



**Mountain Education Charter
High School**

Mountain Education Charter High School

Federal Programs Handbook

Policies and Procedures

FY 21

“The first choice for a second chance”

Mountain Education Charter High School (MECHS) Federal Program Monitoring

Purpose of This Handbook:

The purpose of this standard operations procedures handbook is to provide a step-by-step, systematic approach to managing the rules and guidelines to ensure consistent compliance. The information provided may be used by staff to ensure that federal programs are being implemented accurately and effectively.

The step-by-step approach contained in this handbook will promote uniformity in operations as federal program staff seek to carry out official duties and responsibilities. The Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) provides local educational agencies (LEAs) extensive guidance on the overarching requirements for the federal programs via the on-site monitoring document that is used to ensure that LEAs are meeting all statutory requirements of the programs.

Mountain Education Charter High School Staff

Wayne Lovell - Principal/Superintendent

Victoria Stroud - Federal Programs Director

Sherenna Vandiver - ESOL Director

Debra Seabolt - Migrant and Homeless Coordinator

Sandy Walden - Special Education Director

Lauren Anderson - Director of Finance

Judy Waldroup – Director of Testing

Elisabeth Shaw – Personnel Director

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section/Content	Page #
OVERARCHING REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL FEDERAL PROGRAMS	
<u>Section 1 Monitoring of Schools and Programs</u>	6
Overview of Monitoring all Federal Programs	
Process for Monitoring Federal Programs	
Procedures for Identification of High Risk Schools	
Process/Procedure for Follow-up/Verification of Implementation of Required Corrective Action	
Process for Monitoring Expenditure of Funds	
<u>Section 2 Comprehensive Improvement Plan</u>	12
Procedure for Review and Approval Process for Plans	
Resolution Procedures for Unapproved Plans	
Process for Submitting Revisions	
Comprehensive Needs Assessment Procedures	
<u>Section 3 Private School</u>	13
<u>Section 4 Maintenance of Effort, Assessment Security, Reporting, EL Participation</u>	14
Procedures for determining maintenance of effort	
Comparability of Services	
Assessment Security Policy/Plan	
Procedure for Addressing Data Quality & Security Breaches	
Procedure for Test Material Distribution and Return	
<u>Section 5 Internal Controls, Expenditures, Inventory, Drawdowns, Cost Principles</u>	16
Allowability Procedures	
Procedure for Documenting Expenditures	
Segregation of Duties Procedures	
Procurement Procedure	
Bids and Quotations Procedures	
Conflict of Interest Policy	
Conflict of Interest Procedure	
Time and Effort Internal Controls	
Stipend Procedures	
Travel Policy and Procedures	
Procedure of LEA Verification for Suspension and Debarment	
Inventory & Property Management Internal Controls	
Equipment Disposition Procedures	
Cash Management Procedures	

FUDUCIARY RESPONSIBILITY

Section 6 Within District Allocation Procedures.....25

[Procedures for Allocating Funds](#)

[Procedures for Reservation of Funds](#)

[Procedures for Rank Order](#)

Section 7 Professional Qualifications..... 26

[Professional Qualifications](#)

[Procedure for Ensuring Parent Notification of Right to Request the Prof. Qualifications of Teachers and Paraprofessionals](#)

Section 8 Notice to Parents.....27

[Procedures for Notification to the Parents of EL](#)

INDIVIDUAL FEDERAL PROGRAMS

Section 9 Parent Involvement 28

[Procedures Used to Determine Student Eligibility](#)

[Procedures on How LEA Provides Technical Assistance on PI Requirements.](#)

[Plan to Carry Out Effective Parental Involvement Practices](#)

[Procedures on How Parents Are Able to Provide Input on the Parental Involvement Policy](#)

[Procedures on How Parents Are Able to Provide Input on School PI Plan](#)

[Districtwide Parental Involvement Plan](#)

[Process to Collect/Review Effectiveness of District PI Policy](#)

[Procedures on How Parents Are Able to Provide Input on the School Parent Compact](#)

[Procedures for Building Capacity for Parent Involvement](#)

Section 10 School Improvement 1003(A) 32

Section 11 School Improvement 1003(G) (SIG)..... 33

Section 12 Services for Homeless Children & Youth 34

[Procedures for Education for Homeless Children and Youth](#)

[LEA Procedure for Providing Awareness & Contact Information](#)

Section 13 Services for Neglected & Delinquent Children..... 38

Section 14 Prevention and Intervention Programs for Children who are Neglected, Delinquent or At-Risk 38

Section 15 Services for Foster Care Children..... 39

[Transportation](#)

Section 16 Title IV, Part A Student Support and Academic Enrichment 40

Section 17 Title V, Part B-Rural and Low-Income Schools 41

Section 18 Title III, Part A – Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and

Immigrant Students 42

[Process for Ensuring Private Schools Have Opportunity for Accessing Title III, Part A Programs](#)

[and Services for Eligible Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Children](#)

[Services for EL Students](#)

[EL-Related Procedures; Staff Interview Responses](#)

[Procedures Regarding Parental Waiver of Direct ESOL Services](#)

[Title III Language Instruction Education Programs for English Learners](#)

[EL-Focused Professional Development](#)

[Parent Engagement for ELs](#)

[Section 19 Title I Part C- Education of Migratory Children \(MEP\) Services..... 45](#)

[History and Statutory Purpose](#)

[Section 20 Individuals with Disabilities..... 47](#)

[Procedure for Referral for Special Education Evaluation-Child Find](#)

[Parent Request Procedures](#)

[Private and Home School Child Find Procedures](#)

[Procedure for Referral for Special Education Evaluation](#)

OVERARCHING REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL FEDERAL PROGRAMS

SECTION 1 - MONITORING OF SCHOOLS AND PROGRAMS

Overview of monitoring all Federal Programs

The Georgia Department of Education requires that Mountain Education Charter High School monitors the implementation of Federal Programs and the expenditure of all funds associated with the program. The specific requirements are as follows:

LEA/Program Directors will conduct self-monitoring of its schools and programs sufficient to ensure compliance with Federal Program requirements, including Title I, Part A; Title I, Part A- School Improvement; Title I, Part C; Title I, Part D; Title II, Part A; Title III, Part A; Title IV, Part A; McKinney Vento Act, and IDEA.

MECHS Program Directors will undergo training from GaDOE and other sources to maintain proficiency in program compliance requirements. Program Directors include the Federal Programs Director, Title II Coordinator, Title III Coordinator, Title IV Coordinator, McKinney Vento/Migrant/Foster Care Liaison, and Special Education Director.

Program Directors will provide technical assistance to the school.

Program Director self-monitoring will include monitoring all program expenditures to verify that all program expenditures comply with program requirements.

Federal Programs Director will maintain all documentation LEA may need for future auditing/monitoring according to the LEA Monitoring Form, which is issued annually by GaDOE.

LEA will undergo monitoring by GaDOE on a three-year cycle. LEA/Program Director will participate in training and technical assistance updates as provided by GaDOE prior to monitoring visit.

