

MINUTES

DATE: September 14, 2022

9:30 a.m.

Education Service Center – Region 13
5701 Springdale Road, Austin, Texas 78723

Members Present

Alex Dominguez, Stephanie Dominique, Pam Evans, Marilyn Harris, Lauren Hodge, Brenda Faz-Villarreal

Members Absent

Lisette Allen, Estella Anzualda, Lauren Colangelo, Melody Collier, Meredith Dodd, Mia Hall, Carrie Matthews, Cris Munoz, Alexis Neumann, Ellie Ross, Sharon Sanchez, Mary Thomas

Texas Education Agency (TEA) Staff Present

Cory Green, Nick Davis, Didi Garcia, Vivian Smyrl, LaNetra Guess, Idalia Ibanez

Call to Order

Alex Dominguez, COP Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:33 a.m. Vivian Smyrl reviewed meeting norms.

Welcome

Welcome and Roll Call

Alex Dominguez welcomed all, and Vivian Smyrl initiated the introductions of the members around the room, TEA Staff, and guests.

Committee Discussion Items

Department of Grant Compliance and Administration Updates

Cory Green, Associate Commissioner, shared updates for the School Health Grant and explained the three cycles currently in place for LEAs. Cory also shared that private schools would apply directly to TEA. Equitable services will not be available.

Cory also shared monitoring changes with USDE. Due to the pandemic, special monitoring for ESSER II and ESSER III will be conducted, and LEAs should expect letters in next few months. About half of these will include information about construction and requirement of pictures (a new ask).

ESSA and Perkins grants are being processed faster than ever. TEA has separated some of the review processes in order to meet the Commissioner's request that notices of grant awards (NOGAs) be issued more quickly.

Cory pointed out the advantage to issuing NOGAs faster than ever; however, the disadvantages include that negotiators will not check 100% of the applications and, therefore, audits findings will be more likely. This process will be in place for one or two years, and will be reassessed.

Other updates to note is Roger Hingorani and David McLaughlin have retired. Matt Lashley is currently filling in as interim director for special monitoring through September, 2024, in order to complete the Hurricane Harvey and pandemic grants, and Nick Davis will fill in as interim Chief of Staff while Matt is covering special monitoring.

Title I Committee of Practitioners Overview & Updates

Vivian Smyrl, reviewed the purpose and statutory reference of the Committee of Practitioners, membership, and duties of the committee, including serving as the ed-flex committee to make determinations for Title II, Part A, Title IV, Part A and Perkins. Vivian also shared that the committee currently has several vacancies. The nominations process for potential members will be followed to fill those positions. The program overviews that the committee will receive will include all of the programs covered by Ed-Flex, so that committee members can have basic information concerning those programs for future reference.

Break was taken from 10:24-10:37 a.m.

Private School Equitable Services Overview

LaNetra Guess shared the overview and highlights of Equitable Services, Title I, Part A and Title VIII, Part F. This included program authority, and estimated data from 2021-2022 based on consolidated application data. LaNetra also shared that she serves as the PNP State Ombudsman and explained the duties associated with this role. Website resources were shared, including resources from the Title I, Part A Capacity Building Initiative and USDE's Office of Non-Public Education (ONPE).

Title IV, Part A Overview

LaNetra Guess shared the intent and purpose of the Title IV, Part A program, the statutory citation, funding, data and resources, including the program pages from the ESSA Consolidated Federal Grant Application and the Title IV, Part A Guide for School Safety.

Federal Program Compliance Division Updates

Didi Garcia, Assistant Division Director, Federal Program Compliance Division shared celebrations including refining the random validation submissions via smartsheets; alignment on PFE for migratory parents, the first in-person conference for the national migrant conference since the pandemic in San Antonio; the first audit under the Biden administration for Title IV, Part A; and that LEAs are self-reporting on program requirements the the LEA program compliance report.

Didi also shared that recently the Federal Program Compliance (FPC) Division sent surveys out to ESCs and LEAs to collect feedback regarding training, random validations, and customer service in 2021-2022. These surveys will assist the division in continuous improvement moving in to 2022-23.

