ESEA Committee of Practitioners (CoP)   
February 16, 2017  
Adams 12 Five Star Schools Training Center, Thornton, CO 80241

Members in attendance: Joshua Shoemaker, Lori Cooper, Myra Westfall, Claire Vickland, Clint Allison, Lucinda Long-Webb, Arlene Salyards, John McKay, Mary Ellen Good, Jessica Martinez, Melissa Beck, Laura Gorman

CDE staff in attendance: Pat Chapman, Brad Bylsma, David Schneiderman, Robert Hawkins, Nicole Dake, DeLilah Collins, Colleen Brooks, Joey Willett, Laura Meushaw, Kirsten Carlile, Jennifer Simons, Tomas Mejia, Judith Martinez, Sharon Triolo-Moloney

* Introductions
* Minutes reviewed and approved
* ESSA State Plan Development – Activity to Date and Next Steps (Pat)
  + Need to keep things moving, but want to allow ample time for discussion, thinking outside of the box, and getting feedback.
  + Stakeholder consultation to date
  + Posted first draft of ESSA State Plan last Friday (2/10), hoping to post a Spanish version this week.
  + Will be compiling comments on a weekly basis, getting to spoke committees and incorporating into plan where appropriate. Got plan to Governor, he has 30 days to review, give suggestions, feedback.
  + Go before board on March 13 as an action item (will bring before Hub prior to this).
  + Plan is to move forward with an April 3 submission.
  + Supplement not supplant rules withdrawn via president’s exec order. Have to withdraw 2 regulations for every submitted put into place (only for those not finalized prior to new president). Still moving ahead despite changes in DC.
  + Education Secretary has indicated states can still submit plans in April.
  + Going through process of incorporating feedback and finalizing plan.
  + Comments rec’d will be posted to website.
  + Moving from ESSA planning to ESSA implementation: finalizing tools: application, monitoring tools, templates, etc.
  + Can amend plan as needed with USDE. Also expectation that we revisit plan annually with stakeholders (CoP, Hub, etc.).
  + Title Programs and Assurances: Decision points – Okay to provide state assurances.
    - Retain 3% of Title I funds to make available to direct services grants: CoP group voted ‘No.’ Hub had a mixed response. Need to work through this to find why there are mixed opinions and give reasons behind not taking this. Difference of opinion may be due to some misunderstanding, but need to take minority opinion into consideration.
    - Title III entrance/exit criteria: recommendation to stay with what’s in place in CO (entrance), but need to revisit exit criteria. Need to have consistency across districts on exit criteria.
    - SEA has to describe system of performance mgmt., info about LEA plans, monitoring of implementation, system of continuous improvement, what TA and guidance will we provide in support of effective local plans. Student supports: how students in CO will directly benefit from these funds (homeless students, economically disadvantaged students, etc.).
  + LEA ESSA Plans: presented to CoP and at listening tour events.
    - Green were not in NCLB, black were already part of NCLB/LEA plan requirements.
    - Series of must haves/policies that need to be in place at local level in 2017-18.
    - Want to make sure the plan adequately represents stakeholders. Want to work with CoP on developing application, templates, notifications, etc.
    - What can we do to leverage funds in direct services to these students?
    - Federal HQ requirement went away with ESSA, now revert to state requirements (license). Plus not taught by inexperienced, out of field teachers. Issue with teacher shortage and recruitment, especially in rural districts. Districts that have disproportionalities will have to address this in their plan (how this will be improved, teachers will be brought up to speed, licensed, etc.). Can explain process of hiring unlicensed, out of field teachers, etc. in required parent notification. Additional requirements fall to state legislature now.