The ESEA requires the State educational agency (SEA) to monitor the implementation of program requirements and the expenditure of federal funds. Georgia's monitoring process consists of four major components:

1. Monitoring of Expenditures – Local educational agencies (LEAs) must submit for approval an annual budget through the Consolidated Application process. Title I Education Program Specialists review each application and budget to ensure that expenditures are appropriate for the program area before approving LEA budgets. Once budgets are approved, Title I Education Program Specialists track how well LEAs are requesting funds for expenditures to ensure that LEAs are likely to meet the expenditure requirements for Title I funds.
2. Single Audit – LEAs with single audit findings are flagged for technical assistance (see procedures on audit resolution).
3. On-site Monitoring – An SEA on-site Cross-Functional Monitoring Team visits a LEA to apply the criteria included in the *LEA Monitoring Form*.
4. Self-Monitoring Checklist – LEAs not receiving an on-site visit complete appropriate Checklists and submit it to the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE).

Monitoring and Technical Assistance

Monitoring of schools is a critical component of ensuring that compliance is taking place at each school. During the summer prior to the beginning of the new school year, the district Program Director meets with all Site Directors and Central Office administrators. Policies, procedures and guidance for the operating each federal program are provided during this summer leadership meeting.

Monthly meetings are also held with central office personnel to discuss status and updates of federal programs. Program Directors utilizes phone calls, emails and visits to sites to monitor federal programs and federal personnel. Specific budgetary items are discussed with the financial personnel, Site Directors and the Principal. Monthly reports are generated by the financial director and reviewed for accuracy by the Federal Programs Director. Monthly payroll reports are generated by the Payroll clerk and verified by the Federal Programs Director. Site Directors approve all monthly payroll for federal personnel and then it is approved by the Federal Programs Director before final authorization is complete.

In addition to meeting with Site Directors and federally funded staff, the Federal Programs Director meets with Family Engagement Liaisons to plan and discuss Title requirements and plan activities. These meetings are an opportunity to discuss Title I in detail and also an opportunity to discuss content specific information with each of the above.

All Title I services are supplemental. This process is monitored through on-going technical assistance, site visits, and through the budget process

Onsite Monitoring Procedures

The Title I program is subjected to on-going monitoring by the Title I Director throughout the school year. The Title I Director conducts on-site monitoring of all sites a minimum of two times per year for compliance. Feedback is provided to the Site Directors, Title I Tutors via written communication and or conferences. In addition, emails, meetings, and phone conversations take place throughout the year as a means of providing on-going monitoring and communication with sites.

Timeline for Monitoring of Title I

- Summer Workshop for Site Directors of all sites to update them on any new guidelines and to provide guidance for Title I-A, Title II-A, and IDEA;

Information will include but not limited to the following:

- ☐ Budget
- ☐ Ordering
- ☐ Compliance Issues
- ☐ Parental Involvement
- ☐ Schoolwide
- ☐ Monitoring
- ☐ Academic Achievement
- ☐ Inventory

- August- May. The Program Director reviews the plans and the budgets to ensure that funds are being spent according to the plan and the plan has all the necessary components. Payroll checked monthly, budget reviewed monthly. Monthly staff meetings. Time sheets checked monthly.

- June- CLIP review, Statewide Federal Programs Meeting, MECHS Administrative Meeting update on Federal Programs provided. Parent Policy and Parent Compact final revision.
- July/August – Submit CLIP
- August/September – Submit budget – Prepare materials for FEL’s
- September –October- Meet with Family Engagement Liaisons, plan Annual Meetings. Monitor sites and meet with Site Directors
- December- Submit budget amendment with carry overs.
- January –Monitor budget. Midyear Technical Assistance update on Title I, Title II, IDEA and School Improvement Plan
- February-prepare surveys for parents, staff. Surveys posted
- March- Review data and surveys for parents and staff conduct Needs Assessment
- April – reviews of Parent Policy, Parent Compact, Schoolwide Plan, CLIP, Needs Assessment Data
- May-final budget amendment for Title I, Title II, IDEA, final revision of Parent Policy, compact and Schoolwide plan. Periodic certification completed.

Monitoring of Neglected & Delinquent Facilities

There are no facilities for neglected students in Mountain Education Charter High School.

Data Analysis

Data review for MECHS is compiled and discussed during administrative meetings and at the Board of Education meetings. MECHS central office administrators meet regularly analyze data with the intent of improving instruction. Site Directors are required to discuss this information with all staff to ensure that they fully understand the data presented.

Results of Technical Assistance

The Title I Director maintains a file of training and communication throughout the year by the Title I director; this includes all staff training, handouts, meeting agendas, meeting notes, etc. Ongoing monitoring of the program is conducted by the Title I Director to ensure compliance.

Process for Monitoring Federal Programs

The specific Program Directors participates in training and updates from GaDOE and other sources to maintain proficiency in program compliance requirements. The directors receive technical assistance from Program Specialists at the Department of Education annual Federal Programs Conference other Program specific conferences, as well as at regional meetings. On-going information/training to keep abreast of timelines and new guidance occurs through e-mail and phone calls with the area Program Specialists. The Federal Program Director is enabled with the necessary skills and knowledge to provide on-going technical assistance to the staffs at all schools.

The Federal Program director begins working in early spring to collect and analyze data including various reports, surveys and test

data. RESA staff and/or outside experts may be utilized to provide data analysis workshops in addition to the on-going data analysis conducted on-site by school administrators. This data is utilized in conjunction with the annual needs assessments. Interpretation of these data guide Title academic planning, parental involvement, professional learning, and instructional purchases that are identified in the CLIP.

All federal program expenditures will be monitored by the Federal Programs Director to verify that each program's expenditures comply with program requirements and that correct requisition procedures have been followed. Monthly reports from financial are requested expenditures and verify that the appropriate personnel are coded and paid from their federal budgets. All documentation relating to each specific federal program including those needed for future auditing/monitoring according to the LEA Cross-Functional Monitoring will be maintained by the Federal Programs Director and/or the MECHS County Board of Education Finance Office.

In addition, the director will conduct on-site visits to ensure the purchases have been made and are being utilized in accordance with the budget submitted.

The Federal Program Director will monitor the MECHS schoolwide program through face to face technical assistance meetings, as well as, completion of the periodic certification, required schoolwide plans, Parent Involvement Plan, Equity Plan, Migrant Implementation Plans, and notices to parents. The Federal Program Director reviews the MECHS plan and completes the GaDOE Title I Checklist for Schoolwide Programs on an annual basis. Schoolwide Plans, Parent Involvement Activities may be placed on the system webpage. Technical assistance is provided with the principal and/or assistant principal for instruction about the results. Federal Program updates and technical assistance are provided to the system administrators during Administrative Team meetings.

ON-SITE PROCEDURES: At the beginning of the school year, the Site Directors at MECHS are provided face to face meetings with updated documentation of federal information. This happens in a group setting, and again in an individual based setting with the Federal Programs Director. Both times Site Directors have the opportunity to ask questions or gain more information about the requirements. Each meeting, the Site Directors have the opportunity to ask questions as well as receive further clarification regarding the requirements of federal programs. Emails serve as calendar reminders for item due dates and completion of federal documentation. Sites are provided with technical assistance throughout the school year and by a variety of means which includes on-site visits, meetings, phone calls, emails, etc.

