ESEA LEA Consolidated Monitoring 2011-2012

Feedback from Subrecipients

West Virginia Department of **EDUCATION**

Office of Research
Division of Curriculum and Instruction

ESEA LEA Consolidated Monitoring, 2011-2012

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Abstract

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 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.

Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

Introduction

The West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) disseminates funds to local education agencies (LEAs) and eligible entities under Public Law 107-110, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (Elementary and Secondary Education Act [ESEA]). It is the responsibility of the grant recipient (grantee) to meet the requirements of all titles funded under this act. Each state educational agency that submits a consolidated plan under ESEA must file the assurances contained in ESEA Section 9304. These assurances include a statement that the recipient will monitor its subrecipients and enforce federal regulations. ESEA consolidated monitoring is applicable to the ESEA programs that have monitoring requirements under Titles I, II, III, VI (Rural and Low-Income Schools program [RLIS]), and the McKinney Vento Act.

ESEA Consolidated Monitoring

The purpose of ESEA consolidated monitoring is to ensure that all grantees comply with federal requirements. In addition to the enforcement of legal obligations imposed by federal law, the monitoring process involves collecting information from grantees to (a) review student academic progress, (b) determine compliance with federal and applicable state regulations, (c) promote collaborative planning and budgeting across ESEA programs, and (d) provide technical assistance for program improvement.

ESEA consolidated monitoring procedures and responsibilities

Monitoring teams consisting of WVDE staff conduct periodic on-site reviews in a 3-year cycle, although monitoring for specific issues and/or programs may be conducted at any time at the discretion of the WVDE. On-site monitoring can also be conducted in response to a written complaint or concern received by the WVDE federal program directors, or following the review of school and/or county 5-year strategic plans. Should the cyclic monitoring detect a large number of problematic findings and/or an additional need for technical assistance, follow-up monitoring or technical assistance visits are conducted as deemed necessary by the WVDE federal programs staff.

The WVDE is responsible for developing and distributing an annual schedule for monitoring prior to July 1 of each fiscal year. Should there be a conflict in scheduling, the district is responsible for notifying the WVDE Office of Title I by July 15. The team leader, in collaboration with the grantee, establishes a proposed schedule. The monitoring team leader (the WVDE Title I director) confirms the schedule for the on-site monitoring visit at least 1 month prior to the on-site visit. The schedule followed during the 2011-2012 school year appears in Table 1 (next page).

Other responsibilities of grantees include (a) making the necessary arrangements for on-site visits to schools and/or program sites; (b) ensuring the schools and/or program sites are prepared for the monitoring review; (c) ensuring documentation to verify compliance with ESEA standards is organized and readily available for review by the on-site monitoring

team at both the LEA and school levels; and (d) ensuring that staff members and other stakeholders are available for interviews.

ESEA consolidated monitoring process

Prior to each on-site visit, WVDE staff members review reports of adequate yearly progress (AYP) status and the accountability measures for the district and schools. The LEA can submit data electronically to document the compliance standards at least 1 month prior to the date of the entrance conference. The on-site visit involves eight main components, briefly summarized below:

1. ***Entrance conference***. An entrance conference is conducted with the LEA's designated personnel. The purpose of the visit and the planned activities are reviewed during the conference. District administrators are asked to participate in a discussion of the district initiatives being implemented for the improvement of student achievement and the coordination of federal funding.

Table 1.   ESEA Consolidated Monitoring Schedule 2011–2012

Date	District	Number of schools
Total schools monitored		132
September 12–16	Preston	7
September 19–23	Mercer	15
September 26–30	Brooke	5
October 17–21	Calhoun	2
October 24–28	Wayne	10
October 31–November 4	Summers	3
November 7–10	Mineral	8
November 28–December 2	Gilmer	4
December 5–8	Pendleton	3
	Grant*	3
December 12–16	Wood	11
January 10–11	Lincoln*	4
February 6–10	Putnam	5
February 21–24	Barbour	6
February 27–March 2	Upshur	6
March 12–16	Greenbrier	9
March 19–23	Clay	5
March 26–30	Raleigh	13
April 2–6	Doddridge	2
April 16–20	Braxton	6
April 24–25	Webster*	5

*Denotes counties that were involved in a 1-day follow up

2. ***Verification of data***. Documentation compiled by the district/schools is reviewed and verified by the monitoring team to ensure compliance with ESEA standards.

