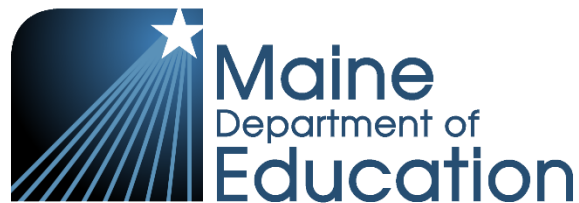


STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



ESEA FEDERAL PROGRAMS MONITORING GUIDANCE

Title I, Part A | Title I, Part D | Title II, Part A
Title III, Part A | Title IV, Part A | Title V, Part B, Subpart II
Section 1003



The Maine Department of Education (DOE) is responsible for the oversight and monitoring of programs and activities carried out under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

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Commonly Used Acronyms

CAP: Corrective Action Plan

CFR: Code of Federal Regulations

EDGAR: Education Department General Administrative Regulations

ESEA: Elementary and Secondary Education Act

ESSA: Every Student Succeeds Act

GAN: Grant Award Notification

GEPA: General Education Provisions Act

DOE: Department of Education

RPM: Regional Program Manager

SAU: School Administrative Unit

SEA: State Education Agency

Monitoring Purpose Overview

The Maine DOE is responsible for the oversight and monitoring of programs and activities carried out under the ESEA, as amended by ESSA.

The [General Education Provisions Act \(GEPA\)](#) requires that each state adopt and use proper methods of administering each applicable program, including monitoring of agencies, institutions, and organizations responsible for carrying out each program. Monitoring procedures must be designed to promote the grant subrecipient's progress in achieving program goals and objectives; adherence to state and federal laws, regulations, and assurances governing the program, and conformity to the approved application, performance reports, or other relevant documents. Likewise, the [Code of Federal Regulations \(CFR\)](#) requires each State Education Agency (SEA) to monitor grants to ensure compliance with applicable federal requirements and that performance goals are being achieved.

The Maine DOE has adopted a consolidated approach to monitoring SAUs to ensure compliance with federal laws and to support the effective implementation of local programs. The following programs are included within Maine DOE's consolidated ESEA program monitoring:

- Title I, Part A: Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged.
- Section 1003: School Improvement
- Title I, Part D: The Prevention and Intervention Programs for Children and Youth Who Are Neglected, Delinquent or At Risk.

- Title II, Part A: Preparing, Training, and Recruiting High-Quality Teachers, Principals, and Other School Leaders.
- Title III, Part A: Language Instruction for English Learnings and Immigrant Students.
- Title IV, Part A: Student Support and Academic Enrichment; and
- Title V, Part B, Subpart II: Rural and Low-Income Schools Program.

To ensure compliance with statutory requirements, the Maine DOE works in collaboration with SAUs and schools to provide ongoing guidance, support, and technical assistance throughout the year.

Monitoring Level Determination

At the beginning of each fiscal year, SAUs are evaluated on both fiscal and programmatic indicators that consider the specific characteristics and performance data for each SAU. The Maine DOE determines the level of monitoring support needed for each SAU through the following indicators:

Fiscal Indicators	Programmatic Indicators
Newly Established SAU and/or Schools (including restructuring)	
Key Personnel (ESEA Coordinator, Business Manager and/or Superintendent) Turnover	
Application – Substantial Approval Date after 9/1	
Performance Report – Final Approval Date after 2/1	
Previous Year Monitoring - Late Submission	
Previous Year Monitoring - Late Closeout	
Previous Year Risk Assessment Rating	
Funding – Combined amount	Identified as a school in Maine’s Model of School Support
Funding – Number of sources	Application – Late Submission after 8/1
Minimum of quarterly invoice Submissions for each title	Application – Final Approval Date after 11/1
Minimum of one invoice is submitted for each title	Performance Report - Approval Date after 2/1
Improper Use of funds, which required SAU to return funds	
Excess Carryover of Funds	
Single Audit findings	

The Maine DOE reviews SAU data on all fiscal and programmatic indicators above to determine specific scores for each item for each SAU. Scores for these items are then aggregated into final fiscal and programmatic ratings for each SAU. The highest of the two ratings then determines the level of support to be provided to the SAU. SAUs are notified of their monitoring level determination when Grant Award Notifications (GANs) are provided within the ESEA Consolidated Application.