Procedures for Identification of High Risk Schools

MECHS is one school one system.

Process/Procedure for Follow-up/Verification of Implementation of Required Corrective Action

System Level Process/Procedure: After the on-site cross functional monitoring visit, the LEA will receive a comprehensive monitoring report which will contain recommendations, findings, and required actions for the federal programs. If a corrective action plan is required, the Federal Program Director will respond in a timely manner and submit the appropriate documentation to the appropriate office. Implementation of the corrective action plan will be monitored by the appropriate personnel.

Process for Monitoring Expenditure of Funds

All expenditure requisitions are submitted to the Federal Programs Director for approval or rejection. The Federal Programs Director will review each requisition to determine if the expenditure is allowable or unallowable based on EDGAR, the annual needs assessment, SWP, Equity Gap, CLIP and budget. The director then assigns the function and object code for the purchase by referring to the budget sheets for each federal program on the consolidated application budget pages and submits the requisition to the Financial Director.

The Federal Program Director would collaborate with the Technology Director if any technology equipment and items (hardware, software, digital cameras) were purchased through Title I, Part A, and Title II-A are necessary and allowable according to identified needs and budget restrictions. These items purchased utilizing federal funds with a useful life of one or more years are tagged and inventoried.

BUDGETS: The Federal Programs Director works with the Finance Department to review monthly budget status sheets, the budget submitted through the consolidated application, as well as periodic payroll reports. These are used to monitor expenditures and verify that the appropriate personnel are coded and paid from Title I and Title II A budgets.

COPIES OF REPORTS, CORRECTIVE ACTIONS, & RESULTS OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE: MECHS is not identified as a Focus School. If MECHS is identified, corrective actions will be required by the Title I Program Director for accurately completing and maintaining the necessary documentation for implementation of the Title I program. The reports (budgets, plans, periodic certification, School Improvement letters, FLP information, and additional information sent to parents) will be maintained both at the school level and central office level. Corrective actions may be noted in e-mail communications and meetings between the Program Director and school personnel.

DATA ANALYSIS: MECHS utilizes a variety of means to provide a visual representation of data as the data relates to the System and School Action Plans. All data is disaggregated by subgroup and to the individual site level. The Program Director presents data to the Board of Education at a Fall meeting each school year and provides a summary of all test data in a concise written manual for administration and board members. During the summer, central office personnel and school level personnel analyze progress toward CCRPI goals and the schoolwide plan. The data is reviewed with parents and community stakeholders ongoing. The stakeholders offer suggestions and approval of the CLIP implementation plans. The action plans describe critical issues, goals, timelines, and strategies for implementation.

FEEDBACK ON SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANS: A minimum of two meetings are typically held in regard to the school improvement plans. These occur after the initial, beginning of the year Title I meeting, in which all components of the program are discussed. Discussions in the first meeting include what is required for update and addition to the plans as related to the Schoolwide Program Checklist. These meetings are held with individual school personnel in the fall using the checklist as a guide. The second meeting is held at the end of the second semester to determine the progress plan in completing the Title I Schoolwide Program Checklist.

INITIAL TITLE I MEETING: The Program Director meets with Title I administrators in August, which is the time designated by the superintendent for all schools to review student assessment data. The Program Director meets with the Title I administrators to discuss the program requirements for the year, and provide updates from the annual Title I conference. System information is again reviewed with the Family Engagement Liaison's and school administrators who meet in the Spring of each year and the beginning of the year to discuss the School Improvement progress, the CLIP, and required components of the overall Title I program.

MONITORING: On-Site Monitoring On-site monitoring has been found to be the most effective way to fully support the particular needs of each school. The Program Director meets with the site director, when appropriate, to discuss Title I Budget expenditures and other Title I requirements, specifically the Title I Schoolwide Plan and the school's Parent Involvement Plan. The plans are reviewed and a schoolwide checklist and parent involvement checklist is provided to ensure all requirements of the program have been met. There is continuing feedback between the Program Director and school level personnel through emails, phone calls, on-site visits, and monthly meetings. At least once during the school year, a formal meeting is held on-site to review personnel expenditures and obligations through the end of the grant period, as well as other object code expenditures.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT: The needs assessment is provided by the annual needs assessment process provided through Title II- Part A, the school level professional learning plan, and the data revealed from analysis of the Georgia Milestones Assessment System, writing assessments, and specific student needs (i.e., subgroups). Schools must develop action plans for the areas in need of improvement and then plan expenditures accordingly.

INVOLVEMENT IN POLICIES AND PROCEDURES: Site Directors are involved in all aspects of the Title I program. They are invited to meetings, provided guidelines and expectations and are requested to provide feedback on those as well due dates and other general procedures. Site Directors are directly responsible for the presentation, review, and revision of their school's procedures as related to the school improvement plan, parent involvement plan and activities. Samples of required information are provided to site directors (i.e., parents' right to know, School Improvement notification, etc.) to utilize with their site needs.

REQUISITION PROCESS: The Federal Programs Director approves the Title I and Title II budget. The budget is submitted and approved by the state. MECHS adheres to the Internal Controls Listed Below.

- 1) Submitting the requisition to the Program Director.
- 2) The Program Director double-checks the account number with the approved school budget and the descriptions placed within the approved budget on the consolidated application.
- 3) The Program Director forwards the requisition to the Finance Director in the Finance Department to sign, as well as, check the purchase against the budget submitted through the consolidated application.
- 4) The Finance Director forwards the requisition to the Superintendent.
- 5) The Superintendent forwards to the Accounts Payable Secretary/Clerk for the final signature.
- 6) At this point, a purchase can be made.

MECHS uses the chart of accounts, and Grants Accounting Online Reporting System (GAORS) provided by GADOE to plan, budget, expend, and drawdown funds.

SECTION 2 - COMPREHENSIVE LEA IMPROVEMENT PLAN (CLIP)

Procedure for Review and Approval Process for LEA Plans (CLIP, SWP, and PI)

The LEA Comprehensive Improvement Plan is updated annually.

CLIP revisions take place annually using prior year data and needs assessment information.

The CLIP serves as the plan detailing coordination of various federal programs and identification of needs and in-turn budgeting for such needs with federal funds. Department Directors, school and system leaders, as well as community and parent stakeholders are involved in the revision process. Parents are able to provide input at the sites and on line on our webpage. The district conducts an annual survey each year that allows parents to provide input. Parent input is examined and considered from these surveys. Documentation includes sign-in sheets, agendas, meeting minutes, emails, and returned plans with comments. Copies of comments are kept on file and put in meeting minutes. Input is also sought from site leaders and district leaders during the annual leadership retreat held in June. The Title I Director gathers all input and updates the Consolidated Action Plan. The plan is submitted to the Superintendent for final approval. The SWP is posted on the school's website and continues to be a living document as the year progresses.

Resolution Procedures for Unapproved Plans-Resolution

If the GaDOE requests revisions the Title I Director retrieves the requested changes from the Audit Trail in the GaDOE portal. The Title I Director then communicates with the appropriate personnel to ensure that requested changes are completed in the consolidated application. The title I Director provides technical assistance as appropriate, makes corrections and/or approves corrections in the CLIP, and then resubmits the CLIP. This process is continued until the system's CLIP has been approved by the GaDOE.