3. ***Interviews***. Interviews are conducted with LEA staff for the purpose of verifying and gathering information. Federally funded coaches and/or technology integration specialists (TISs) are asked to participate in the interviews.

4. ***Site visits***. School and/or site visits, conducted as part of the Title I and Title III monitoring process, include an on-site interview with a school team (4–6 members) at each Title I school. The team should be representative of the Title I school and it is highly recommended that reading and mathematics teachers be included.

5. ***Exit conference***. Members of the monitoring team meet with the superintendent and/or designated LEA personnel to (a) discuss the information gathered during the monitoring visit; (b) discuss preliminary information regarding prospective commendations; (c) provide the LEA an opportunity for clarification of information gathered in the interviews and/or the review of documentation; (d) provide an op-

portunity for questions by county personnel; (e) provide technical assistance and/or suggestions for improving student achievement, program implementation, and professional development; and (f) provide an opportunity for the LEA to request follow-up technical assistance and/or professional development.

6. *Monitoring report*. The team leader coordinates the preparation of the final report based on information submitted by each member of the team. The report identifies programmatic commendations, recommendations, findings, and/or areas in need of further professional development and/or technical assistance. Any areas for improvement identified in the report also include the required corrective action and a date by which the corrective action must be implemented. The report is issued electronically to the grantee within 30 business days of the exit conference, and districts must electronically confirm receipt of the monitoring report.

7. *Monitoring report response*. All grantees with identified recommendations and/or areas for improvement must submit a written response to the monitoring report, approved by the grantee's superintendent or executive director. The response must outline the planned implementation of corrective actions issued for findings, including timelines for completion of the corrective action. Grantees must submit documentation, as directed, along with the monitoring response. The SEA federal program director of the related program must receive this report within 30 business days of receipt of the written monitoring report. Failure of the district to provide a written response within the required time may result in federal funding being withheld by the WVDE until receipt of the response.

8. *Appeals Process*: If after reviewing the final report, the district concludes that the evidence of a finding is inaccurate, the district may file a written appeal within 30 business days requesting reconsideration of specific findings. Documentation must be submitted to the WVDE prior to, or in conjunction with, the monitoring response. The SEA federal program director reviews the documentation to make a final decision. If the federal program director finds the documentation acceptable and determines that it fulfills the compliance standard, he or she issues an amendment to the final report. The respective federal program director's decision, issued within 30 business days of receipt of the written appeal, is final.

As shown in Table 1 (previous page), during the 2011-2012 school year, monitoring visits took place in 21 of the 55 West Virginia counties. Of the 21 counties, three were involved in only a 1-day follow-up to ensure corrective actions from the prior year were in place and to provide any additional technical assistance.

Purpose of the Survey Research

The purpose of the Consolidated Monitoring Survey was to gather feedback regarding the quality, relevance, and usefulness of the federal consolidated monitoring process in order to improve the efforts of the WVDE in assisting districts with school improvement initiatives and capacity building.

Methods

The Consolidated Monitoring Survey was designed by the Office of Research in consultation with representatives from the Division of Educator Quality and System Support at the WVDE.

In mid-September 2011, the Office of Research completed development of the survey and made the link to the online survey available to the monitoring team leader (the director of Title I). The monitoring team leader included the link to the online survey in an e-mail message to superintendents and Title I directors in counties that participated in the consolidated monitoring process during the 2011–2012 school year (Table 1, page 2). The message also included an electronic copy of the monitoring report prepared by the WVDE, which was issued to the grantee after each on-site visit. Superintendents and Title I directors were asked to complete the survey and distribute the survey link to other relevant stakeholders in their districts. This method of distributing the online survey did not include a mechanism for counting those invited to respond; thus, we were unable to calculate a response rate.

To assure confidentiality, the survey did not ask respondents to identify the county or school in which they work. As an additional measure to assure confidentiality, rather than asking the exact date monitoring visits took place, respondents were asked to indicate the timeframe during which the monitoring visit took place in their county or school. Respondents were given three options, each covering a 3-month period during which a minimum of six counties participated in monitoring visits (see Table 2 below for the time spans).

We tabulated data from the survey and interpreted descriptive statistics, as described below.