Vivian Smyrl shared information on the ESC ESSA Basic Service Initiatives in collaboration with the FPC including Title I, Part A, Title I, Part C, Title II, Part A; and Title IV, Part A. Other initiatives for Title I, Part A include the Title I, Part A Capacity Building Initiative with Region 20, the Parent Family Engagement (PFE) with Region 16; and the PFE Council Statewide Training Grant with Region 16.

Statewide initiatives for Title I, Part C include the MEP Systems Initiative with Region 1; the MEP Curriculum Initiative and Capacity Building Initiative with Region 20; the Texas Migrant Interstate Program with PSJA ISD, CNA/SDP/Evaluation Contract with META and TX-NGS Contract with Catapult Systems; and for Title IV, Part A includes the School Safety State Initiative with Region 14..

Didi wrapped up this portion of the discussion by sharing the 2022-2023 FPC Division Projects to include continuing the FAQ documents, rebranding the program guides, working on an LEA Federal Program Director Activities Calendar (in conjunction with the Title I, Part A Capacity Building Initiative with Region 20), and Statewide Virtual Trainings for beginners in the fall and more advanced offerings in the spring.

Lunch Break 11:20 a.m.-12:45 p.m.

Didi resumed the presentation of FPC updates after lunch, sharing information about random validations (RV) for 2021-22. Of 402 LEAs validated, 94% met requirement and 6% were rated as improvement needed. Those LEAs needing improvement are required to resubmit documentation for review.

She also shared the processes for random validation for 2022-2023. Things to note for the new validation process are discontinuing the use of Submission packets and replacing ESSA Reports with the Federal Program Compliance WorkApp System for Documentation Submission. The process will again be conducted in two phases: validations for the “Big 4” (Title I, Part A; Title I, Part C; Title II, Part A; and Title IV, Part A) and SNS will be conducted in Phase 1, and validations for the other programs (USCO, PNP, RLIS, Title I, Part D; and Ed-Flex) will be conducted in Phase 2. The number of LEAs to be selected, selection method, ESSA alignment, and timeline were also reviewed. The agency will provide resources to support the RV including handbooks, training slides, voice over presentation videos, and a resources webpage.

Vivian wrapped up the FPC updates by reviewing the Ed-Flex Biennial Report, sharing the Statewide Program Waivers data for 2020-2021 and 2021-2022.

Title I, Part A Overview

Vivian Smyrl shared the statute for Title I, Part A starting with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 and evolving in to the current Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015-present. The intent and purpose of the program was also reviewed, including how allocations to individual LEAs are determined, and factors that affect the LEA allocations. The agency’s [“ESSA Funding Formulas Reference Manual”](#) is available through the Entitlements web page. Review of funding cycles and amounts from FY2020 through FY2023 were also shared. LEAs apply for these funds online through eGrants. Program highlights and requirements (provisions and assurances) were reviewed, and resources shared.

Title I, Part C Overview

Idalia Ibanez, Title I, Part C Program Director, reviewed the program purpose and intent. She also reviewed who determines eligibility, who a migrant student is, and necessary requirements to qualify for the MEP. Idalia also shared the MEP numbers over the years (2018-2022), including number of students eligible compared to number of students served. A map of Texas was shared to indicate where large concentrations of migratory students reside – a majority do reside in Region 1. In comparison, a US map was shared indicating large concentrations of migratory students from Texas moving to the following northern states: Minnesota, Michigan, North Dakota, Illinois, and Wisconsin. General program requirements were reviewed along with what the state does to provide support to the LEAs and ESCs in addressing the identified needs of migratory children. Idalia also reviewed fiscal requirements including Supplement, Not Supplant for MEP; priority for services; and agency resources.

Ed-Flex Overview

Vivian Smyrl referenced the TEA website and gave direction as to where to access information for the ESSA Ed-Flex highlighting the three types of available waivers: State Administrative; Statewide Programmatic; and Individual Programmatic waivers.

She reviewed the Ed-Flex Web Page, information regarding the waivers, background on the program, covered programs, items that cannot be waived, types of waivers available, waiver application steps, and the waiver review process.

Committee Action Items

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 September 9, 2022, Committee of Practitioners Meeting was made by Marilyn Harris and a second by Pam Evans.

Adjourn

Alex Dominguez, Committee Chair, adjourned the meeting at 1:43 p.m.

Minutes approved by the Committee on November 3, 2022.