Process for Submitting Revisions

All amendments to any documents are approved by the school's administration and Federal Programs Director. The Federal Programs Director submits amendments for approval to the Area Title I Coordinator.

Comprehensive Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan/Improvement Plan Procedures

MECHS conducts an annual needs assessment. The process includes collecting and examining information about the school/system and then utilizes that data in structured decision making that will determine priority goals, develop a plan, and allocate funds and resources. The needs assessment is conducted by gathering school data, surveys, and meetings with stakeholders. The timeline for the MECHS Needs Assessment is that it begins in January and runs through June. During this time, MECHS staff prepare surveys in the January, Collect and analyze data from appropriate sources/programs in February through April, Conduct Surveys (Parents, Teachers, Paraprofessionals, Site Directors, and Central Office Staff) in March and April, Contact Secondary Institution personnel for feedback in April and May and Complete needs assessment Worksheet and meet with necessary additional stakeholders in May through June.

MECHS conducted the needs assessment utilizing the survey results of all stakeholders. Additional data sources used in the review were the yearly MECHS student survey results, the 2018 AdvancEd reporting and survey results, School Improvement Plan (SIP), student achievement/test data including the End of Course Tests and input from stakeholders. Additional academic needs are identified through the analysis of student data and the disaggregated test scores.

MECHS stakeholders then meet each semester for impact checks to review the Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan is a living document and is adjusted based on identified needs and timelines.

SECTION 3 - PRIVATE SCHOOLS: SERVICES TO ELIGIBLE PRIVATE SCHOOL CHILDREN

MECHS does not provide services to students enrolled in private schools. In the event that MECHS begins to serve private schools, this handbook will be amended to reflect all requirements for services to private school children.

SECTION 4 - MAINTENANCE OF EFFORT (MOE), ASSESSMENT SECURITY, REPORTING, EL PARTICIPATION

Procedures for determining maintenance of effort (MOE), including funds to be excluded from MOE calculations

GADOE compares the fiscal effort of the preceding year to the second preceding fiscal year and makes the maintenance of effort determination available to the system through a marked “met” or “unmet” on the consolidated application. Documentation for MOE is only required for districts that do not meet the required maintenance of effort.

The Districts’ MOE is completed by the GaDOE.

Comparability of Services

MECHS is only one school and does not report comparability. In the event that MECHS begins to report comparability, this handbook will be amended to reflect all comparability requirements.

Assessment Security Policy/Plan

The System Testing Coordinator (STC) is in charge of Georgia Milestones End of Course state assessments. Since all Georgia Milestones assessments are given online, paper tests are not received and therefore there is no need to keep paper tests secure. The test tickets are secure materials and each School/Site Testing Coordinator is responsible for printing the tickets and securing them in a locked area that is available only to the testing coordinator and site administrator. After testing is completed and sites receive scores, the test tickets are shredded. Testing irregularities at the site level are immediately reported to the STC who in turns reports to the Georgia Department of Education. The GaDOE makes a determination of whether the test score(s) should be invalidated. The irregularity or invalidation code is entered into the assessment system by the STC.

A similar process is used for administering the PSAT. Each site has a person in charge of administering the PSAT and tests are delivered directly from the vendor to the site. The PSAT site coordinator accounts for all tests and answer documents received and places the tests in a secured location only accessible by the testing coordinator and the site administrator until the time of the test administration. After completion of the test, the testing coordinator collects all materials, and returns answer documents following instructions from the vendor.

All testing procedures follow the Georgia Student Assessment Program Student Assessment Handbook (SAH) published by the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE). The GaDOE updates the handbook each year and local testing examiners are trained in all policies and procedures each year using the handbook and other presentations/webinars provided by the GaDOE. The complete handbook can be found at the following website:

<http://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Assessment/Pages/Information-For-Educators.aspx>

The System Testing Coordinator attends all trainings provided by the GaDOE. Training is redelivered to site test coordinators/examiners before every main test administration. Site test coordinators then train site level persons as needed. As a general rule the site test coordinator administers all tests. Training includes test preparation, test administration, ethics, security, post test procedures, and reporting of irregularities. The system testing coordinator maintains records of agendas, handouts, and sign-in sheets.

Procedure for Addressing Data Quality & Security Breaches

Any action that compromises test security or leads to the invalidation of an individual student’s or a group of students’ test scores will be viewed by the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) as inappropriate use or handling of tests and will be treated as such.

Any concern regarding test security must be reported to the system testing coordinator immediately who then reports to the GaDOE. If there is a need to report to the Professional Standards Commission (PSC), the system superintendent is notified as well as the PSC. Below are some guidelines to assist system personnel in determining which activities might compromise test security or score validity. A more complete list is found in the Student Assessment Handbook.

It is a breach of test security if anyone performs any of the following:

- coaches examinees during testing, or alters or interferes with examinees' responses in any way;
- gives examinees access to test questions or prompts prior to testing;
- copies, reproduces, or uses in any manner inconsistent with test security regulations all or any portion of secure test booklets;
- makes answers available to examinees;
- reads or reviews test questions before, during (unless specified in the IEP, IAP, or ELL/TPC), or after testing;
- questions students about test content after the test administration;
- fails to follow security regulations for distribution and return of secure test materials as directed, or fails to account for all secure test materials before, during, and after testing (NOTE: lost test booklets constitute a breach of test security and will result in a referral to PSC);
- uses or handles secure test booklets and answer documents for any purpose other than examination;
- fails to follow administration directions for the test;
- participates in, directs, aids, counsels, assists, encourages, or fails to report any of these prohibited acts;
- erases, marks answers, or alters responses on an answer document.

Failure to safeguard test materials or to comply with test administration procedures could adversely affect an employee's certification status. Such must be reported to the GaDOE and may be referred to the Professional Standards Commission as failure to adhere to established policies and procedures. Under no circumstances may any tests be reproduced or duplicated for individual or group use unless authorized by GaDOE. Failure to comply with the U.S. Copyright Laws protecting these materials could result in legal action. Any instance of violation of copyright laws must be reported immediately to the GaDOE.

Procedure for Test Material Distribution and Return

All Georgia Milestones End of Course assessments are administered online; therefore, no test booklets are handled at the system. Each site testing coordinator prints out Test Tickets to be used at the respective site and those materials are kept in a locked cabinet until the test coordinator needs them to administer the tests. The tickets are returned to the cabinet once testing is complete then they are shredded when scores arrive. If/When paper tests are needed due to an accommodation such as large print or Braille; the materials will be inventoried by the system testing coordinator and will then be delivered to the site when needed. All materials will be inventoried by the site testing coordinator and kept in a locked cabinet until needed. After the test is administered the site testing coordinator will notify the system testing coordinator to pick up materials. Testing procedures, rules and regulations used by Mountain Education Charter High School System follow documents found on the GaDOE website (<http://www.doe.k12.ga.us>) and in the Student Assessment Handbook provided by the GaDOE.