    - Please remember that there is an opportunity to submit comments around all of these areas (teacher requirements, etc.). **We will be relooking at ESSA statute to make sure that we are capturing teacher requirements correctly**\* (section 5 in plan) especially since HQ requirement is not included in ESSA. In Colorado you just have to have a teaching license to be qualified to teach (in any subject, grade level). Other states have more stringent requirements. Teachers with alt licenses (or in process of getting this license) are considered qualified under CO law.
    - Application for federal funds: We, as a state have an option to give out individual or consolidated plans to LEAs. We’ve opted to use a single one, consolidated application.
    - We came up with a temporary application for the transition year (from NCLB to ESSA) which took quite a bit of work. Now we’ve spent a lot of time trying to create cross-cutting questions and questions tied directly to program requirements (taking makeup of LEAs into consideration: large metro, small rural, BOCES, etc.). People want to balance between a rigorous process and an unburdensome process. We have to make sure that student’s needs are being addressed with these funds in a good way. Where do we find the sweet spot between reasonable expectations that will give the best result for students in our state? Identify best services for students, provide supports to teachers, evaluate programs, address unique needs (migrant, homeless students, etc.). We do recognize that this is not a lot of money, but we want to engage with you to make sure that the funds are budgeted in a thoughtful way. WE want to communicate to you the expectations CDE has based on the allocation amount (BOCES versus a large metro district, etc.). Plan is meant to be used for multiple years, so this first year will most likely be the biggest lift. Implement a process that is supportive to BOCES, LEAS, with a good plan.
    - Brad and his team are starting networking meetings around the state to introduce the questions and get feedback and to help LEAs begin the planning process for the 2017-18 school year.
    - Supplement not supplant provision (will be discussed more during comparability presentation): USDE withdrew rules around this provision due to push back from states.
  + Consolidated Application Questions (DeLilah, Lindsay & Pat)
    - We want to walk you through the questions and the process CDE used to create these questions.
    - In ESSA the guidance asks us to describe activities 59 times for all programs (SEA)
    - We’ve collapsed these down to 25 questions for all title programs.
    - Essential components: We’ve taken the questions from ESSA and combined them with these components to create the application questions.
    - Question development table: Feedback from stakeholders (CoP, etc.) on the right. WE took and incorporated feedback where we were able to while still following the law. Changed text to avoid negative language. Ask only what’s needed to release funds. What are our goals, theory of action?
    - Comparison: You can see how when presented in a word document looks more overwhelming than it will actually look in the application. Check boxes are requirements (used Title III as a model for all title program questions).
    - MEG: Requirements still feel like more questions. Checkbox requirements look like ‘How?’ Looks like the questions have gotten way big again. Requirements are way beyond the nature of the question. All of this other verbiage got put back in. Now we’re back to 59 or more questions again. DC: In your description make sure you include the items that pertain to you. This can be a paragraph or more. Answer should include/synthesize applicable requirements. PC: Mary Ellen, can you think of a way we can do this better? MEG: Won’t have the ‘how’ at the local level when the SEA submits their ‘how’ in the state plan. PC: WE have to address these issues more generally. How we will monitor, provide technical assistance, continuous improvement, etc. We’ve sketched out a broad plan for the USDE. Level of detail not expected in state plan. State plan is one thing and the details will be ironed out post submission or right now. WE are not locked in based on the plan we’re submitting now.