Monitoring Status Guidance

Low – Level of Monitoring Support

This level of monitoring oversight includes standard procedures that are required of **ALL** SAUs operating ESEA programs and evidenced by submissions of required documents through the online grant management system, Grants4ME, and regular contact and support from the SAU's regional program manager throughout the course of the year.

Medium – Level of Additional Monitoring Support

This level of monitoring oversight includes all the requirements outlined in Low-Level Monitoring with the required additional submission of documentation during two submission windows (Fall and Winter) throughout the year, in Grants4ME.

High – Level of Additional Monitoring Support

This level of monitoring oversight includes all the requirements outlined in Low Level and Medium-Level Monitoring, with the required submission of additional documentation during two submission windows (Fall and Winter) throughout the year, in Grants4ME, and the potential for an on-site review in the Spring as deemed necessary by the ESEA team.

Monitoring Submission Windows

To enhance the effectiveness in supporting a continuous improvement cycle, the ESEA Federal Programs Team has adopted a monitoring plan that includes additional monitoring items for SAUs with a Medium or High monitoring level. SAUs at these monitoring levels will have additional requirements to be completed throughout the year (Fall and Winter). The ESEA team has intentionally structured monitoring items to align with when they are typically the focus of attention within the SAU. However, we recognize that items may continue to be revised and refined outside the applicable monitoring window. This approach supports increased team capacity to provide additional guidance, support, and training related to specific items when they are most relevant to SAUs.

The Submission, Review, Results, and Corrective Action timelines are outlined as follows:

Timelines	District Submission	ESEA Team Review	Results & Corrective Action Requirements
Fall	Window opens 9/1 Submission due 10/1	30 days from SAU submission	45 days from the return of results to the SAU
Winter	Window opens 2/1 Submission due 2/21	30 days from SAU submission	45 days from the return of results to the SAU
Spring	Onsite visits as informed by fall and winter monitoring as determined by the Maine DOE.		

Submission of Required Documentation

Required documentation is submitted in the Grants4ME platform, which serves as the Department's online grant management system.

The **ESEA Monitoring Instrument** outlines what items are required for each monitoring status within each submission window (Fall and Winter SAUs with a "medium" monitoring status need only respond to the medium monitoring items. SAUs with a "high" monitoring status must respond to all items (medium and high) within each submission window.

The **Monitoring Required Documentation** section within Grants4ME is activated before each submission window. The platform setup guides SAUs through questions related to each statutory requirement, the evidence required, document templates and/or links (if applicable), and an opportunity for the SAU to provide additional explanation as appropriate.

Monitoring Feedback

Typically, within three weeks of submission by the SAU, monitoring feedback will be provided directly in the monitoring instrument. The feedback provided for each required item will directly align with the following statuses:

- **Meets Requirements**: The SAU's submission for an individual item meets all the necessary statutory requirements. No further action is required for this item.
- **Meets Requirements with Recommendations**: The SAU's submission for an individual item meets the necessary statutory requirements. However, important recommendations have been provided to help the SAU more clearly adhere to the applicable statutory requirements. The SAU must check the box for these item(s), indicating acknowledgment of its agreement to implement the Department's recommendation(s).
- **Does Not Meet Requirements**: The SAU's submission for an individual item does not meet all the necessary statutory requirements. Feedback has been provided and updated documentation or an outlined Corrective Action Plan needs to be submitted within 45 days. The item will not be marked as "Meets" until the plan is followed, updated documentation formalized, and communication given to appropriate stakeholders (when necessary).
- **Items Without Ratings**: Items without ratings were not applicable to the SAU and therefore, not reviewed.
- ***No Submission**: When required items are not received, this results in a no submission, and a status of "Does Not Meet Requirements" is assigned for that item.
**Lack of responsiveness from the SAU may impact the continued availability of ESEA funding until requirements have been met.*

Corrective Action Plans

In those instances where an SAU is unable to respond to a particular monitoring item or items within the applicable timeline due to extenuating circumstances (i.e. an item needing school board approval, needing parent input, etc.), the SAU must submit a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) for the specific monitoring item(s). This means that, instead of leaving the LEA Response page blank within the SAU's ESEA Monitoring Instrument, the SAU must upload a document outlining a plan for how it will respond to the item and/or meet the requirement(s) within a reasonable time frame. The CAP can be submitted directly within the "Monitoring Results – LEA Response" page in Grants4ME as a temporary response for a particular monitoring item. All CAP submissions must include detailed plans (including action steps and timelines) for the required documentation. Please note, that an item will not be marked as "Meets" until the plan is followed, updated documentation formalized, and communication given to appropriate stakeholders (when necessary).