SECTION 5 – INTERNAL CONTROLS, EXPENDITURES, INVENTORY, DRAWDOWNS, COST PRINCIPLES- ALL PROGRAMS

Allowability Procedures

Expenditure of Federal Funds: Federal funds are utilized to provide only services that are not mandated by state or federal law to students enrolled in the Mountain Education Charter High School who meet eligibility requirements for each program. The School may not use Federal funds to supplant and must use Federal funds to supplement funds that would be made available from non-Federal sources for the education of students (2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E). Expenditures are evaluated to ensure they are reasonable, allocable, and necessary.

Federal and state guidelines regarding expenditure of Federal funds are followed. Federal funds expended on personnel are monitored separately through payroll reports and timekeeping reports (Kronos). Periodic certifications for Federal programs verify that duties and schedules are consistent with the positions. Periodic certifications are collected once yearly (May) for those Federally funded staff members who are paid 100% with Federal funds (2 CFR §200.430(i)(1)(i, vii)). Split-funded personnel sign into Kronos timekeeping system and monthly reports from the system document the amount of time spent on Federal program duties. Other expenses are documented through purchase orders, which have been approved through the requisition process, and through travel authorizations, which are submitted through Doc e Fill with automatic calculations and information available for reimbursements on mileage and meals.

PAYROLL Program Directors receive a monthly report by fund that shows the names of the personnel paid with Federal funds. The monthly report is reviewed by the Federal Programs Directors to ensure that the report matches personnel names submitted on the budget sheet by the Site Administrator. If the names do not match, an in depth review occurs and any discrepancies are resolved through payroll transfers and/or journal entries. The payroll report is reviewed monthly by Federal Program Directors.

OTHER EXPENDITURES Funds available for non-payroll allowable expenditures are expended through the following process:

Allowable items are approved by Federal Program Directors. If the need for revision to budgeted dollars by site arrives during the school year the Federal Programs Directors shift budgeted dollars by site as needed.

The budget is uploaded into the consolidated application. Approval is obtained through the Georgia Department of Education.

Procedure for Documenting Expenditures (Authorizations, Allowability)

Procedure for documenting expenditures such as registration, travel on requisitions for purchases, and other expenses:

All purchasing for the Federal programs will follow the rules and guidelines of the Mountain Education Charter High School and meet Georgia Auditing Guidelines.

The following steps are followed in the expenditure of Federal funds after the budget which is part of the Consolidated Application is approved. All federally funded activities must follow the process below to ensure that the Program Director, who has firsthand knowledge of federal and state program implementation requirements, examines each request for allowability (2 CFR §200.302(b)(7), 2 CFR §200.403, 2 CFR Part 200.420-200.475, 2 CFR §200.432, 2 CFR §200.421, 200.454(a-b), 2 CFR §200.94, 2 CFR §200.453).

- Purchase requisitions are housed in Doc e Fill paperless solution. Purchases requisitions may be generated centrally or at the site level. (EXCEPTIONS: Technology purchases may originate with the Technology Director. This is to ensure compatibility with existing technology and band width at the sites.
- Each purchase requisition is submitted electronically through Doc e Fill to the Director who then electronically approves or rejects the purchase requisition. Approvals or rejections are dictated by the allowable/unallowable expenditures as dictated by EDGAR, OMB Circulars (such as A-87), 2 CFR Part 200, the annual needs assessment, CLIP and budget. The Director checks for appropriate documentation such as agenda, hotel slip, sign in, the event is within the period of grant performance, or other evidence the Director may ask for verification. The Director then assigns the fund, program code, function and object code for the purchase by referring to the budget sheets for each Federal program on the consolidated application budget pages and the Georgia state chart of accounts.
- Requisitions for purchases also require the electronic approval of the Superintendent.

- The approved requisition is electronically forwarded to the Financial Administrative Assistant (accounts payable) for final approval and archive. Once a purchase requisition is archived in accounts payable it becomes a purchase order.
- The Financial Administrative Assistant notifies the vendor of the goods to be purchased.
- When the purchases are received, the packing slip is checked against the original order. Packing slip is forwarded to Accounts Payable through an AP approval form in Doc e Fill.
- All items costing shelf life of >1 year are labeled appropriately and inventoried by the appropriate persons. Inventories are maintained by the Federal Programs clerical staff and are monitored by the Federal Programs Director.
- Upon receipt of an invoice, the Financial Administrative Assistant matches the invoice, purchase order, and packing slip. This becomes a complete voucher package. Vouchers are entered into the accounts payable module of the accounting system. A voucher register is balanced to the invoices and printed by the Financial Administrative Assistant.
- The Finance Director re-checks all documentation before processing checks for payment. Checks are processed, posted to the ledger and mailed to vendors.
- Quarterly the Finance Director checks, as needed, the Request for Reimbursement DE0147 for the drawdown of funds. The Federal Program Director monitors the DE0147 and supporting documentation to ensure appropriate funds are being drawn down (2 CFR §200.302(b)(5)).

Segregation of duties procedures

The electronic approval system allows for the segregation of duties. Requests must be reviewed and approved at various levels before they are processed (2 CFR §200.303(a)).

Federal and state guidelines regarding expenditure of Federal funds are followed. Federal funds expended on personnel are monitored separately through payroll reports and timekeeping reports (Kronos). Periodic certifications for Federal programs verify that duties and schedules are consistent with the positions. Periodic certifications are collected twice yearly (January and May) for those Federally funded staff members who are paid 100% with Federal funds. Split-funded personnel sign into Kronos timekeeping system and monthly reports from the system document the amount of time spent on Federal program duties. Other expenses are documented through purchase orders, which have been approved through the requisition process, and through travel authorizations, which are submitted through Doc e Fill with automatic calculations and information available for reimbursements on mileage and meals.

PAYROLL Program Directors receive a monthly report by fund that shows the names of the personnel paid with Federal funds. The monthly report is reviewed by the Federal Programs Directors to ensure that the report matches personnel names submitted on the budget sheet by the Site Administrator. If the names do not match, an in depth review occurs and any discrepancies are resolved through payroll transfers and/or journal entries. The payroll report is reviewed monthly by Federal Program Directors.

Procurement Procedure

The following steps are followed in the expenditure of Federal funds after the budget, which is part of the Consolidated Application, is approved.

- Purchase requisitions are housed in Doc e Fill paperless solution. Purchases requisitions may be generated centrally or at the site level. (EXCEPTIONS: Technology purchases may originate with the Technology Director. This is to ensure compatibility with existing technology and band width at the sites.
- Each purchase a requisition is submitted electronically through Doc e Fill to the Federal Programs Director who then electronically approves or rejects the purchase requisition. Approvals or rejections are dictated by the allowable/unallowable expenditures as dictated by EDGAR, the annual needs assessment, CLIP and budget. The Federal Programs Director then assigns the fund, program code, function and object code for the purchase by referring to the budget sheets for each Federal program on the consolidated application budget pages and the Georgia state chart of accounts.
- Requisitions for purchases also require the electronic approval of the Superintendent.