MEG: Can some of the requirements/considerations be part of the assurances? PC: WE need to report information, we get monitored, and we need to have the ability to provide this information to justify state’s receipt of funds. How do we get there? WE can do the review process differently, stagger things, etc. How best to capture the required information in a way that enables people to give CDE a genuine response.

* + - Example of question function in application: WE want to show you some of the functionality that we’ve built into the application
      * The BOCES process is going to be a lot different from what you see here.
      * First cross-cutting question. Consideration in pop-up window. We will be providing you with the questions, a manual and other resources as a companion piece to opening the application this year.
      * Requirements move from right to underneath because there were so many.
      * Some items are nested, so when selected opens up to provide more options. This will be helpful for BOCES. WE will populate a list of member districts for each question to make it easier (can also write it once if same for all member districts).
      * Title II: Based on what you select, check box menu will open up which you can select from and base narrative on. Helps for evaluation purposes. Idea is to pool funds under this program to strengthen overall district/school PD plan.
      * We want feedback on questions from CoP today. How do you answer these questions based on your LEA makeup? We’re still developing how the review will look. We want to make sure we’re doing a good service to districts who are writing the plans as well as the students that these funds flow down to.
      * We want to streamline and make application/questions flexible. Answer to questions will look differently for a small rural district than it will for a large metro district, but still have to answer all questions. This will be taken into consideration in review process as well.
      * Reasonable to expect more from a larger district than a smaller one.
      * Peer reviews?
      * Want your opinion on some of the things that we’re thinking about doing. RNM’s where CDE staff is unpacking those questions with LEAs. Application process in not pass/fail. CDE will be working with and supporting districts as they complete their applications. Next step is seeing plan in action through monitoring. Technical assistance will be there if action plan put into place isn’t working.
      * All plan questions tie back to needs assessment.
      * We want to see what stakeholders, data were involved in plan development. What’s in the requirements are probably things that you’re already doing, so maybe you can help us simplify this process.
      * MEG: Stakeholder engagement – why can’t this be an assurance and then CDE follows up on this during monitoring to make sure it’s actually happening?
      * PC: We need to ask you to describe the process for including stakeholders in plan development, so this can’t just be a checkbox.
      * MEG: It was communicated that this will be a heavy lift year. In future years maybe it will be less work? I think your role at the state level is to make sure we’re compliant, monitor and provide technical assistance. These are not a lot of percentage wise dollars. You have to have a good base program, not just through federal funds target high need students. The best we can hope for is level funding. Given all that, small rural districts may say it’s not worth the money to complete the consolidated application.
      * PC: This is creating a base application to revisit in coming years. Your task is to figure out how best to use funds on a rolling basis.
      * MEG: If state is giving USDE a skeleton proposal plan, why can’t LEAs do that as well in application?
      * PC: The additional questions nested under the main questions seems to be the problem, is that correct (consensus is ‘yes’).
      * John, Poudre: WE can’t have another year like last year. Impossible to do a needs assessment when teachers are not under contract, etc. (due to lateness of application release, allocations, etc.). Who’s reading the responses and at what level?
      * BB: We’ve asked ourselves, do we want to create a rubric for reviewers to know what level to look at each question depending on LEA. In order to develop a complete response we should see… You’re letting us know how you’re serving your students.
      * PC: First step is to cut down the number of questions. Next step is to identify how we can handle these open ended questions as a checkbox?
      * AA/Aurora: Timeline of when this will be available?
      * BB: WE can release a word version of these questions when we’re all feeling comfortable with them.
      * LS: Our goal is next week, but we really do want your feedback before they’re finalized.
      * PC: Hard part is what do we expect from Aurora vs Poudre, for example.
      * BB: Good news coming up about how the questions/application will be released. We had a regional networking meeting on Monday and had some very small and large districts and by the time we were done everyone was feeling much more comfortable with the questions. Provided assistance in beginning to answer questions. Get your people to RNMs to receive this assistance. Just getting in there and doing it really helps the stress level.
      * Clint Allison: I’m counting on that common sense will rule the day. It will be painful no matter what form it takes unless it stayed the same as last year. What I want is to get to the point where I can start working on finalized questions because they look drastically different from how they did a month ago. We’re at the point where it is what it is and we need to start taking action.
      * New Assurances:
        + Title IX assurance – requires Title IX coordinator for each LEA.
        + Indian education
        + Foster Care
      * WE need support form you regarding where the questions are duplicative.
      * Timeline, Protocol, etc.:
        + Application is due on June 30th.
        + If you need more time to develop response, indicate that in the narrative. Can be developed beyond June 30th, just let us know that. Can follow up during PAR window, etc.
        + We will set up time to walk through questions that LEAs may have when completing questions. Can’t release funds unless at least the process for developing plan is outlined in narrative box.
        + PAR process will still be available twice to update budget.
        + Budget will be the same as it was last year. We will still prepopulate strategies, activity description, etc.
        + Give us feedback on protocol, let us know if it’s helpful, etc.
        + LS: We’re happy to come meet with you, look at emailed response to questions, etc. We’re happy to meet ahead of time in person, virtually, over email ahead of June 30th.
        + LS: Connection to Monitoring: We’re now trying to build out the monitoring process as implemented by new law. Trying to model it based on CLDE’s monitoring process. Also based on schools identified for CSI/TSI.

