

## Monitoring of Local Educational Agency (LEA)

### Purpose of Monitoring

Federal regulations and administrative procedures require that the state educational agency (SEA) monitor the implementation of program requirements and the expenditure of federal funds.

Monitoring of federal programs is conducted to ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education.

Monitoring emphasizes accountability for using resources wisely.

It serves as a vehicle for the Georgia Department of Education (Department) to help LEAs achieve high-quality implementation of educational programs.

Georgia Department of Education's (The Department's) monitoring process consists of seven major components:

1. **Program Requirements:** LEAs must submit for approval an annual Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP) through the consolidated application process. Title I Education Program Specialists review each CLIP to ensure that the plan contains allowable activities for use and budgeting of Title I, Part A monies. Once the CLIP has been approved, the LEA submits a budget reflecting the approved CLIP activities for review and approval by the Title I Education Program Specialist assigned to the LEA.
2. **Monitoring of Expenditures:** LEAs must submit an annual budget for approval through the consolidated application process. Title I Education Program Specialists review each application and budget to ensure that expenditures are appropriate for program-specific federal guidelines and 2 C.F.R. Part 200 – Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards guidelines before approving LEA budgets. A separate handbook, *Title I, Part A and Schoolwide Consolidation of Funds Budget Approval Process*, outlines the procedures for approving the expenditures. Once budgets are approved, Title I Education Program Specialists track funds drawn down by LEAs for expenditures to ensure that LEAs are likely to meet the draw-down of funds timelines for Title I funds.
3. **Single Audit:** An audit is a formal or official examination of records and accounts with the intention to verify that proper accounts have been utilized, proper procedures have been followed, and attending documentation has been maintained. If an auditor is unable to verify a program's accounts, procedures, and documentation, the LEA will be notified in writing, either by first class mail or by electronic mail, of an exception or audit finding(s). The Federal Programs Division will follow procedures as outlined in the Federal Programs Operations Manual for resolving any LEA audit findings through a single audit process.

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4. **On-Site Monitoring:** An SEA On-Site Cross-Functional Monitoring Team visits an LEA to review the criteria included in the LEA monitoring document. LEAs are monitored, at least, on a four-year cycle. Approximately one-fourth of the LEAs are monitored on-site each year. As part of the process for determining which LEAs are to be monitored, the Federal Programs Division conducts a risk assessment using a combination of elements as defined by the Title Programs Division and the Department's Finance and Business Office. Consequently, LEAs with audit or monitoring findings requiring a return of monies or a high number of complaints from parents or other stakeholders are monitored within a year of the LEA audit or monitoring report and written complaint.

The Title I portion of the on-site Cross-Functional Monitoring Team visit consists of two sections: monitoring for compliance and results based monitoring. The Monitoring for compliance portion of the visit is a review of documents that are either uploaded prior to the visit for review or provided in folders at the time of the visit. The Results based monitoring includes individual interviews with the district level staff and preselected Title I school staff. The monitors will use a set of prescribed questions regarding the process that the district utilizes to design its Title I program based on achievement data. At a minimum the Superintendent and Title I Director will be interviewed at the district level and the principal and a staff member, either a teacher or academic coach, at the school level. The interview process should take approximately 15-20 minutes per person interviewed.

Prior to the Cross-Functional Monitoring team visit, LEAs monitored during this cycle have an additional on-site visit for a physical inventory check and evaluation monitoring for LEAs offering a Flexible Learning Program. The Education Program Specialist will conduct the inventory and FLP monitoring.

5. **Self-Monitoring Checklist:** The self-monitoring process is an outgrowth of the on-site monitoring process. It is designed to provide LEAs the support and guidance needed to maintain ongoing high standards for compliance and program delivery by conducting a self-monitoring of compliance with federal law for each fiscal year that the local educational agency (LEA) does not participate in the Title Programs Division on-site monitoring process. LEAs not receiving an on-site visit complete and submit the Self-Monitoring Checklist within the e-monitoring portal.
6. **Desktop Monitoring:** LEAs are monitored via desktop monitoring in two areas:
  - **Flexible Learning Programs (FLPs)**
    - LEAs required to set aside Title I, Part A monies for FLPs are monitored by reviewing set-aside amounts listed in the LEA's annual budget.
  - **Approved LEA Budgets**

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- Once a Title I Education Program Specialist has approved an LEAs budget, those budgets are reviewed one more time by the Title I, Part A Program Manager and Title Programs Director. At this time, LEAs may be asked to clarify those The purpose of this handbook is to provide the Department's Title Programs Division a step-by-step process for the on-site monitoring visit as well as the self-monitoring process. This handbook includes procedures for: (a) determining the monitoring cycle for the LEAs; (b) revision of the monitoring instrument; (c) training at the SEA and LEA levels; (d) preparation for the on-site visit; (e) conducting the on-site visit; (f) providing feedback to the LEA following the on-site visit; (g) the LEA response to findings or recommendations; and (h) the LEAs that need to conduct self-monitoring.

Depending on the implementation of the programs at the LEA, the following federal programs may be included on the On-Site Cross-Functional Monitoring Team visit:

- Title I, Part A – Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged
- Title I, Part A – Academic Achievement Awards, including Title I, Part A Reward Schools Award; Title I, Part A Reward District Award; and National Title I Distinguished School Award
- Title I, Part A – ESEA Flexibility Waiver – Flexible Learning Program (FLP)
- Title I Part A – School Improvement Grants – State Reservations – 1003(a)
- Title I, Part A – School Improvement Grants – Assistance for School Improvement – 1003(g)
- Title I, Part D – Prevention and Intervention Programs for Children and Youth Who Are Neglected, Delinquent, or At-Risk
- Title I, Part C – Education of Migratory Children
- Title II, Part A – Preparing, Training, and Recruiting High-Quality Teachers and Principals
- Title III, Part A – Language Instruction Limited English-Proficient (LEP) and Immigrant Students
- Title X, Part C – McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance for Children and Youth
- Title VI, Part B – Small, Rural Education Achievement Program (REAP)
- Parental Involvement

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- The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

The results of the Cross-Functional Monitoring Team visit are reported within the online portal system at the Department. Each of the federal programs included in this monitoring process has its own corridor within the e-monitoring reporting site. The Title I Education Program Specialist serves as an overall team lead for the Cross-Functional Monitoring Team. A detailed description of the overall team lead's responsibilities is outlined in this manual. Each federal program that has someone assigned to the team will have a person that is designated as the program team lead. The program team lead is responsible for entering the data and writing the finding and corrective actions for the specific program as needed. If there is a federal program that is applicable to the LEA and no one is present the day of the monitoring, the program will have a desktop monitoring where the documents to be reviewed are uploaded for review. A detail description of this process is provided later in the manual.