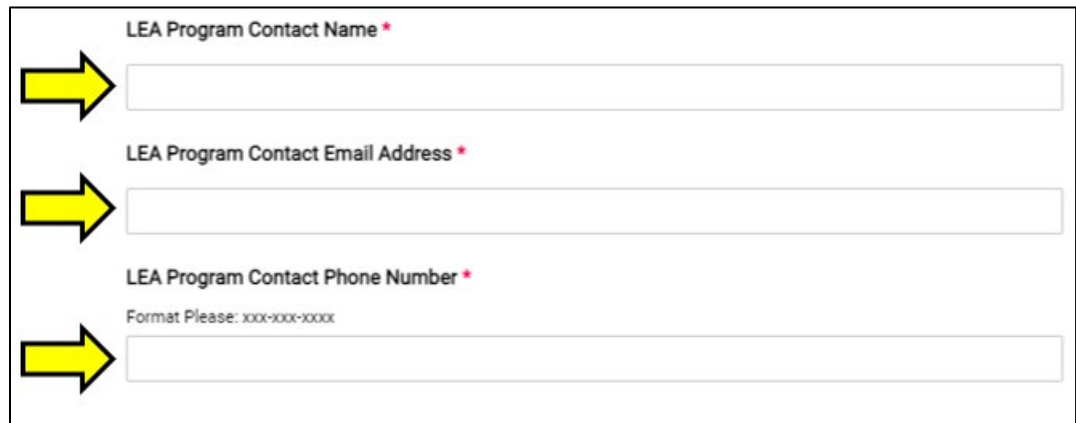
5. Complete the Details Form – Data Tab.

- a. Type the page number(s) where the requirement(s) is addressed in the LEA’s documentation to be submitted in the “Requested Documentation Page Number(s)” field(s). Be as specific as possible in order to facilitate the auditor’s review process. For example, if relevant items appear on pages 2, 4, and 5, please list pages 2, 4, and 5, rather than pages 1-5 in the “Requested Documentation Page Number(s)” field. **These fields are required.**

The screenshot shows a 'Details' form with the following sections:

- LEA Name and CDN:** Input field containing 'ABC ISD 000001'.
- Program:** Input field containing 'Title I, Part A'.
- Requirement:** Dropdown menu containing 'Campus Written Parent and Family Engagement Policy'.
- Requested Documentation 1:**
  - Section header: Requested Documentation 1
  - Text: Page Number(s) Required.
  - Text: The relevant page(s) of the Campus Written Parent and Family Engagement (PFE) Policy that references the description of the method(s) of policy distribution and the language(s) in which the policy was distributed to parents and family members of participating students.
  - Section header: Requested Documentation 1 Page Number(s)
  - Text: Page Number(s) Required.
  - Input field: Empty, with a yellow arrow pointing to it from the left.
- Requested Documentation 2:**
  - Section header: Requested Documentation 2
  - Text: Page Number(s) Required.
  - Text: Evidence of policy distribution to parents and family members of participating students.
  - Section header: Requested Documentation 2 Page Number(s)
  - Text: Page Number(s) Required.
  - Input field: Empty, with a yellow arrow pointing to it from the left.

- b. Scroll down to access the rest of the form. Complete the remaining fields with the information for the LEA Program Contact. The LEA Program Contact should be the person that is most familiar with the documentation submitted. This is the person that TEA will contact if additional documentation is needed and/or if clarification is needed on documentation submitted. **\*The following fields are required.**
- i. Type the name of the LEA Program Contact in the “LEA Program Contact” field.
  - ii. Type the email address of the LEA Program Contact in the “LEA Program Contact Email Address” field.
  - iii. Type the phone number of the LEA Program Contact in the “LEA Program Contact Phone #” field. Please use the following format: ###-###-####.



A screenshot of a form section with three input fields. Each field is preceded by a yellow arrow pointing to the right. The first field is labeled "LEA Program Contact Name \*". The second field is labeled "LEA Program Contact Email Address \*". The third field is labeled "LEA Program Contact Phone Number \*" and includes the text "Format Please: xxx-xxx-xxxx" below it.

- c. Add LEA Comments. This section is optional if the LEA would like to provide additional information that will be helpful for the reviewer.