Compliance based monitoring: assurance check offs, testing transparency, etc. We want to get a work group together to figure out what would be needed to meet compliance level monitoring. (desk review maybe)

Program review: more aligned to application. Will ask more questions about needs assessment, stakeholder involvement, etc. (teachers, district staff, community members, parents, etc.).

Additionally we will be convening a work group to develop questions to ask for both types of review (compliance and program).

Timeframe for TSI/CSI identification? Process has to be approved by USDE first. Don’t want to release until CO plan is approved first. September/October will plan to notify those district and schools. Using 16/17 data to identify in the fall. Priority and focus school list will go away along with SES/Choice requirement (are still optional activities, but not as set-asides).

Program Review Support: Who will we talk to? How will responses be evaluated?

A lot of other offices and units are being brought in to connect with LEAs if we’re not able to provide answers/supports around early learning, SPED, etc.

* + - * + Questions for CoP around LEA questions and Monitoring. We really do want recommendations from you. We want to walk away from today’s meeting knowing that we can move forward, but not contrary to the will of the committee.

Goal for today is move forward so the LEAs can begin working on application, so we’d like to work through reservations/concerns now (PC)

Monitoring document with arrows and red/yellow/blue is still in play (universal support, intensive, etc.) Reflected in state plan. Monitoring will focus on 4 buckets: Comprehensive needs assessment, stakeholder engagement, student supports, evaluation

Concerns across the board regarding allocations that will be much lower than previous years.

You will have substantial approval once all required elements are submitted. Can’t submit without doing this. We will send you a notification of this.

GF has no idea about when allocations will be released. We will let you know at least as soon as we have them.

DeLilah’s goal is to get all finalized content to programmer by April 1 (questions, etc.).

John, Poudre. Not interested in going to a training until the application system is actually live.