Results

Characteristics of Respondents

The Consolidated Monitoring Survey was completed by 35 respondents. It should be noted that some survey items were completed by less than the total number of respondents. The survey questionnaire asked respondents to indicate their role and responsibilities; they were given the opportunity to select more than one response category. Principal and Title I director were roles selected most frequently by respondents. Over half of respondents (60%, n = 21) selected only one role. A quarter of respondents (26%, n = 9) selected two roles. Less than half of respondents (43%, n = 15) had less than 3 years of experience in their current positions, while the remaining 20 (57%) had been in their current positions for 4 years or more at the time of the survey (Table 2).

Of the 35 respondents, about a third (34%, n = 12) indicated their monitoring visits took place between September 2011 and November 2011; a fifth (20%, n = 7) indicated the period between December 2011 and February 2012; and nearly half (46%, n = 16) indicated the period between March 2012 and May 2012 (Table 2).

Table 2.   Characteristics of Survey Respondents

Respondent background	Response	Frequency	Percent
Role and program responsibilities*	Superintendent	2	3.4
	Assistant superintendent	1	1.7
	Title I director	12	20.3
	Title II director	8	13.6
	Title III director	7	11.9
	RLIS director	7	11.9
	McKinney-Vento	3	5.1
	Title I coordinator	1	1.7
	Principal	14	23.7
	Other**	4	6.8
Number of years of experience at current position	Less than 1	7	20.0
	1 to 3	8	22.9
	4 to 6	8	22.9
	7 to 9	6	17.1
	10 or more	6	17.1
Timeframe of monitoring visit	September 2011–November 2011	12	34.3
	December 2011–February 2012	7	20.0
	March 2012–May 2012	16	45.7

*Denotes survey items for which respondents could select more than one response category.

**Assistant principal, Title I reading interventionist, literacy curriculum facilitator, personnel director

The survey included nine items that elicited information regarding the overall quality and usefulness of recommendations and technical assistance provided by the Offices of Title I, II, III, VI (RLIS) and McKinney Vento as a direct result of the federal consolidated monitoring visits. Another survey item gauged the extent to which LEAs have begun using the Electronic Document Storage System designed to facilitate the monitoring process, and a last item inquired about any additional support LEAs may need from the WVDE as a result of the monitoring visit. Lastly, three open-ended questions elicited data regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the monitoring process.

Overall Quality and Usefulness of Monitoring Process

The first two questions of the survey asked respondents about the overall quality of formal written recommendations/corrective actions and technical assistance provided by the WVDE. The overwhelming majority of respondents (91.4%, n = 32) indicated that *all* recommendations/corrective actions were specific, achievable, and relevant and *all* technical assistance provided was high quality, relevant, and useful (Table 3). The remaining three respondents or 8.6% indicated that *most* of recommendations/corrective actions were specific, achievable, and relevant and *most* technical assistance provided was high quality, relevant, and useful.

Table 3.   Respondents' Perceptions Regarding Recommendations/Corrective Actions and Technical Assistance Provided by WVDE

Survey Item	Total		All		Most		Some		None	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
The extent to which written recommendations/corrective actions provided by the WVDE were specific, achievable and relevant.	35	100	32	91.4	3	8.6	0	0	0	0
The extent to which technical assistance provided by the WVDE was high quality, relevant and useful.	35	100	32	91.4	3	8.6	0	0	0	0

Figure 1. **The Extent to Which the Monitoring Experience Was Helpful in Targeting Federal Funds**
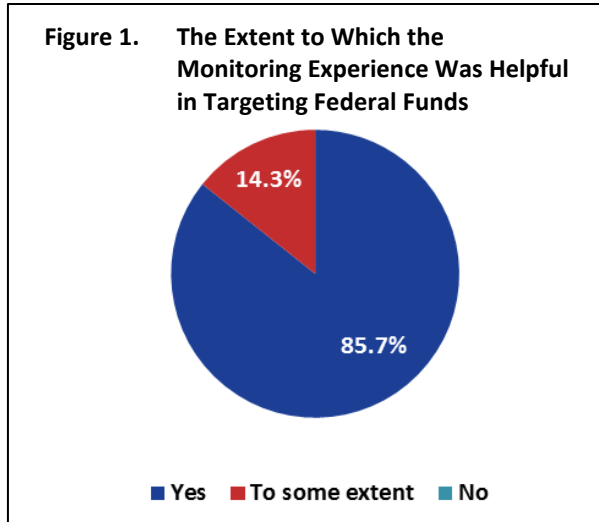
Respondents were also asked if the monitoring process was helpful to them in targeting federal funds to meet county and school needs. Of the 35 respondents, 30 or 85.7% said *yes* and 5 or 14.3 said *to some extent* (Figure 1).