- The approved requisition is electronically forwarded to the Financial Administrative Assistant (accounts payable) for final approval and archive. Once a purchase requisition is archived in accounts payable it becomes a purchase order.
- The Financial Administrative Assistant notifies the vendor of the goods to be purchased.
- When the purchases are received, the packing slip is checked against the original order. Packing slip is forwarded to Accounts Payable through an AP approval form in Doc e Fill.
- All items costing shelf life of >1 year are labeled appropriately and inventoried by the appropriate persons. Inventories are maintained by the Federal Programs clerical staff and are monitored by the Federal Programs Director.
- Upon receipt of an invoice, the Financial Administrative Assistant matches the invoice, purchase order, and packing slip. This becomes a complete voucher package. Vouchers are entered into the accounts payable module of the accounting system. A voucher register is balanced to the invoices and printed by the Financial Administrative Assistant.
- The Finance Director re-checks all documentation before processing checks for payment. Checks are processed, posted to the ledger and mailed to vendors.

Bids and Quotations Procedures

Two written quotes are required for individual items or services with an estimated cost of \$10,000.00 or more. Quotes are evaluated based on the quoted cost, the performance specifications, product quality, product availability, delivery considerations and compatibility with the organizations programs. Deviations from this procedure would be when there is a sole source provider for the service or item.

For micro purchases of goods and services up to \$5,000 (individually or in aggregate) where there is no sole source vendor, the Director has discretion to recommend the purchase without soliciting additional quotations or Internet searches (2 CFR §200.67, 48 CFR Subpart 2.1).

In accordance with 2 CFR §200.320, competitive proposals are required for goods and services in excess of \$150,000.

Conflict of Interest Policy

BOARD POLICY

Descriptor Code: BHA Board Conflict of Interest

The Mountain Education Charter High School Board shall adhere to these Conflict of Interest provisions, as set forth in state law.

Domain VII: Financial Governance

1 No Board member shall use or attempt to use his or her official position to secure unwarranted privileges, advantages, employment for himself or herself, any of his or her immediate family members, or others.

2 No Board member shall act in his or her official capacity in any matter in which he or she, any of his or her immediate family members, or any business organization in which he or she has a material financial interest, that would reasonably be expected to impair his or her objectivity or independence of judgment. Compliance with Code Section 20-2-505 shall not constitute a violation of this paragraph.

3 No Board member shall solicit or accept or knowingly allow any of his or her immediate family members or any business organization in which he or she has an interest to solicit or accept any gift, favor, loan, political contribution, service, promise of future employment, or other thing of value based upon an understanding that the gift, favor, loan, contribution, service, promise, or other thing of value was given or offered for the purpose of influencing that board member in the discharge of his or her official duties. This paragraph shall not apply to the solicitation or acceptance of contributions to the campaign of an announced candidate for elective public office if the local board of education member has no knowledge or reason to believe that the campaign contribution, if accepted, was given with the intent to influence the local board of education member in the 2 discharge of his or her official duties. For purposes of this paragraph, a gift, favor, loan, contribution, service, promise, or other thing of value shall not include the items contained in subparagraphs (a)(2)(A) through (a)(2)(J) of Code Section 16-10-2.1

4 No Board member shall use, or knowingly allow to be used, his or her official position or any information not generally available to the members of the public which he or she receives or acquires in the course of and by reason of his or her official position for the purpose of securing financial gain for himself or herself, any of his or her immediate family members, or any business organization with which he or she is associated.

5 No Board member or any of his or her immediate family members or any business organization in which he or she has an interest shall represent any person or party other than the local board of education or local school system in connection with any cause, proceeding, application, or other matter pending before the local school system in which he or she serves or in any proceeding involving the local school system in which he or she serves.

6 No Board member shall be prohibited from making an inquiry for information on behalf of a constituent if no fee, reward, or other thing of value is promised to, given to, or accepted by the local board of education member or any of his or her immediate family members in return therefor.

7 No Board member shall be deemed in conflict with these provisions if, by reason of his or her participation in any matter required to be voted upon by the MECHS Board, no material or monetary gain accrues to him or her as a member of any profession, occupation, or group to any greater extent than any gain could reasonably be expected to accrue to any other member of that profession, occupation, or group.

8 No Board member may also be an officer of any organization that sells goods or services to that local school system, except as provided in Code Section 20-2- 505 and excluding nonprofit membership organizations.

9 No Board member shall sell to any county board any supplies or equipment used, consumed, or necessary in the operation of any public school in this state unless there are fewer than three sources for such supplies or equipment within the county; provided, however, that any purchase pursuant to this subsection for supplies or equipment that is equal to or greater than \$10,000.00 shall be approved by a majority of the members of the board in an open public meeting. Any member violating this shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

10 No local board may do business with a bank or financial institution where a Board member is an employee, stockholder, director or officer when such member owns 30% or more stock in that institution.

11 No Board member may have a financial interest in school buses, bus equipment or supplies, provide services for buses owned by the Board, or sell gasoline to the Board from a corporation in which the Board member is a shareholder.

12 No Board member shall accept a monetary fee or honorarium in excess of \$101.00 for a speaking engagement, participation in a seminar, discussion panel, or other activity which directly relates to the official duties of that public officer or the office of that public officer. Actual and reasonable expenses for food, beverages, travel, lodging, and registration for a meeting which are provided to permit participation in a panel or speaking engagement at the meeting shall not be monetary fees or honoraria.

Conduct As Board Member

1 No Board member shall disclose to or discuss with any information which is subject to attorney/client privilege belonging to the local board of education to any person other than other Board members, the Board attorney, the local school superintendent, or persons designated by the local school superintendent for such purposes unless such privilege has been waived by a majority vote of the whole Board.

2 No Board member shall vote on the employment or promotion of any of his or her immediate family members. No immediate family member of a Board member may be employed or promoted unless a public, recorded vote is taken separately from all other personnel matters.

3 No Board member may be employed in any position in the school district in which they serve.

4 No Board member shall hold another county office.

5 No Board member shall be employed by the State Department of Education or serve concurrently as a member of the State Board of Education.

6 No Board member shall serve on the governing body of a private elementary or secondary educational institution. Each member of this Board understands and acknowledges that no person shall be eligible for election as a member of a local board of education unless he or she:

1 Has read and understands the code of ethics and the conflict of interest provisions applicable to members of local boards of education and has agreed to abide by them; and

2 Has agreed to annually disclose compliance with the State Board of Education's policy on training for members of local boards of education, the code of ethics of the local board of education, and the conflict of interest provisions applicable to members of local boards of education. Each person offering his or her candidacy for election as a member of a local board of education shall file an affidavit with the officer before whom such person has qualified for such election prior to or at the time of qualifying, which affidavit shall affirm that he or she meets all of the qualifications required pursuant to this subsection. This subsection shall apply only to local board of education members elected or appointed on or after July 1, 2010.

Conflict of Interest Procedure

Employees of Mountain Education Charter High School who are engaged in the selection, award and administration of contracts shall abide by the following:

- No employee, officer, or agent may participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by a Federal award if he or she has a real or apparent conflict of interest (2 CFR §200.112).
- Such a conflict of interest would arise when the employee, officer, or agent, any member of his or her immediate family, his or her partner, or an organization which employs or is about to employ any of the parties indicated herein, has a financial or other interest in or a tangible personal benefit from a firm considered for a contract.
- Officers, employees, and agents of the Mountain Education Charter School System may neither solicit nor accept gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from contractors or parties to subcontracts.
- Violation of these standards will result in reporting of said personnel to the Superintendent of Schools and if appropriate, local authorities. Any misconduct could result in suspension, loss of employment, and any other consequences that are applicable by law.

