Meeting Logistics & Desired Outcome

Meeting: ESSA Committee of Practitioners

Date & Time: Tuesday, February 11, 2025; 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Location: Virtual via Zoom

Meeting Leads: Laura Gorman (Elected Co-Chair), Alan Nall (Elected Co-Chair)

Rachel Temple(CDE Lead), Nathan Hickman (CDE Lead)

Objective: To allow the Colorado Department of Education the opportunity to provide updates to and elicit recommendations from the Colorado Committee of Practitioners regarding relevant and timely issues related to CDE’s responsibilities under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESSA).

Agreed Upon Norms:

* Be present and engage fully.
* Let everyone have a voice and be heard! Don’t talk over each other.
* When not talking, turn off mic on your computer/phone to minimize background noise.
* Begin and end meetings on time. Stick to times allotted for topics, to the extent possible, or develop next steps for moving the work forward if running out of time.
* Use time productively.
* Assume positive intent and ask for clarification when something lands wrong.
* Come prepared.
* The chair of the meeting should enforce the norms.
* A minimum of 6 members must plan to attend in-person to proceed with a hybrid meeting; if less than 6 members indicate that they will attend in-person, the meeting will be fully virtual.
* In the event of unsafe travel conditions due to weather, CDE staff will consult with the CoP co-chairs to determine whether to cancel the in-person option.