* Comparability – DeLilah Collins and Colleen Brooks
  + DeLilah discussed the past recommendations from the group
  + Colleen presented the current law requirements….
  + Comparability Table
    - For districts that have comprehensive and targeted schools, required to submit comparability bi-annually. Will use online platform every other year and can access excel spreadsheets in between. Will sign assurance in Consolidated Application every year. Will demonstrate comparability during monitoring.
    - For districts without CSI/TSI schools: No longer required to submit through the online platform. Can use district worksheets or excel template provided by CDE to work through comparability. Will sign assurance in Consolidated Application every year. Will demonstrate comparability during monitoring.
    - These changes are based on new statutory requirements and in effort to alleviate data submission burden on districts.
  + CDE is working to put all of the comparability calculators online
  + Clint Allison: We use these tools starting in April and update them as we hire thought out the year. It is brilliant that the excel worksheets will be available for us.
* Multi-District Online Schools – David Schneiderman
  + A few months ago we talked about the Title I, Part A allocations that are set aside from the initial state allocation. A piece of that set aside goes toward the Multi-District Online Schools
  + The State Board of Education directed CDE to start this program in 2014. It has been expanded to four total schools since then.
  + David explained the changes in MDOL Pilot criteria
  + Allocation process is based on US Census Data
    - Charter School Institute and Colorado School for the Deaf and Blind are two special LEAs
  + David discussed the allocation process methodology that is used for the special LEAs and has been the same that were used for the MDOL Pilots
  + If this program were to expand to include all multi-district online schools it would be too difficult to work through the original methodology. David proposes to send the funds from each LEA into a pool that will be used to serve the schools.
  + Take the LEAs, put it into the MDOL pool, calculate per pupil, then send back to LEAs
  + David shared the current list of MDOL schools
  + David proposed options for discussion
    - Keep all of the current criteria ($1.07 million)
    - Drop all criteria and open the process to all MDOL ($2.01 million)
    - Keep some of the criteria?
    - Modify the criteria?
    - Add additional criteria?
    - Discontinue the pilot/process ($0.00 million)
  + Did it work?
    - Laura Gorman discussed the improvement that they have seen at Hope Online since it opened.
      * They initially served only Hope Elementary, and now serve Hope Middle and Hope High schools.
      * We do end up providing Title I services to students at Hope Online that do not generate funds for us.
      * It is a hybrid program. Some of the students receive services online and some students go to centers for support. They receive food, as well.
      * Schools are held to same accountability measures.
      * The ability to serve other schools with Title I funds has been tremendous. The students at those schools have received supports that we would not have been able to provide.
    - Pat Chapman discussed the impact on the sending districts. It did not have as negative of an impact on sending districts as we had anticipated.
    - Brad Bylsma raised the question of how would we support and evaluate a Title I school that is entirely online.
    - How do we evaluate the value and effectiveness of this pilot?
    - Clint: what is the precedent that we’re setting here? Essentially, we are attaching funds to kids instead of the community. If we start to do this with federal funds, why would we not be able to do this with state funds?
    - Jennifer Oakes: With MDOL schools, there is a sate base that is the same for all districts operating MDOL schools. This base rate is lower than the ppr that other districts would receive.
    - Clint: Districts with MDOL schools end up serving students who do not live within district boundaries, which puts a burden on the district, but that brings me back to what is the purpose for Title I funds? To serve students that are at-risk of not meeting standards and historically under served. So, if those are the students at these schools, they should be able to access supports through Title I. So, I think we need criteria, but I am not sure if the criteria listed are the most appropriate.
    - Laura Gorman: You need to have a good Title I program in place in order to run these supports, because you will get more money to work with. Need to be considerate of the unique needs of a hybrid school. It helped to already have a Title I program in place for Hope, rather than all of a sudden receiving more money to support an online school that has never received Title I supports before.
    - Mary Ellen: Do these districts fill out the same consolidated application?
    - Brad: another concern we have heard is that for a year students cannot receive supports and may be a burden on the hosting district.
    - Would this apply to online regular schools or only online charter schools?
      * David: This would apply to any multi-district online school.
    - Laura: So it all the criteria disappears, what would happen?
    - David: Other districts would send their money to other districts with online schools that aren’t necessarily Title I schools. Then the districts could use the money to support their brick and mortar schools. The money we move around for the MDOL program does not go directly to the online schools. It goes to the LEA to decide using rank order and comprehensive needs assessment how they will serve all of their schools.
    - Laura: We use the money from other districts to serve our online schools, and then we are able to save a little from what would generally be our allocation to serve our schools. This allows us to serve about 2-3 more schools than we would have been able without the MDOL pilot.
    - Pat: Because this was a board directive, we didn’t have a lot of opportunity to get input from districts when we were implementing
    - Lori Cooper: I don’t feel like I have enough understanding to make a decision other than this is an info item.
    - David and Pat: we can bring more information to share with you as well.
    - Mary Ellen: This is all new to me. It was a pilot. I think it is a big important part about the future of education, Title I, portability. I don’t feel ready to say yay or nay. It was good information. The outcome for me would be, what were the desired outcomes and objectives of the pilot and were they met? Other than I agree that we should not use Title I dollars to serve non-Title I schools (if we include more online schools that aren’t currently Title I).
