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ESEA LEA Consolidated Monitoring 2011-2012

Feedback from Subrecipients

Monitoring team members were appreciated for their professionalism and level of expertise, in a process that respondents characterized as collaborative.

Usage of the Electronic Document Storage System, although increasing, is an aspect of the monitoring process that program staff can target for improvement—one that can enrich the overall process for all stakeholders.

Federal consolidated monitoring declared useful and collaborative

The Consolidated Monitoring Survey was designed by the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) Office of Research in consultation with representatives from the WVDE Division of Educator Quality and System Support. The purpose of the survey was to gather feedback regarding the quality, relevance, and usefulness of the federal consolidated monitoring process for improving the WVDE's efforts to assist districts with school improvement initiatives and to build capacity.

Method of study. The link to an online survey was distributed to district superintendents, federal program directors and coordinators, and school principals following monitoring visits during the course of the 2011-2012 school year. A total of 35 respondents completed the survey. Data from the survey were tabulated and descriptive statistics were interpreted.

Findings. Overall, feedback from respondents suggests the monitoring process has been highly successful in ensuring that grantees comply with federal requirements, and in aiding LEAs and schools working to bring about county- and school-wide improvement. Monitoring team members were appreciated for their professionalism and level of expertise in helping LEAs and schools overcome obstacles and identify solutions, in a process that respondents characterized as collaborative. In the process, based on the nature and tone of comments from respondents, LEAs view the SEA as a partner in their improvement efforts. Based on survey responses collected later versus earlier in the school year, use of the Electronic Document Storage System seemed to increase—although it remained low.

Limitations of study. Due to the process by which the online survey was distributed, coupled with the need to ensure confidentiality, we were not able to calculate a response rate and confidence level for the result. In other words, without knowledge of the exact size of the population, we cannot be confident that feedback from a sample of 35 respondents is representative of the larger population.

Recommendations. The increase in usage of the Electronic Document Storage System throughout the 2011-2012 school year, although encouraging, is not yet ideal. The intent of the system appears to be a very good one, as it would allow monitoring teams to dedicate more time during on-site visits to conversations with LEA and school staff, which respondents seem to value above time spent reviewing documents. Some respondents expressed the need for training in use of the system. Respondents' comments and the fact that near the end of the 2011-2012 school year only a little over a third of respondents indicated having begun using the system suggest that this is an aspect of the monitoring process that program staff can target for improvement—one that can enrich the overall process for all stakeholders.

For more information about the study, *ESEA LEA Consolidated Monitoring 2011-2012: Feedback from Subrecipients*, published by the West Virginia Department of Education Office of Research, contact the author, Anduamlak Meharie (ameharie@access.k12.wv.us), or visit <http://wvde.state.wv.us/research/>.