Likewise, program staff at the WVDE wanted to know for which federal program monitoring visits were most useful. Respondents were given four response options (Title I, Title II, Title III, and RLIS) and were asked to rate the helpfulness of monitoring visits to each program on a 3-point scale (*not at all helpful, somewhat helpful,* and *very helpful*) with an additional option to select *not applicable.*

After excluding *not applicable* responses, data indicate that at least 75% of respondents rated the monitoring process for each of the federal programs *very helpful* (Table 4). Monitoring visit feedback to Title I was rated the highest with 96.8% of respondents (n = 30 of 31) indicating the process had been *very helpful,* followed by RLIS (83.3%, 12 of 16), Title III (76.9% or 10 of 13) and Title II (75% or 12 of 16).
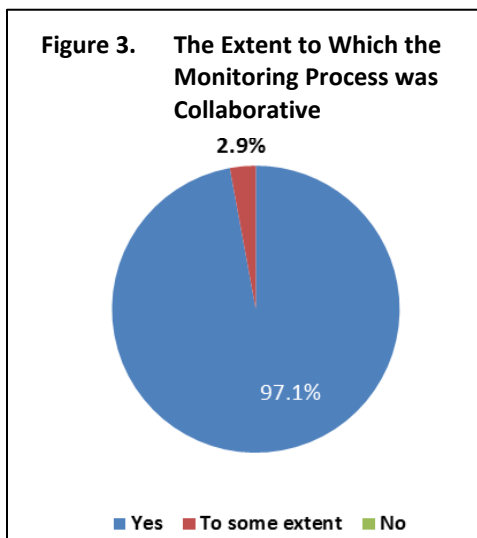
Table 4. **Usefulness of Monitoring Visit Feedback to Applicable Federal Programs**

Survey Item	Not at all helpful		Somewhat helpful		Very helpful		Response count*	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Title I	0	0.0	1	3.2	30	96.8	31	100.0
Title II	0	0.0	4	25.0	12	75.0	16	100.0
Title III	0	0.0	3	23.1	10	76.9	13	100.0
RLIS	0	0.0	2	16.7	10	83.3	12	100.0

*Excludes *not applicable* responses

Figure 2. **LEAs Planning to Implement Recommendations**
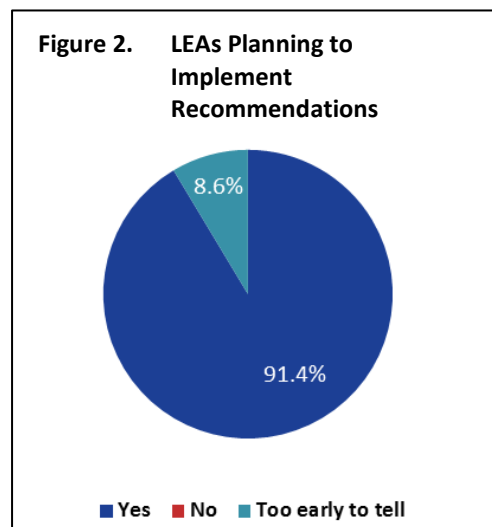
Respondents were then asked if the LEA plans to implement recommendations provided by the monitoring team. Of 35 respondents, 32 or 91.4% indicated that they plan to implement recommendations while 3 or 8.6% indicated that it was *too early to tell* (Figure 2). Respondents were then given the opportunity to expand on their response to this question. Two of the three respondents who indicated that it was *too early to tell* commented that either they have not had time to discuss the report with relevant stakeholders in their county or that even though that he or she was confident the LEA will implement the changes, it was simply too early to answer *yes* to the question.

Figure 3.   The Extent to Which the Monitoring Process was Collaborative

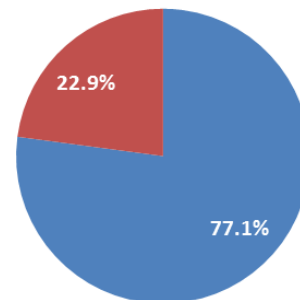2.9%

97.1%

■ Yes ■ To some extent ■ No

Most respondents commented that they had already begun making the necessary steps to implement the recommendations, some providing specific steps they had taken or plan to take in the near future. The reasons they provided for implementing the recommendations ranged from a desire to be compliant with federal programs to a desire to improve the education system in their county for students.