    - Pat: I believe this merits more analysis with the sending districts and receiving districts.
    - Laura: Another challenge is the mobility of students in MDOL schools and the constant change in numbers of students from year to year. For the sending districts, whether they are concentrated in the district or if they moved, it is difficult to keep track.
    - Clint: So why were MDOL schools chosen in this way? Is the next step for any kid who is choicing anywhere and happens to be a free- and reduced-lunch kid, to have funds follow him/her?
    - Laura: I think at the beginning we started discussing portability
    - Pat: there has been desire and discussion around portability for many years. It was hotly contested in ESEA. We seem to have some flexibility now and have a pilot that looks tedious to implement. So, yes, the impetus for this pilot was based in curiosity around Title I portability.
    - Claire Vickland: was this supposed to incentivize districts to want to host MDOL schools?
    - Laura: I think it was about being able to truly serve the students in your district who need and should receive Title I services. We didn’t have that ability because of the size of our online school.
* Foster Care – Judith Martinez
  + Judith shared a video about transition services for children in foster care
  + Pat: we want to work with you to make sure that all LEAs that receive Title I understand the requirements, and to support you in working through the supports and services that you will offer to students in foster care
  + Foster care provisions under ESSA went into effect on December 10, 2016 to establish educational stability and a continuous and appropriate education
  + Colorado is a leader in this work because of the data we have as a result of the collaboration with researchers. We are in a good place to implement ESSA foster care provisions.
  + We have strong partnerships in place.
  + Want to emphasize cross-agency collaboration.
  + State level
    - Still working toward educational stability
    - Best interest determination – The Department of Human Services passed rules about one month ago and put out guidance regarding what best interest determination should look like.
      * If it is not in the student’s best interest to remain in the school, the child should immediately be enrolled in a new school.
      * Melissa Beck: Does the child have a say in their best interest in this process?
      * The intent is that there is a student and family voice, but we need to check on the specific guidance.
    - Colorado has a new coordinator to oversee foster care coordination that will begin on March 2. This person cannot be the coordinator of homeless education.
      * Mary Ellen: is there a requirement at the local level?
        + Short answer, no. It is a recommendation.
    - We have a data sharing agreement at the county level to share student level data across districts. This is currently coordinated by the Department of Human Services, but over time will move to district coordination.
    - LEAs are required to have a Family Coordination liaison, Child Welfare Education liaison, and McKinney-Vento Liaison. In many LEAs these people have many other roles or serve in this role for a number of districts.
    - Transportation supports for a child in foster care looks a little different than McKinney-Vento because the Child Welfare Agency is involved, as well. Recommendation to create common understanding between LEAs and Child Welfare Agency.
      * CDE is still learning about possible guidance and working through various toolkits to create guidance that is appropriate for Colorado’s diversity.
      * Facility schools are not included in Foster Care provision
    - Judith detailed the five stakeholder meetings that have been hosted.
    - There is a lot of information that can support districts in implementing the foster care provision in ESSA on the website: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/dropoutprevention/fostercare_index>
* ESSA Equitable Services for Non-Public Schools – Colleen Brooks
  + Colleen Brooks presented the updates to the equitable services for non-public schools under ESSA
  + There is a working group to support this work. Contact Colleen Brooks for information.
  + One of the big updates is how LEAs will calculate proportionate shares for non-publics. Under ESSA, proportionate share should be calculated prior to taking any set-asides. From the proportionate share, you can take admin and parent and family engagement set-asides.
  + Colleen walked through tables that USDE has released in non-regulatory guidance to explain the process for calculating proportionate share in Title I
    - The proportionate share should be provided in services to the Title I students, not in the form of funds to the non-public school.
    - Clint: Does this only apply to the non-publics in our district boundary?
    - Colleen: There should be an MOU on file between districts to compensate each other for services provided by a district where students don’t reside. We have an example if you need one.
    - Students should be eligible for services that they would have otherwise received if they attended a public school.
    - Proportionate share conversations and calculations happen after the consultation with non-public schools
  + For Title II, the administrative costs can come out before the proportionate share is calculated
  + There is a new provision in ESSA for LEAs to notify the non-public schools of the amount of money that has been made available for services. This will be collected in the consolidated application.
  + CDE has created a consultation template for LEAs to use in consultation with non-public schools. The template is due to CDE by May 31, 2017.
  + Are preschools included?
    - They would mirror the sending school in the district. So if the public school serves preschool, then the non-public school students in preschool would be eligible for services, as well.
  + There is a complaint process for schools and LEAs.
  + If a non-public school chooses not to participate, can a teacher or family file a complaint?
    - We need to look into this.
* Concluding Remarks – Pat
  + Thank you for all the time and thought that has gone into all of this work
  + Questions
    - Mary Ellen: I am happy to move forward with the questions that we have. Would like to see a template statement to see that there is flexibility and wording around some of the questions and adequate responses for a district that is requesting more time to work through this.
* The next meeting will be on April 20 at the Colorado Children’s Campaign.
* The meeting concluded at 3:18pm