

MINUTES

DATE: April 13, 2023

9:00 a.m.

LOCATION: Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Members Present

Lisette Allen, Alex Dominguez, Stephanie Dominique, Pamela Evans, Brenda Faz-Villarreal, Marilyn Harris, Lauren Hodge, Carrie Matthews, Cris Munoz, Alexis Neumann, Sharon Sanchez

Members Absent

Estella Anzualda, Lauren Colangelo, Melody Collier, Meredith Dodd, Mia Hall, Ellie Ross, Mary Thomas

Texas Education Agency (TEA) Staff Present

Nick Davis, Didi Garcia, Cory Green, Jaime Huerta, Matt Lashlee, Gerardo Ramirez, Vivian Smyrl, Anita Villarreal

Call to Order

9:00 a.m. Jaime Huerta reviewed the virtual meeting norms and Alex Dominguez called the meeting to order.

Welcome

Welcome and Roll Call

Alex Dominguez, COP Committee Chair, welcomed all. For roll call, Jaime Huerta instructed members to type their name using the chat feature on zoom.

Committee Discussion Items

Department of Grant Compliance & Administration Reorganization

Cory Green – Associate Commissioner shared the reorganization of his department. The big changes are that there are two new Executive Director positions. One of the new Executive Directors is Christina Villarreal. She oversees the Grants Administration Division and the Federal Fiscal Compliance and Reporting Division. Matt Lashlee is another new Executive Director who oversees the Federal Program Compliance Division, the Federal Fiscal Monitoring Division, and the Special Monitoring Division. There is not a director for the Special Monitoring Division because that division is made up of term positions that will be going away in eighteen to twenty-four months.

Federal Program Compliance Division Updates

Anita Villarreal, Senior Division Director, informed the committee how her team plans for topics to present during the Statewide Training Series by reviewing the results of the Random Validations and Compliance Reports. All the PowerPoints and resources from the Statewide Training Series will be posted on TEA’s website. Programs that will be represented during the Statewide Training Series are Title I, Part A; Title I, Part C; Title I, Part D; Private Nonprofit; and Supplement, Not Supplant. Ms Villarreal shared the training dates and topics for each program, respectively, that will be covered during the Statewide Training Series.

Random Validation Information by Program

Jaime Huerta, State Director – Title I, Part A, shared the results of the 2022-2023 Random Validations for Title I, Part C; Unsafe School Choice Option (USCO); Title I, Part D; Title I, Part A; Supplement, Not Supplant; Ed-Flex; and Private Nonprofit (PNP) Equitable Services. For each program, respectively, he informed the committee the number of LEAs validated, items that were validated, overall program results, general observations, and program contacts from TEA.

Alex Dominguez commented random validations have been occurring for about 10 years and TEA has transformed it into a nice process for LEAs to ensure they make the targets. Mr. Huerta explained that the random validation process is the result of feedback gathered from the Continuous Improvement Surveys TEA distributes to LEAs and ESCs at the end of the random validation period. TEA also reviews USDE’s monitoring process to see if any changes are needed to the state’s current random validation process.

ESSA ESC Grants Update and ESSA Compliance Reports

Didi Garcia, Assistant Division Director, explained the dates when allocations and applications are released for the ESC ESSA Basic Services Grants - Title I. She also informed the committee of the various ESC Title I Statewide Initiatives for Title I, Part A and Title I, Part C. Ms. Garcia reviewed the key dates and events for ESCs wanting to apply for the 2023-2025 Title I Parent and Family Engagement Initiative and the Title I, Part C (MEP) – Texas Migrant Interstate program (TMIP). Pharr-San Juan-Alamo ISD has had the Title I, Part C (MEP) – TMIP Initiative for the past 40 years. This is the first time ESCs can apply for this initiative.

Ms. Garcia also explained a new process that will be implemented in 2023-2024 for unexpended fund balances regarding the ESC Basic Services Grant. Because TEA received feedback that ESCs do not have enough time to spend their carryover fund balances when they receive their Notices of Grant Award (NOGAs) in the Spring, TEA staff will use an Expenditure Transfer Voucher (ETV) process to allow the ESCs to have additional time to spend the funds.

Ms. Garcia reviewed the due dates for the 2022-2023 ESC Basic Services Compliance Reports, as well as the 2022-2023 ESSA Compliance Report Timeline for LEAs. In order for LEAs to receive NOGAs, they must submit their Gun-free Schools Report. The Gun-Free Schools Compliance Report has a few changes. The report is transitioning to a new look, similar to that of the applications on eGrants. Ms. Garcia reviewed questions that were removed from the report. The U.S. Department of Education (USDE) has deleted the question related to the number of incidents; instead, the report will collect the number of students.

Ms. Garcia shared results of the Program Compliance Self-Check review, addition and changes to the 2022-2023 ESSA Consolidated Compliance Report, number of requirements, and TEA contact information, respectively, for the following programs: Title I, Part A; Title I, Part C; Title I, Part D; Title VIII, School Choice Option; Private Nonprofit (PNP). Because of changes to the report, she provided examples of what the 2022-2023 Consolidated Compliance Report looks like for Title I, Part C; Title I, Part D; and Private Nonprofit (PNP). Ms. Garcia explained the components of TEA’s monitoring plan timeline. The idea is to bring everything together and have one monitoring plan that incorporates the ESSA Consolidated Compliance Reports Review, the Random Validations, and the Specialized Reviews.

Break 10:17 a.m.-10:27 a.m.

Title I, Committee of Practitioners Updates

Jaime Huerta, State Director – Title I, Part A, discussed the membership of the Committee of Practitioners and explained that statute requires representation from different stakeholders to serve on the committee. A formal call for nominations to serve on the committee will be issued in the near future. The commissioner approves/disapproves recommendations. A review of the current membership will occur. Mr. Huerta shared the proposed COP meeting dates for the 2023-2024 school year. The committee will finalize the dates in June.

Pre-award Costs & Title I, Part A Program Updates

Vivian Smyrl, Program Director – Title I, Part A, reminded the committee that an Ed-Flex Statewide Administrative Waiver was created to allow LEAs to request pre-award costs from TEA, rather than USDE. This waiver was only for programs covered by Ed-Flex. However, in December of 2022, the USDE issued guidance that allows TEA to grant pre-award for programs under ESEA. This extended TEA’s pre-award authority to Title III, Part A; Title IV, Part B; and Title V, Part B, Subpart 2. However, since the USDE guidance letter did not include the Perkins grant, TEA will keep the Statewide Administrative Waiver so that we can have that flexibility with the Perkins grant as well.

Ms. Smyrl explained the revisions to the 2023-2024 ESSA Consolidated Application and provided examples of what the application will look like. The review process for the 2022-2023 SC5000 – Title I, Part A Campus Selection Schedule was discussed, and the FPC division will continue that review in 2023-2024. Ms. Smyrl informed the committee that the dates for the Statewide PFE Conference have been changed from December to October to move the conference away from the holidays. In the coming year, the conference will be held at the American Bank Center in Corpus Christi, Texas. Registration and hotel information are available at <https://statewideparents.com/>.

Committee Action Items

Minutes of Previous Meeting

Alex Dominguez, Committee Chair, confirmed with the members that they had reviewed the minutes from the previous meeting. A motion to approve the minutes from the November 3, 2022, Committee of Practitioners Meeting was made by Lauren Hodge and seconded by Pam Evans. The motion to approve the minutes passed.

Adjourn

Alex Dominguez, Committee Chair, adjourned the meeting at 10:54 a.m.

Minutes approved by the Committee on September 14, 2023.