Respondents were also asked to what extent the monitoring process was a collaborative effort between the LEA and schools, on the one hand, and the WVDE, on the other. An overwhelming majority of respondents, 34 of 35 or 97.1% indicated that collaboration has been a prominent feature of the monitoring process (Figure 3). Only one respondent (2.9%) indicated that the process was only *somewhat* collaborative.
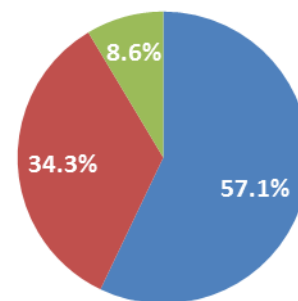
Respondents were asked the extent to which areas of improvement identified by monitoring teams aligned with improvement areas identified by the LEA. In addition, respondents were asked to indicate whether LEAs, on their own, would have come up with similar solutions to identified areas of needed improvement as those recommended by monitoring teams. Of 35 respondents 27 (77.1%) indicated that areas of improvement identified by the monitoring team aligned with those identified by the LEA, while the remaining eight (22.9%) indicated that it was *somewhat* aligned (Figure 4). On the other hand, over half of respondents (57.1%, n = 20) answered *yes* when asked, "Did the WVDE monitoring team recommend possible solutions for improvement that otherwise would not have been identified by the LEA?" Another 12 respondents (34.3%) answered *to some extent* to the same question and the remaining three (8.6%) answered *no* (Figure 4). The results suggest that consolidated monitoring visits have been instrumental to LEAs and schools, not only by assisting them to identify areas of improvement but also, and more importantly, by recommending specific solutions to bring about needed improvement.

Figure 4   Alignment Between LEAs and Monitoring Team in Identifying Areas of Improvement and Possible Solutions
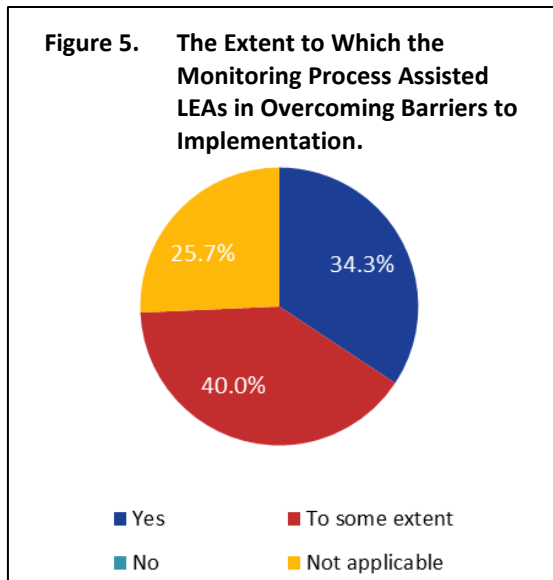
Identification of improvement areas

22.9%

77.1%

Identification of possible solutions

8.6%

34.3%

57.1%

■ Yes ■ To some extent ■ No

Figure 5. **The Extent to Which the Monitoring Process Assisted LEAs in Overcoming Barriers to Implementation.**


Furthermore, respondents were asked whether monitoring visits have assisted LEAs and/or participating schools in overcoming barriers and implementing challenging transformations for improvement. While approximately a quarter of respondents (25.7%, n = 9) said the question was *not applicable*, a little over a third (34.3%, n = 12) answered *yes* to the question and the remaining 40.0% (n = 14) answered *to some extent* (Figure 5).

## Electronic (Online) Document Storage and Additional Support

The 2011-2012 school year was a pilot year for the Electronic Document Storage System designed to facilitate monitoring visits. The system allows LEAs to upload the necessary documents so that the monitoring team can verify data prior to visiting. This allows the monitoring team to focus on conversations during on-site visits rather than spending valuable time reviewing documents. LEAs received a formal training in the fall of 2011 and little additional technical assistance was provided thereafter.

