

# Guidelines for Cross-Program Consolidated Monitoring Process for Charters and Lab Schools

Charter/Lab School: \_\_\_\_\_

Documentation due: \_\_\_\_\_ On-site visitation: \_\_\_\_\_

## INTRODUCTION

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015 is designed to promote equitable access to high-quality education for all students regardless of economic background. Under the law, various grants are made available to charters/lab schools in order to help compensate for additional challenges of providing education in schools that are impacted by economic hardships.

In North Carolina, seven of those grants have been consolidated for purposes related to grant application, implementation and compliance monitoring. Those grants are:

- Title I Part A (Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Education Agencies)
- Title I, Part C (Education of Migratory Children)
- Title I, Part D (Prevention and Intervention Programs for Children and Youth Who Are Neglected, Delinquent or At-Risk)
- Title II, Part A (Supporting Effective Instruction)
- Title III, Part A (English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement)
- Title IV, Part A (Student Support and Academic Enrichment) and
- Title V, Part B (Rural Education Initiative).

## PART I – SCOPE AND PURPOSE OF MONITORING

The Office of Federal Programs (OFP) of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction conducts Cross-Program Consolidated Monitoring (CPCM) to measure charter/lab school's compliance with the provisions of the grants listed above. A federal program administrator (PA) at OFP will lead the monitoring process and serve as the primary contact for the charter/lab school.

The scope of monitoring depends on the grants in which the charter/lab school participates. In addition, CPCM will consider the charter/lab school's participation in other programs addressed by ESSA, such as Title I pre-kindergarten, homeless education programs, Targeted School Improvement (TSI), and Comprehensive School Improvement (CSI). Other ESSA grants and related programs which a charter/lab school might participate do not fall within the scope of the CPCM process.

OFP has organized key provisions of ESSA into 22 compliance elements for charter/lab schools that form the basis of the CPCM process. The accompanying *CPCM Monitoring Instrument* describes the elements in detail and provides examples of the types of documentation charter/lab schools will be asked to



provide to OFP during the process. The following pages provide important details about the document review, school visits and interviews with stakeholders. The resulting monitoring report and charter/lab schools responses to any findings are also briefly described.

## **PART II – THE MONITORING PROCESS**

Most of the activities associated with the CPCM process are the review of documents and interviews with stakeholders.

Three sections in this part will help the charter/lab school prepare for the CPCM process:

- A – Sharing Documents for Review
- B – Preparing for the School Visit
- C – Preparing for the Interviews with Stakeholders.

After reading these *Guidelines* and becoming familiar with *CPCM Monitoring Instrument*, please feel free to contact the PA to discuss the document request and plan the visitation.

### **A - Sharing Documents for Review**

The charter/lab school is responsible for providing evidence of compliance with the statutes that are cited in *CPCM Monitoring Instrument*. Some of the elements or portions of elements will not apply. The PA will help identify those areas where the charter/lab school will not be required to produce evidence.

- 1) The charter/lab school will share the documents with OFP electronically, using SharePoint. After official notification of the monitoring visit, the PSU will receive an automated message with instructions on how to access SharePoint. Access to the SharePoint folders will automatically be granted to the Superintendent/Board Chair and the Federal Program Director listed on the Notification Letter. If your PSU would like to grant access to additional PSU staff, please email your Lead Program Administrator those names, roles, and email addresses. If your PSU uses an external platform (e.g., Google Drive) to maintain documentation, OFP has created a video reference guide to show how to transfer documents into the SharePoint platform.
- 2) The SharePoint platform will be set up to include a Parent Folder for each of the Elements listed on the Monitoring Instrument (22 Folders total). OFP requests relevant document(s) are then dropped into each folder. There is no need to upload documentation for any elements that do not apply to the PSU .
- 3) If one document satisfies more than one element, it should be uploaded into **all applicable folders**. This seems redundant but makes it easier for all parties to keep track of what has been shared and reviewed.
- 4) The Monitoring Instrument column titled *Supporting Documentation* provides multiple examples of types of possible evidence that could demonstrate compliance. The charter/lab school is not required to provide an exhaustive set of a particular kind of document. For example, to demonstrate that a particular group has met 12 times during the year, the charter/lab school may supply the artifacts related to one or two of those meetings, as long as those artifacts reflect what is described in the given element. Artifacts from all the other



meetings would not be required. However, to provide a more comprehensive view, a calendar or schedule showing the other meeting dates should be included. During the interviews, stakeholders may be asked if the supplied artifacts represent meetings that occur on a regular basis, as applicable. The PA is available to answer questions about supplying sufficient documentation for a particular element.