Time and Effort Internal Controls

Monthly Kronos time reports and monthly payroll detail reports are reviewed by the Federal Program Directors to ensure that time worked is in agreement with the payroll charge to the Federal program in the accounting system. The Federal Programs Directors meet with the Finance Director, Payroll Coordinator and the Superintendent as needed to discuss the current state of the all federal program funds.

In order to assure that charges are accurate, allowable and properly allocated to support Time and Effort records:

- Activities, for which employees are compensated, are reviewed and signed off on by designated administrative staff at various levels before they are processed.
- Professional Learning charges are reviewed prior to approval by the program director/coordinator.
- The system procedure (via electronic program) for the approval of charges is followed by the system staff members.
- The system School Activity Account Financial Accounting Handbook is followed.

Stipend Procedures

Any stipends included in the approved grant budget, are paid out through payroll processing upon receipt of supporting documentation of attendance at the approved event. The Federal program directors accumulate and verify the documentation and remit this to the Payroll Coordinator for processing.

Stipends will be paid on an individual hourly rate up to a maximum of \$49.15 per hour, at a maximum of 8 hours per day, and a maximum of 3 professional learning days per event.

Travel Policy and Procedures

The following steps are used to document registration and travel expenditures:

- The employee or Site Administrator receives permission from the Program Director to attend a Federally-funded activity 2 CFR 200.404(a)).
- Registration Fees, if applicable, may be paid at the central office level or may be paid by the employee and included on the Doc e Fill travel reimbursement form.
- After attending the activity, the employee submits a travel form through Doc e Fill with the appropriate supporting documentation attached (2 CFR §200.474(b)). This form is submitted to the Site Administrator for his/her signature.
- The Site Administrator submits the completed and signed Doc e Fill travel form to the Program Director for approval signature or rejection and funding coding.
- The Program Director submits the Doc e Fill approved travel form to the Superintendent.
- The Superintendent submits the Doc e Fill approved travel form to the Finance Director.
- The Finance Director submits the Doc e Fill approved travel form to accounts payable. The travel form is then archived and is ready for payment.

Mountain Education Charter High School follows the Georgia State Accounting Office's official travel regulations.

<https://sao.georgia.gov/travel>

Procedure of LEA Verification for Suspension and Debarment

The System for Management and Debarment (SAM) is utilized to verify that a vendor is not debarred PRIOR TO the preparation of a purchase requisition. School procedure is to not use any debarred vendors for any transactions.

Inventory & Property Management Internal Controls

Inventory & Property Management

According to 2 C.F.R. Part 200.33, equipment is defined as an article of nonexpendable, tangible personal property (including information technology systems) having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost which equals or exceeds the lesser of the capitalization level established by the non-profit organization for financial statement purposes, or \$5,000. Items qualifying as inventoried will be labeled and will be verified by a designee of the building-level or program administrator each year. The completed and signed inventory is submitted to the Director/Coordinator of each Federal Program. Materials purchased for use in Federal programs are to be utilized in the capacity for which they were purchased. Any equipment, materials and/or supplies purchased with Federal funds are considered solely for the use of that program.

Federal inventory is documented in a spreadsheet that is updated each time equipment is purchased. If no inventory is purchased in the prior year the Federal Programs Director will sign the spreadsheet at the start of the new year. All Federal property is identified by a specific label or marking. The database includes a description of the item, serial number, fain number, vendor name, date of purchase, funding (ie. Title I), cost, school, equipment location, and current condition (2 CFR §200.313 (d). If inventory is at a Site then Site personnel must annually verify the location and condition of the equipment.

Procedure for Use of Equipment

Equipment, materials and/or supplies purchased with federal funds is to be used only for the purposes outlined in the grant and may not to be used off-campus without prior written permission from the Program Director (2 CFR 2 CFR §200.313(a)(1,3),(c)).

Person Responsible

The individual federal program directors/coordinators are responsible for maintaining documentation.

Disposal of Unusable Equipment

At the close of the Federal program, or in the event the equipment is no longer usable, materials and equipment will be disposed of following the MECHS disposition of property which requires approval by the Governing Board (2 CFR §200.313(d)). Equipment that is damaged, lost, or stolen will be reported to the individual directors/coordinators of the Federal Programs. Damaged and inoperable equipment will be returned to the Federal Program director's/coordinator's office to be removed from the inventory. Lost equipment will be verified by the site director's and noted in the inventory and stolen equipment will require a police report. In the event that a Federal program is no longer available, equipment purchased with Federal funds will be transferred equitably to the inventory of another functioning Federal program 2 CFR §200.313 (e)

Disposal of Technology Equipment

Mountain Education Charter High School - Procedure for Disposition of Technology

1. Remove item from use and remove it from active inventory.
2. Place item on inactive inventory and place item in storage. Annually, the inactive inventory is placed on the board meeting agenda to be declared surplus. Once the inactive inventory has been declared surplus then a disposal company is called for pick-up. The disposal company comes on site and picks up surplus equipment.

The disposal company, (Atlanta Recycling Co.), disposes of the surplus equipment and sends us documentation of proper disposal in accordance with EPA rules and regulations.

Equipment Disposition Procedures

Disposal of Unusable Equipment

At the close of the Federal program, or in the event the equipment is no longer usable, materials and equipment will be disposed of following the MECHS disposition of property which requires approval by the Governing Board. Equipment that is damaged, lost, or stolen will be reported to the individual directors/coordinators of the Federal Programs. Damaged and inoperable equipment will be

returned to the Federal Program director's/coordinator's office to be removed from the inventory. Lost equipment will be verified by the site director's and noted in the inventory and stolen equipment will require a police report. In the event that a Federal program is no longer available, equipment purchased with Federal funds will be transferred equitably to the inventory of another functioning Federal program.

Disposal of Technology Equipment

Mountain Education Charter High School - Procedure for Disposition of Technology

1. Remove item from use and remove it from active inventory.
2. Place item on inactive inventory and place item in storage. Annually, the inactive inventory is placed on the board meeting agenda to be declared surplus. Once the inactive inventory has been declared surplus then a disposal company is called for pick-up. The disposal company comes on site and picks up surplus equipment.

The disposal company, (Atlanta Recycling Co.), disposes of the surplus equipment and sends us documentation of proper disposal in accordance with EPA rules and regulations.

Cash Management Procedures

Quarterly, the Finance Director checks, as needed, the Request for Reimbursement DE0147 for the drawdown of funds. Drawdowns are based on actual expenditures and are always on a reimbursement basis so as not to carry a cash balance of Federal funds. The Federal Program Director monitors the DE0147 and supporting documentation to ensure appropriate funds are being drawn down (2 CFR §200.302(b)(5)). At the end of the grant period, the Finance Director creates and completes the completion report. Any balance due to the School calculates on the completion report and automatically generates a DE0147 for the final balance. All Federal reimbursements are direct deposits to the School operating account. No checks are received. Bank reconciliations are performed monthly (2 CFR §200.302(b)(6) and 2 CFR §200.305).