Agenda Items and Next Steps

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| **Headline**  **Time**  **Presenters** | **Agenda Item** | **Summary/Notes** |
| **Committee Business: Welcome, Meeting Overview, New Member Welcome, Approve Minutes, Update from Assistant Commissioner of School Quality and Support**  10:00-10:20 (20)  *Rachel T., Nathan, Lindsey Jaeckel*  *Co-chairs: Laura, Alan* | * Welcome, meeting logistics, introductions * CoP members will vote on the approval of the minutes from the previous meeting and review the agenda for the meeting * Lindsey Jaeckel will provide an update | * Meeting minutes approved. |
| **FPSU Updates & Listening Session**  10:20-11:20 (60)  *Nazie*  Informational  Feedback Requested | * FPSU Updates * Listening Session   Guiding Question:   * What are Hot Topics on your mind? * How is ESSA implementation going for you?   + What is going well?   + What is challenging? * What questions do you have for our team at this time? | Presentation Highlights:  Updates:   * Closely monitoring federal activities and appropriation conversations * Determining impact of (or not) and preparing training materials for the new guidance documents and EOs - to be rolled out this spring * CDE website migration and accessibility work * E&E Learning Series - February 25th * E&E Conference planning - September 22-23, 2025 * Cons App - update today * Monitoring - no changes for the 2025-2026 (37 LEAs) monitoring cycle; working on reports for 2023-2024 (67 LEAs) and 2024-2025 (28 LEAs) monitoring * Reporting - Submitted all EDFacts files for ESSA reports, working to submit Consolidated State Performance Reports, and gearing up for next round of ESSER reports * Evaluation - ESSER and ESSA - looking for success stories to highlight * High Performing School Study - focus on AEC * Twice weekly emails sent to Superintendents and BOCES Directors from Commissioner Susana Córdova.   CoP Feedback:   * Request for emails to be forwarded to ESEA Consolidated Application contacts. * There’s been a lot of chatter and assumptions around discretionary grants. It would be helpful to know if they are the first ones they’re looking at, and which ones fall within the state/CDE’s realm. Are we talking about the McKinney-Vento subgrant? Competitive grants? It would be great to have some clarity so we can better support these conversations. * Question regarding the impact of the bill, which proposes that funds be dispersed to the State: What impact would federal income tax have—would it be more or less for CO? There’s a presumption that the funds will go to the State. * Our folks are confused and somewhat frustrated. |
| **Immigrant Set-Aside Percentages: Continue Discussion**  11:20- 11:30 (10)  *Rachel T.*  Informational | * Update about next steps | Presentation Highlights:  Next steps:   * FPSU Title III Specialists have reached out to CDE colleagues in the Office of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Education * Title III, Immigrant Set Aside allocation analysis * Survey will be generated   + EDAC approval * 6 LEAs with highest T3 ISA allocations for FY25 will be contacted   + 87.7% of TIII, ISA allocation * Responses will be captured and shared with CoP members   CoP Feedback:   * What is the potential for this to be eliminated all together?   + It is a required reservation and therefore will not be eliminated. * If the participants who are currently getting allocations ask for it to be raised, what would that look like for approval from all districts losing Title III funds from that?   + An impact analysis would be conducted and brought back to CoP for input. |
| **Consolidated Application Updates**  11:30 - 12:30 (60)  *Laura*  Informational | Guiding question: | Presentation Highlights:   * Multiple release date:   + Cross Program open March 1 including BOCES: Contacts, Retention of Funds, Tribal Consultation, Cross Program Questions, Non Public Schools, EDT Data, ESSA School Improvement, General Assurances, Alternative Fund Use Authority (AFUA).   + ESSA ARAC Application Supplement - Open when allocations are available: Assignment of Funds, Certification and Agreement   + All other areas would be opened once allocations are available and Assignment of Funds has been completed. * Available resources:   + Certain sections not directly tied to budgets will be open for completion.   + Narratives will be able to be copied into the new application.   + Excel Budget template for pre-work   + An option to copy last year’s budget into the current application. * Timeline:   + Revisions to the online system and reviewer checklist based on internal and external feedback: Revisions projected to be completed by March 3   + Virtual Winter Training (CNA, Narratives and Pre-work): February 27 and March 4, 2025   + GAINS System Training: March   + Cross Program Section Available: March   + Allocations Uploaded and Budgets Available for LEAs: April   + Work Sessions: April/May   + Training on Financial Expenditure Report (FER): May   + Summer Support Opportunity: August   + Application Due: June 30   + FER Due: September 30   CoP Feedback:   * Will a paper version also be available on March 1? EC BOCES has always used that to plan and meet with our districts to gather narratives and other information needed before we enter into the app   + A paper application will not be available, however a reviewer checklist will be made available at the Winter RNM. * Can you explain the statement about the false carryover, but still be able to budget it -- not understanding how that "budgeting" it would work * Since we know there will be carryover, and some of it will go to FTE, can we include an explanation in the budget line indicating that some will be supported with carryover? It will be important to demonstrate reasonableness for the reviewer. If so, a training is recommended on how you would like to see this. * Will we be able to enter the amount that is anticipated for carry over?   + No. Carryover will be calculated once the FER has been completed. * With the proposed changes, districts with salaries that carryover and do not close AFR out until later in year are essentially writing a narrative plan that references large set asides and FTE that will not be in the original application. Every year for the last 10 years you have seen our admin costs, indirect, district set-aside. Any optional set- aside and DMA will not be in the original app, but they will be happening starting July 1 as we’re using carryover funds. Recommendation to prepare reviewers and Regional Contacts team at CDE that they will read about programs in the narrative, however they will not be reflected in the budget. Rather than tamper into school PPA, we are going to pump it into there, and try to make it as accurate as possible, and not include what we have to cut until carryover is put in. Heavier lift on CDE during PAR. * When you approve my narrative, and it is not in my budget, is it approved? What is the impact on the district if not approved due to system constraints? * We previously discussed trying to limit the number of times we have to review things. If we are carrying large amounts of carryover into next year, it's doing exactly that. It adds a lot more steps if we can't account for money up front. * The application timing is even more complicated this year with the allocation piece. If the application or timeline were moved out for any reason, people still have to have substantial approval. From an audit standpoint, we have to have substantial to show we were allowed to spend starting July 1 (start of fiscal year). In a previous year when allocations were super late, we were still able to get substantial approval. * At the last meeting, it was mentioned that CDE is considering visiting with each district to go through applications and address flags/questions in advance of the application deadline. If there is something districts can provide to you at that time (month of June), can substantial approval be provided based on activities then? If you’re already building in the process to have 1x1s with districts, maybe that is an appropriate time for districts to have a checklist available to streamline the approval process. * Regional substantial approval! * Is the Cons App Excel budget workbook template available now?   + No. However, there are no major changes to last year’s template, excluding possible changes to tags. |
| **Lunch Break**  12:30 - 1:00 (30) |  |  |
| **Title IV Waiver Discussion**  1:00 - 1:20 (20)  Evita, Nathan  Informational  Feedback Requested | Guiding Questions: After reading the proposed Title IV Apportionment and Technology Infrastructure waivers, what questions do you have? What concerns do you foresee in utilizing this waiver? | Presentation Highlights:   * [Educational Flexibility (Ed-Flex)](https://www.cde.state.co.us/fedprograms/ov/ef) allows States to waive certain requirements of Federal statute or regulations that may impede an LEA’s efforts to reform and improve education, without first having to submit those waivers to the U.S. Department of Education for review and approval. * Prohibited from being waived:   + Parental participation and involvement   + School improvement   + Maintenance of effort   + Comparability of services   + Supplement, not supplant   + State plans, standards, assessments, and accountability   + Equitable services to non-public schools   + Distribution of funds to States or LEAs   + Health, safety, and civil rights   + Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) * Current waivers:   + Ed-Flex waivers: [Ed-Flex Title I, Part A 15% Carryover Waiver](https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/24450adbd4be4640b9bd75b2ae23c1c8)   + Consolidated Application waivers:     - Extension Request (in GAINS)     - [Title I, Part A District Managed Activities Waiver](https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/36ebd88929a5484fb9de7f7d63075bdd)     - [Title I, Part A Schoolwide Waiver](https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/2540944106c64790bc7739cc768bcc00) * New TIV waivers:   + New Ed-Flex Title IV Apportionment [waiver](https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/67df580a4d174295964187b93fa8b2bc):     - For LEAs with Title IV, part A allocation of $30,000 or more)     - LEAs may apply to waive the Title IV, Part A apportionment requirement as long as the underlying purposes of the statutory requirements for Title IV, Part A are still met (i.e., purpose of Title IV and allowability of activities).   + NEW Ed-Flex Title IV Effective Use of Technology 15% Infrastructure Maximum [waiver](https://app.smartsheet.com/sheets/9JjhH5HpjPWxp9RQg6GJ86Q92P5mX42JXH2Vrx41/forms/3004850096960):     - For LEAs with any Title IV, Part A allocation amount.     - LEAs may apply to waive the Title IV, Part A 15% maximum on infrastructure requirement as long as the underlying purposes of the statutory requirements for Title IV, Part A are still met (i.e., purpose of Title IV and allowability of activities).   CoP Feedback:   * Are these annual waivers?   + Yes. * The 15% infrastructure waiver would only be necessary if going over 15% for infrastructure, correct?   + Correct. |
| **CoP Member Representation Across the State and Recruitment**  1:20-1:30 (10)  *Nathan*  Discussion  Feedback Requested | Guiding question: How can we expand representation to include more rural districts and include underrepresented regions? | Presentation Highlights:   * CoP membership is lacking from local school boards, Charter school leaders, teachers, including public schools, and Charter schools and career and technical educators. * Southwest and Southeast are severely underrepresented, as well as central mountains   CoP Feedback:   * Recommendation to contact Georgina Owens in Indian Education at CDE for recruitment support. |
| **Location for April 15th Meeting**  1:30 - 1:45 (15)  *Rachel T.*  Discussion  Decision | * The April CoP meeting will be hybrid   Guiding question: For members wanting to attend in-person, what location(s) should be considered? | CoP Feedback:   * Possible future meeting locations: APS, DougCo, Thompson |
| **Closing & Next Steps**  1:45 - 1:55 (10)  *Nathan* | * Upcoming meeting dates | Presentation Highlights:   * Confirmed meetings:   + April 15   + May 8 (truncated) * Tentative calendar holds:   + March 11 |

*Feel free to share your agenda topic submissions through the* [*submission request form*](https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/80d4a142008c43ef9fd51be7e7e25346)*. Please let us know if you have any questions.*