

MINUTES

DATE: November 16, 2023

9:00 a.m.

LOCATION: Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Members Present

Alex Dominguez, Stephanie Dominique, Pamela Evans, Brenda Faz-Villarreal, Cris Munoz, Kristie Pacher (proxy member for Lauren Hodge)

Members Absent

Lisette Allen, Estella Anzualda, Laura Colangelo, Melody Collier, Meredith Dodd, Mia Hall, Marilyn Harris, Carrie Matthews, Alexis Neumann, Ellie Ross, Sharon Sanchez

Texas Education Agency (TEA) Staff Present

Lindsay Denman, Jaime Huerta, Matt Lashlee, Gerardo Ramirez, Vivian Smyrl, Christina 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, Ms. Dominguez instructed members to type their name and the LEA or organization they are affiliated with using the chat feature on zoom.

Committee Discussion Items

Title I School Improvement – Increasing the ESF-Focused Support Grants and Phasing Out School Improvement Grants

Lindsay Denman – Division Director shared changes to the School Improvement Grant (SIG) strategy. Ms. Denman explained the SIG is a formula grant for those campuses identified as School Improvement under Federal Accountability. Her team wants to make the School Improvement grant work easier for the campuses, to make it more impactful so the change will yield more rapid outcomes for the students. She explained the current and future state of the School Improvement grants. The current awarded amounts for the SIGs do not cover the costs associated with the implementation of the effort needs. Ms. Denman wants to move towards leveraging the School Support funds to ensure schools have a two-year package of evidence-based strategies. This would enable campuses to receive larger grant awards that would cover the costs to support the initiative efforts. For this school year, 2023-2024, Ms. Denman wants to transition towards an ideal use of the School Improvement grants. She explained the timeline planned to transition from the 2023 School Improvement formula grant to the 2024-2026 Effective Schools Framework Focused Support Grant (ESF FSG), a competitive grant. This will be the final year to have the SIG formula grant. The application for the ESF FSG will be simplified. It will be a yes/no application.

Alex Dominguez asked if feedback has been received on the changes. Ms. Denman stated they have received feedback that this is major change for those who are used to formula grants. Ms. Dominguez also asked if schools have been notified of the changes. Ms. Denman shared schools have not been identified because the Federal Accountability ratings haven't been released. However, they are scheduled to be available today. A To The Administrator Addressed (TAA) letter will be sent today announcing the availability of the *School Improvement (SI)* federal identification list. The TAA will explain the grant opportunities for campuses with SI federal identifications.

Ed-Flex Report to USDE

Vivian Smyrl – Program Director reviewed the Ed-Flex report that will be sent to the United States Department of Education (USDE). Ms. Smyrl shared the reporting period of the Ed-Flex report, which is the approval date of the application in 2019 through September 30, 2023. TEA created a spreadsheet to capture those campuses who received Statewide Programmatic Waivers since 2019-2020. The spreadsheet organizes campuses as those who received the Statewide Programmatic Waiver for Schoolwide Eligibility, 15% Carryover Limitation, and Title I Campus Eligibility. Ms. Smyrl also shared a draft of the Performance Data spreadsheet. The Performance Data spreadsheet demonstrates whether those campuses granted Programmatic Waivers had gains or drops in performance during the reporting period.

Alex Dominguez asked if TEA gets feedback on the report or is it just collected. Ms. Smyrl shared that generally the report is just collected. She also added TEA hasn't received feedback in prior submissions. Ms. Smyrl explained the state of Texas is in its last year of the 5-year waiver authority. Texas was one of the original states to participate in the 5-year waiver authority. Texas' authority doesn't always get granted to use in 5-year increments. Sometimes it is granted on a year-to-year basis. This makes it hard to grant waivers to LEAs in multiple years.

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 which was held on September 14, 2023. A motion to approve the minutes meeting was made by Pamela Evans and a second by Stephanie Dominique. The motion to approve the minutes passed.

Adjourn

Alex Dominguez, Committee Chair, adjourned the meeting at 9:36 a.m.

Minutes were approved by the Committee on February 22, 2024.