- 5) Only the most recent or current documents that demonstrate compliance are required. Documents spanning the last two or three years are not required. For example, the most recent artifacts from required annual Title I meetings would suffice, if they fit the description provided in *Elements and Documents*. If the current year's documentation is not yet available, last year's documentation will suffice.
- 6) The charter/lab school is not required to provide an exhaustive set of a particular kind of document. For example, to demonstrate that a particular group has met 12 times during the year, the charter/lab school may supply the artifacts related to one or two of those meetings, if those artifacts reflect what is described in the given element. Artifacts from all the other meetings would not be required. However, to provide a more comprehensive view, a calendar or schedule showing the other meeting dates should be included. During the interviews, stakeholders may be asked if the supplied artifacts represent meetings that occur on a regular basis, as applicable.
- 7) All documents provided as evidence must be genuine documents that reside in the charter/lab school's files or databases or are disseminated (e.g., handbooks or brochures) or shared as a part of the PSU 's operations (e.g., emails or web page). Charter/lab school staff should not create documents (such as notes-to-file) that describe the Charter/lab school's compliance with an element simply to have a document to provide for the monitoring event. If none of the requested documentation exists for an element, the PA should be contacted to help determine how compliance is best demonstrated.
- 8) Items may be provided in the following formats: PDFs, Word files, TXT files, Excel files, CSV files, PowerPoints, or JPEGs. If other formats are included, the PSU should contact the PA prior to uploading them. Files in proprietary formats generated by subscription-based services or special applications cannot be opened with the software on OFP computers. In such cases, screen shots that are stored as PDFs or JPEGs may be used, if they are legible.
- 9) Clarifying information may be added onto an existing document in the form of an electronic "post-it" or comment (e.g., features available in Adobe or Word) or a handwritten note in the margin prior to scanning. For example, if a sign-in list does not indicate which participants at a stakeholder meeting are parents, that information should be added. The author of the notation should include their name and the date on which they are adding the clarification.
- 10) The examples of evidence listed in Monitoring Instrument column titled *Supporting Documentation* are intended to clarify and simplify the charter/lab's document collection efforts. Before searching far and wide for documents that might be needed, the PSU should consult with the PA. In many cases, less is more.



- 11) All documents must be available for review no later than 5:00 P.M. on the due date listed on page 1 of these guidelines. SharePoint file access will be locked after that date and time and no additional documentation will be accepted for upload. **IMPORTANT:** The ratings of the applicable elements and the monitoring report will be based on documents that are submitted by the deadline; late documents will not be reviewed. Charter/lab school staff should consult the PA with any questions about the documents needed for of the elements.

## **B – Preparing for the School Visit**

A small team from OFP will visit each classroom of the charter/lab school for about 40 minutes during the morning of the **visitation date listed on the first page of these guidelines**. School staff and students should be assured that there is no need to alter their instructional plans or other activities for this visit. For example, a schoolwide assembly that coincides with the visit should occur as planned. The OFP team would like the opportunity to meet the principal for a few moments before touring the school and would prefer that the principal facilitates the tour. However, the principal may delegate that responsibility to someone else at the school.

The schedule for the visitation and interviews will be determined by the charter/lab school, based on the location and start time of the school and the scheduling needs of the parents, teachers and principal. A typical charter/lab school outline of the schedule might appear as follows:

- 11:30 – 12:30 School Tour
- 12:30 – 1:10 Parent Interviews (as determined by the district)
- 1:15 – 1:55 Teacher Interviews
- 2:00 – 3:00 School Leadership Interviews
- 3:00 – 3:15 School Leadership Exit Conference (includes staff selected by the charter or lab school)

\* OFP will conduct a virtual visit for any PSU receiving only Title II funding.

## **C – Preparing for the Interviews with Stakeholders**

- 1) The OFP team will interview three separate groups for charters and lab schools: parents, teachers, and school leadership. The interviews will last about 40 to 50 minutes each. Because of the tight schedule, the interviews should all take place at the same location. The school leadership for charters and lab schools will be interviewed last.
- 2) It may reassure stakeholders to know that this is a routine monitoring process that occurs once every few years and that the process focuses on charter/lab school practices, not on schools or staff members. The interviews will be documented with notes and sign-in sheets, but none of the comments or discussion will be attributed to specific participants.
- 3) Sample stakeholder interview questions are provided on the Monitoring Instrument in the column entitled Interview Questions. PSUs may share the interview questions with participants prior to the monitoring visit, however interview participants should not respond to questions from a prepared script.