On-Site Visits (*Updated)

The purpose of an on-site visit is to: 1) support a SAU through topic specific technical assistance, 2) develop a positive professional working relationship between the Regional Program Manager (RPM) and the SAU ESEA Coordinator, Business Manager, and Superintendent, 3) provide an opportunity for the ESEA Federal Program Teams to assess the fidelity of implementation of approved plans and procedures, 4) serve as an important information-gathering method for any areas of noncompliance, and 5) provide an opportunity to gauge the need of future technical assistance.

The ESEA Federal Programs Team determines whether an on-site visit to an SAU is needed. Some of the relevant indicators for determining when an on-site visit is warranted include a:

- High ESEA monitoring level
- Lack of communication or submission of required documentation and/or corrective action plan by the SAU
- Extenuating and/or unique situation within the SAU over the last 12 months that involves one or more ESEA programs
- *Request from an SAU

The Maine DOE understands that on-site visits are labor and time intensive; however, using the on-site visit selection criteria and desk reviews, the Maine DOE works to reduce the burden to collect the necessary compliance evidence and makes every effort to support SAUs to ensure their programs meet Federal requirements through the monitoring submission window prior to the on-site visit.

The Maine DOE will schedule and plan the on-site visit to ensure an efficient and effective process while outlining the proposed times, needs, and other specifics. The Maine DOE will work with the SAU to identify a primary point of contact who will help to coordinate and schedule the visit. The SAU's regional program manager (RPM) will be joined by, at least, one

additional ESEA Federal Programs team member. During the on-site visit, the ESEA Federal Programs team may:

- Ask guiding questions on protocols, procedures, and operating practices
- Request additional evidence that might demonstrate compliance with the monitoring requirement
- Interview ESEA coordinator and key personnel such as the Business Manager
- Engage in focus groups with SAU educators, students, and community members
- Visit selected schools to observe programing and practices in action.

After the conclusion of the on-site visit, a notification of findings letter will indicate areas the SAU was able to demonstrate full compliance and/or areas of ongoing noncompliance. If an SAU receives a letter with areas of noncompliance, action steps and a timeline for completion will be provided. The ESEA Federal Programs team will monitor the completion of action steps and provide additional support.

Closeout of Each Monitoring Window

Following the successful completion of each monitoring window, the SAU will receive a monitoring closeout notification confirming its submissions have demonstrated compliance with applicable statutory requirements. Upon receipt of such notification, no further action related to that specific collection window will be required of the SAU. Communication is Key

As a pass-through entity, the Maine DOE is responsible for the oversight and monitoring of programs and activities carried out under the ESEA, as amended by the ESSA. Federal funds awarded under the ESEA are designed to support SAUs and schools in providing equitable learning opportunities for all students. Effective, efficient, and transparent communication between the SAUs and the ESEA Federal Programs Team is crucial for the successful implementation of ESEA programs and services across the State of Maine. The ESEA Federal Programs Team is intentionally structured to provide SAUs with direct connectivity to key personnel because that is one of the most effective, efficient, and transparent practices we can provide for support to SAUs in meeting all the required federal regulations.

It is with this same intentionality that monitoring support levels are determined from year to year. SAUs are expected to support these communication practices throughout the year in adherence to all requirements. Lack of communication can influence the potential of additional support that may or may not be needed, which can result in ineffective and inefficient practices. Supporting these efforts is not only appreciated but crucial.

Monitoring Support and Resources

More support and resources related to ESEA Monitoring can be found on the [ESEA Monitoring](#) webpage. This includes:

- Monitoring Fact Sheets that explain the individual items SAUs must submit
- A recording and PDF slide deck of our most recent training

- ESEA Federal Programs Monitoring FAQ document

For additional support, please reach out to your Regional Program Manager. Their contact information can be found on the [ESEA Federal Programs](#) webpage.