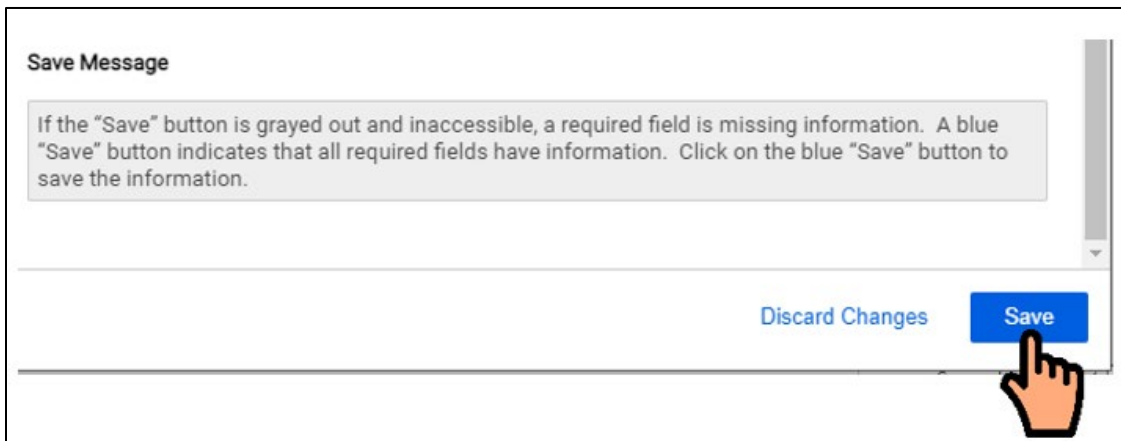
A screenshot of a text area labeled "LEA Comment". The text area is empty and has a thin border.

- d. Select your LEA’s Submission Status from the following options available: In Process (Saved data/will complete later) or Submission Complete (Data entered and documentation attached). **\*Selecting a status is required. If the first option remains selected after the submission due date, your submission is not considered complete, and TEA will contact you.**



A screenshot of a dropdown menu labeled "LEA Submission Status \*". The dropdown is currently empty. A hand icon is pointing to the dropdown arrow on the right side of the field.

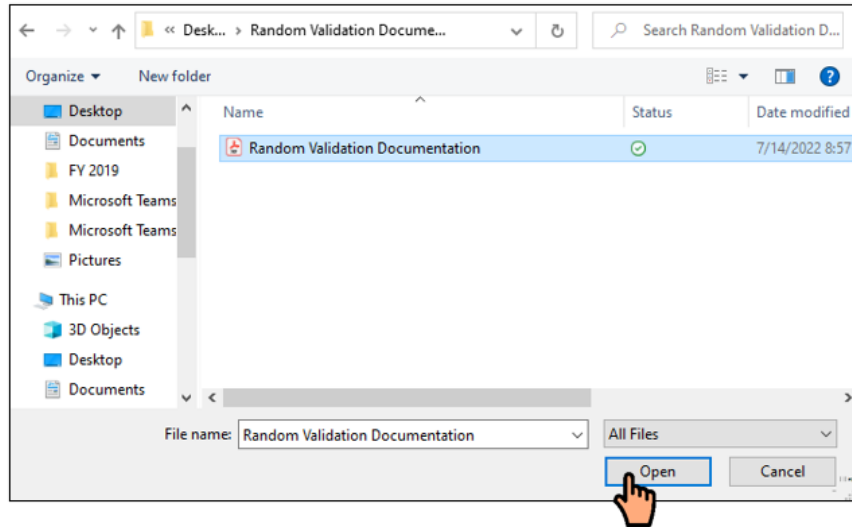
6. Click “Save” in the bottom right-hand corner of the Details Form – Data Tab. This will save the information that was typed in the details form under the data tab (documentation page numbers, LEA Contact information, and LEA Comments, if applicable). **This step is required.**