Respondents were asked whether their district had begun using the Electronic (online) Document Storage System. Over three fourths of respondents (77.1%, n = 27) answered *no*. A closer inspection of the data, however, suggests that as the 2011-2012 school year progressed, a higher percentage of respondents were indicating that they were indeed starting to use the electronic system. Whereas only 8.3% of respondents from counties where consolidated monitoring took place between September and November 2011 indicated that they were using the electronic system, that percentage increased to 14.3% and then to 37.5% for respondents from counties where consolidated monitoring took place between December 2011 and February 2012 and between March 2012 and May 2012, respectively (Figure 6).

Figure 6. **Percentage of Respondents Indicating Utilization of Online System by LEA, by Timeframe**
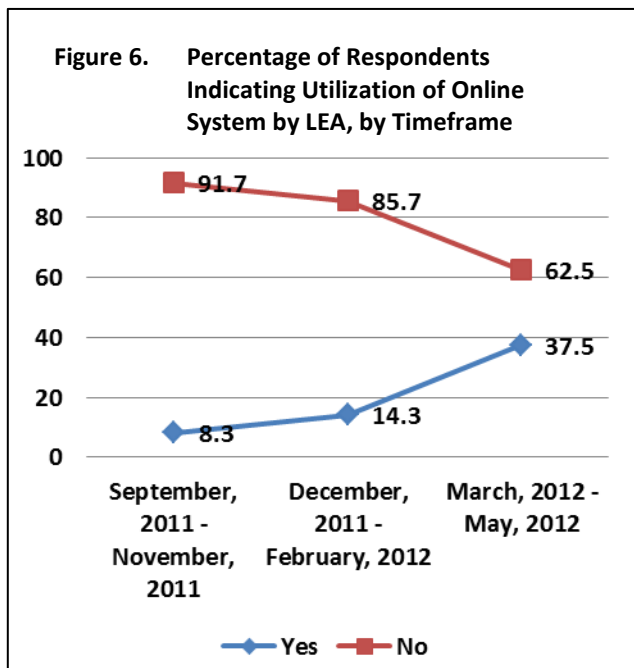
Respondents were then asked if, as a result of the monitoring visit, the LEA wanted additional support from the WVDE and, if so, how they would prefer the assistance to be delivered. Only 11 of 35 respondents (31.4%) said *yes* (Figure 7). Respondents were then given the opportunity to specify the type of support the LEA was requesting. (It should be noted

Figure 7.   Percentage of Respondents Requesting Additional Assistance
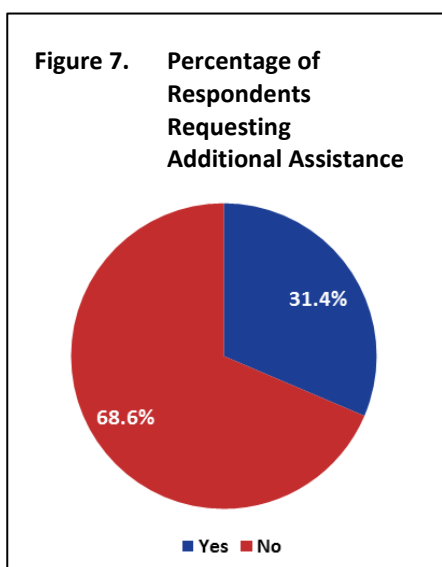
here that this follow-up question was for research purposes only. Respondents were asked to direct their requests for additional support to the respective SEA program director).

Eight respondents provided substantive comments to the follow-up question. Comments from four respondents indicate a need for professional development for LEA and school staff. Two of these comments suggested a need for additional training in use of the online document storage system for county and building level staff, while the other two respondents indicated a need for high quality staff development, more specifically according to one of the respondents, training on teaching strategies in mathematics and reading/language arts. Comments from two respondents were related to the need for assistance about the ways schools can further improve student achievement and increase parent involvement.

Of the two respondents requesting assistance to improve student achievement, one specifically requested training be provided to Title I and other key staff at the building level so they can become trainers themselves. Another respondent indicated the need for support in translating the implementation plan into a 5-year strategic plan. Comments from one additional respondent expressed a need for additional funding necessary to implement one of the recommendations of the monitoring team.

Responses to the survey item that asked respondents how they would like the additional support to be delivered suggest small-group or individualized technical assistance is the preferred mode of delivery (50%) followed by large formal professional development conferences (40%) (Table 5).

Table 5.   LEA Preference for How Additional Support Should Be Delivered

Mode of delivery	N	%
Professional development conference	8	40.0
Small group/individualized technical assistance	10	50.0
Information referral	1	5.0
Other*	1	5.0
Total	20**	100

*Webinar
** Respondents had the option to pick more than one response category.