- 4) Parent Interview: The parents will be interviewed as one group with no others present, except for any interpreters required to facilitate participation of all attendees. OFP asks the PSU s to adhere to the following guidelines:
- Eight to ten parents of participating students are expected to attend.
  - PSU's should invite additional parents, if needed, to ensure representation of families of students served with the applicable federal funds, such as English as a Second Language (ESL), migrant, homeless and pre-k students.
  - The parents in this group may not be employees of the school or a member of the local board of education.
- 5) Teacher Interview: Teachers and others who work directly with students will be interviewed together in one group with no others present. OFP asks the PSU s to adhere to the following guidelines:
- Six to ten teachers from each selected school are expected.
  - A variety of grade levels and teaching areas should be represented.
  - The group should include mostly classroom teachers, but may also include resource teachers, interventionists, media specialists or counselors.
  - Not to be included are instructional coaches or facilitators, even those who serve only part-time in those roles. (These individuals may attend the central office interviews, if the PSU believes it would be beneficial.)
- 6) School Leadership Interview/Exit Conference: This interview will include any central office & leadership staff necessary to discuss the requested documentation and the PSU 's implementation of all consolidated federal programs. If the PSU operates an MEP Program, the migrant recruiter and migrant coordinator should be included in this part of the interview process. It will be the last interview conducted, allowing the OFP team to tie up any loose ends that remain after the previous interviews. The final portion of the central office interview will serve as an exit conference, providing an opportunity for OFP and PSU staff to share feedback about the monitoring process.

NOTE: The School Leadership interview participant group \*must\* include leadership staff who are employees of the school. Representatives from any management or fiscal service vendor the school contracts with may also attend, but since the school is being monitored it is a requirement that school leadership participate in the interview and exit conference sections of the monitoring event.

### **PART III – ELEMENT RATINGS AND THE MONITORING REPORT**

Based on the documentation and interview notes, OFP staff will analyze the PSU 's implementation of the consolidated federal programs and issue a rating for each of the applicable elements, using the following rubric:

A rating of Meets Requirement will be issued if the following are true:

- Compliance element is 100% met and supported by all required evidence.
- All required documents are provided and support compliance.



- Interviews are consistent with documentation and indicate proper processes and implementation.
- Compliance is consistent throughout the PSU.

A rating of *Meets Requirements with Recommendations* will be issued if:

- Basic compliance requirements are met.
- Compliance and/or documentation could be strengthened with reasonable modifications.

A *Finding* will be issued if either of the following is true:

- Evidence or lack of evidence shows compliance element has not been met.
- Documentation is incomplete or lacking.
- Interviews do not support documentation.
- Interviews reveal a lack of understanding of processes or implementation.
- Compliance is inconsistent throughout the PSU.

An element will be considered not applicable if the PSU does not participate in the program(s) which form the basis of the element or if the pre-requisites stated in the element do not apply.

OFP will issue a monitoring report by designating one of the three ratings for each of the applicable elements. OFP is required to issue the report within 30 business days of the monitoring event. For elements rated as *Meets Requirements with Recommendations*, the report will include recommendations that require no further action on the part of the PSU. Where a *Finding* is issued, the report will describe the areas of non-compliance, the corrective actions required of the PSU and the deadlines by which those actions must be completed.

After receiving the Findings letter, the PSU will have 30 business days to submit the required documentation to resolve all findings. The PSU will provide the required documentation to OFP electronically, using SharePoint. The Lead Program Administrator will share a link to a Findings folder after the official Findings letter is sent. After the findings are resolved, the PSU will receive an official letter to signify the closing of the monitoring process.



# Cross-Program Consolidated Monitoring Review Agenda

PSU:

Onsite Date:

**Directions:** List one school per timeslot unless more than four schools are visited. **For Charter/Lab Schools, only complete the 11:00 AM school visit timeslot and the interviews schedule. Please finalize and return this completed template to your lead Program Administrator no later than one week prior to the on-site visit date.**

## **SCHOOL VISITS:**

- **8:00 AM – 8:40 AM (Selected School #1)**

\*School Name / Address / Phone Number

- **9:00 AM – 9:40 AM (Selected School #2)**

\*School Name / Address / Phone Number

- **10:00 AM – 10:40 AM (Selected School #3)**

\*School Name / Address / Phone Number

- **11:00 AM – 11:40 PM – (Selected School #4 OR Charter/Lab School Name)**

\*School Name / Address / Phone Number

## **INTERVIEWS (afternoon)**

Interview Address - one location: \*Building Name / Address / Phone Number

- 1:00 – 1:50 – Parents
- 2:00 – 2:50 – Teachers
- 3:00 – 3:50 – Principals (for Charter/Labs, principals and central office are one meeting)
- 4:00 – 4:45 –FPMS team meeting/review of notes Central Office Leadership
- 4:45 – 5:00 - Central Office Staff Exit Conference (includes staff selected by the district)

## **NOTES:**

- *The schedule for the selected Title I school visits and interview groups is determined by the district, based on the locations and start times of the selected schools and the scheduling needs of the parents, teachers and principals. However, the Central Office Leadership interview group must be the last interview slot prior to the Exit Conference.*
- *Please reserve a meeting space (with Wi-Fi accessibility) large enough for the OFP team to conduct interviews.*