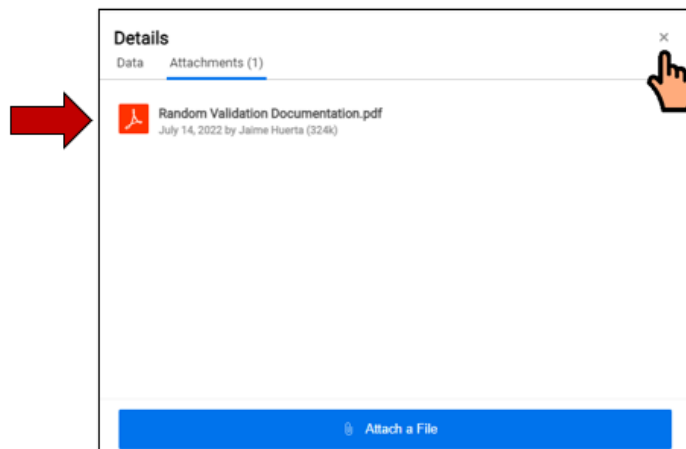
7. Attach the requested documentation in pdf file format. All documentation should be attached as a single file. **Attaching documentation is required.**
  - a. To attach the PDF file containing the LEA’s documentation, click on the “Attachments” Tab on the Details Form; then click on the “Attach a File” button located at the bottom of the Details Form – Attachments Tab.




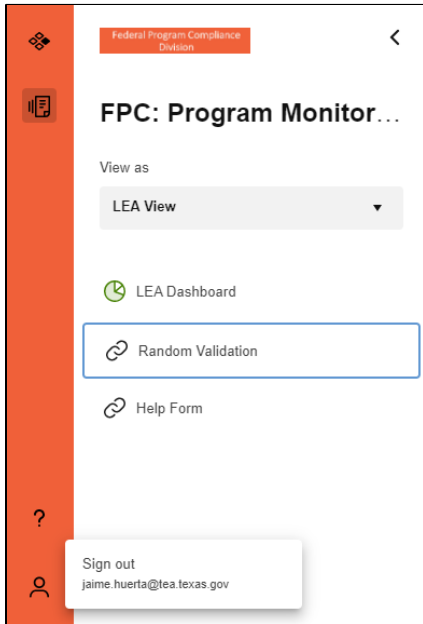
- b. Browse your computer and locate the documentation file to be attached; select the file; the File Name will appear in your file browser; click on “Open;” confirm that the file is listed as an attachment in the Details Form – Attachments Tab.



- c. Confirm that the document you are attaching is listed as an Attachment. Click on the “x” at the top right-hand corner to close the Details Form.



8. Sign out of the Department of Grant Compliance and Administration WorkApp System by clicking on the  icon located in the bottom left-hand corner of the window and selecting "Sign out."



## Phase 2 Random Validation Timeline

Task	Due Date
Federal Program Compliance (FPC) Random Validation (RV) WorkApp LEA contacts receive initial notification regarding program selection. Education Service Center (ESC) FPC RV WorkApp Contacts will be copied.	<b>November 28, 2023</b>
ESC staff will contact LEA to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• confirm receipt of initial notice;</li> <li>• confirm access to FPC RV WorkApp for appropriate staff;</li> <li>• offer technical assistance.</li> </ul>	Contact within 1 business day after initial notification to LEA. Technical assistance through <b>December 12, 2023</b>
<b>Deadline to submit documentation via the FPC Random Validation WorkApp System.</b>	<b>December 12, 2023</b>
TEA program staff complete preliminary reviews.	<b>February 5, 2024</b>
TEA contacts ESC regarding LEAs that receive “Improvement Needed” status for ESC review and comment before TEA notifies LEAs.	<b>February 15, 2024 – March 1, 2024</b>
FPC RV WorkApp LEA contacts receive notification of validation results. ESC FPC RV WorkApp Contacts will be copied.	<b>March 18, 2024</b>
ESC technical assistance deadline if LEA receives “Improvement Needed” status regarding any items.	<b>September 30, 2024</b>
ESC submits documentation in the FPC RV WorkApp System that technical assistance was offered/provided.	<b>September 30, 2024</b>
If the LEA receives “Improvement Needed” status on a program requirement, the LEA will be required to <u>submit documentation for 2024-2025 for the same requirement.</u> The documentation must be submitted in the FPC RV WorkApp System.	<b>September 30, 2024</b>