Open-Ended Responses

Respondents were asked to provide additional comments to three open-ended survey questions. The first two questions asked respondents, based on their recent experience, to specify (a) what they believe to be the best part about the monitoring process, and (b) to identify areas of the monitoring process that need improvement. The last survey item provided respondents an opportunity to provide any additional comments they may have.

Comments from respondents to the three open-ended questions validate the overwhelmingly positive responses to the close-ended survey items presented above.

Of 35 respondents who completed the survey 27 (77%) provided comments to the first open-ended question. Respondents were very complimentary of the monitoring team and commented on their level of expertise, their willingness to share valuable insights and provide positive feedback and technical assistance. Most respondents also pointed out how the "professional," nonthreatening, and friendly approach of the monitors reduced their anxiety about the process and made it "less stressful." Many of the comments were directed toward the Office of Title I staff who, in some cases, were identified by name. The following comments, sent to the monitoring team leader via e-mail by LEA personnel in two different counties, encapsulate the nature of respondents' comments about the monitoring team.

> I just wanted to let you know how well received your staff was in visiting the schools this week. In addition, [Title I coordinator] did a tremendous job with making the central office team feel at ease throughout the process. Your entire team was, as always, very professional and made the entire school staff feel comfortable. No one was demanding or intimidating and the entire County Schools team was very impressed by the process. You know you have a wonderful team, but I always like to recognize great work when I see it. I also want to thank you for your leadership in the process. Their work this week is a direct reflection on the hard work you do to put things into place... (director of federal programs)

> ...I received your report. Thank you for sending us an efficient and kind team of monitors. They made the monitoring process actually enjoyable. When does that ever happen??? (Superintendent)

Perhaps due to the professional qualities monitoring teams bring to the process, respondents indicated that they enjoyed the face-to-face conversations during the entrance and exit conferences and interview stages of the monitoring process most. Comments indicate these were viewed as *opportunities* to (a) receive an objective assessment of their programs from an outsider, (b) showcase LEAs' and schools' accomplishments, (c) receive suggestions, and (d) ask questions and receive valuable information. In sum, as a result of the monitoring process, comments from respondents suggest LEAs and schools are viewing the SEA in a different light. The following statement from a principal conveys the overall sentiment.

> We learned that the department of education wants to be a partner

Twenty-one of 35 respondents (60%) provided comments to the second open-ended question asking them to identify areas of the monitoring process that they believe need improvement. Sixteen of those 21 respondents (76.2%) indicated that they could not identify any areas that need improvement. One of the remaining five indicated that several recommendations for Title II were not based on policy procedures. Another requested additional training on the Electronic Document Storage System. A third respondent suggested that other offices of the WVDE attempt to coordinate their events around district monitoring. The remaining two comments were incomplete and unclear.

Twelve of 35 (34.3%) respondents provided comments to the last open-ended question, requesting any additional comments. One respondent expressed concern regarding the

name of a single individual appearing in a monitoring report when, in fact, several individuals could be involved during the 3-year span that the report covers. The remaining 11 comments reiterated the type of positive feedback that has been discussed thus far. The following three comments are from principals.

> The experience was positive, thanks to the professionalism and expertise of the monitoring team.

> The monitoring process went very well. The staff that monitored us was very professional.

> I enjoyed the experience and the person doing the monitoring was very helpful and pleasant to speak with regarding all issues.

Discussion

Overall, feedback from respondents suggests the monitoring process has been quite successful in ensuring that grantees are complying with federal requirements as well as providing the necessary support to LEAs and schools to bring about county- and school-wide improvement. Recommendations and technical assistance provided by monitoring teams were rated very high in terms of their quality and usefulness. Monitoring team members were appreciated for their professionalism and their level of expertise in helping LEAs and schools overcome obstacles and identify solutions to ameliorate areas that need improvement in a process that respondents characterize 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.

This study had certain limitations. 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 can be representative of the larger population.

Recommendations

Respondent feedback in this survey has been overwhelmingly positive, and as such the Office of Research can offer only one recommendation as it relates to the consolidated monitoring process. 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 time during on-site visits to conversations with LEA and school staff, which respondents seem to value above reviewing documents. Some respondents have also expressed the need to receive training on how to utilize 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.