There are no sub-recipients to these funds.

Risk Assessment: The Finance Director is familiar with the guidelines concerning Cash Management and understands that program costs are to be paid for by the entity funds before the reimbursement from the GaDOE is received. A worksheet is prepared to reflect expenditures incurred since the last request and compares them to any cash that may be on hand for the Federal program. It is then determined what Federal program expenditures are shown in fund ledger budget reports. Ledger reports may be generated at any time to reflect the cash needs of the Federal program. The Finance Director also consults with Federal Programs Director, Payroll Coordinator and Accounts Payable about any needed adjustments before a requisition is initiated. Requests are submitted electronically to GaDOE using the Grants Accounting Online Reporting System (GAORS). After approving requests, GaDOE directly deposit the funds into the School's operating bank account and are then recorded in the respective Federal fund. The amount deposited into the operating account is compared to the amount requested by the School and any variances are investigated.

Information and Communication: The Finance Director is familiar with "Financial Management for Georgia Local Units of Administration" which provides guidelines for requesting funds from GaDOE. A copy remains on file at the Board and one can be accessed through the GaDOE website. Annual Trainings at both GAINS and GASBO are attended by the Finance Director. Before preparing the requisition, the Financial Clerk communicates with Federal Program Directors and Payroll Coordinator about any needed adjustments to the ledger. The requisition is prepared by the Finance Director and reviewed and signed off on by the Federal Program Directors and the Superintendent. Federal and GaDOE guidelines and The Administration Handbook on EDGAR, regarding cash management activities, are available for reference purposes.

The monthly amount deposited into the operating account is compared to the amount requested by the Board. Variances between the actual deposit of funds and the requisition of Federal funds are investigated by the Finance Director and, if necessary, the GaDOE Grants Accounting office is contacted for assistance.

Monitoring: The Finance Director reviews all the requisitions with the Federal Program Directors before transmitting them to GaDOE. While reviewing the requisitions, the Finance Director refers to the available budgeted amount for Federal programs and the expenditures for the prior quarter, to ensure that the amount being requisitioned is reasonable. Balances are checked throughout the

month to assure that funding levels are appropriate and to ascertain if fund balances are low or excessive. The Finance Director and the Federal Program Directors perform a follow up on problems or weaknesses, if any, identified in the cash management system.

Control Environment: School management has assigned sufficient knowledgeable personnel to manage the drawdown of Federal funds. All funds drawn down are to reimbursement for funds already spent. Those who handle cash management responsibilities are familiar with GaDOE's guidelines and procedures for requesting Federal funds (2 CFR §200.302(b)(6)). The School's process of requesting funds from GaDOE has been found to be realistic to meet the Federal program's cash needs.

SECTION- WITHIN DISTRICT ALLOCATION PROCEDURES

Procedures for Allocating Funds

MECHS is one school and does not allocate funds within the district.

MECHS is neither under a state-ordered nor court-ordered desegregation plan. MECHS has a statewide attendance zone. We adhere to open enrollment guidelines per state guidance.

MECHS is not residential treatment facility.

Procedures for Reservation of Funds

MECHS awards set-aside money for McKinney Vento students based on the needs of the students and Homeless Liaison recommendation. MECHS does not serve centers for neglected and delinquent children or receive funding for these services.

MECHS has a Family Engagement Liaison at each MECHS Site and a Parent Involvement Coordinator to oversee parent and family engagement within district. MECHS does not serve Private Schools.

Procedures for Rank Order

MECHS is one school and one system with a Schoolwide Title I Program.

Section 7 PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Purpose

The goal of the Title II-A program is for the school to have a teaching staff that is highly qualified and effective in helping all students, regardless of individual learning needs, to achieve challenging state content, master academic achievement standards and to allow every student to have an equitable opportunity to receive quality instruction in terms of teacher quality, teacher experience, and class size.

Professional Qualifications

MECHS requires all teachers to hold a Clearance Certificate.

Procedure for Ensuring Parent Notification of Right to Request the Prof. Qualifications of Teachers and Paraprofessionals

Right to Know

Parent's Right to Request a Teacher's and a Paraprofessional's Qualifications:

By law, LEAs are required to notify parents of their 'Right to Know' the professional qualifications of the student's classroom teachers. In Georgia, within 30 calendar days from the start of school, LEAs are required to notify parents in all schools that they may request, and the LEA will provide the parents on request, information regarding the professional qualifications of the student's classroom teachers or paraprofessionals, including at a minimum, the following:

- Whether the student's teacher—
 - has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
 - is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived; and
 - is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher.
- Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

LEAs should as best practice:

- Notify parents in multiple ways in order to ensure that all parents have the opportunity to receive the information. This may include, but is not limited to a LEA or school handbook, a letter mailed home, inclusion in a newsletter or brochure, posting on a website, and/or a school-wide email.
- Notify parents in a format that is accessible in language and format and ensures the notification, or document that contains the notification, includes the point of contact information by position, the school or LEA name, the day, month and year of notification.
- Maintain records that document the dissemination of the Right to Know notifications in multiple forms to the parents of all students.

SECTION 8 – NOTICE TO PARENTS

Procedures for Notification to Parents of EL

This form is completed in English and the native/primary home language annually with information containing current test scores, graduation rates, and exiting criteria. At this time, the parent/guardian also has the choice to waive English language services for their child. See the Parental Waiver of ESOL Services section for more information.

SECTION 9 - PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Procedures used to Determine Student Eligibility

MECHS is a Schoolwide Title I school. All students are eligible for the MECHS Title I program.

Procedures on How LEA Provides Technical Assistance on PI Requirements

Information is provided to school personnel and parents on how to build parent capacity through Family Engagement Liaison's during meetings, through response to parent needs on surveys, through information received from the GADOE Parent Engagement department, and through student handbooks, newsletters/flyers. Guidance and sample communications to schools are provided by the LEA for the development of Parental Involvement Plans, Schoolwide plans, and School-Parent Compacts.

Technical Assistance from Federal Programs Director concerning the status of MECHS is provided to principals during the summer during an administrative meeting. Parents are informed through the school handbooks, a meeting with the Family Engagement Liaison at the beginning of the school year, and postings on websites.

Plan to Carry Out Effective Parental Involvement Practices

The Federal Programs Director meets with school administrators each summer to review Title I policies and requirements. The Federal Programs Director, also, meets with each Family Engagement Liaison for each Site at MECHS.

Parent involvement workshops and activities are planned for year from the annual survey results. All parent meetings are academically based to build parent capacity to support academic achievement. Materials are also purchased from expressed needs. Many opportunities are provided for building strong parent capacity. The purpose is to ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among the schools, parents, and the community to improve student academic achievement through the following activities:

- Annual meetings
- Conferences
- E-mail communications
- Phone calls
- Parent workshops and activities
- Family nights
- Open Houses
- Annual notification of School Improvement status
- Newsletters/flyers/brochures
- Website information

Procedures on How Parents Are Able to Provide Input on the Parental Involvement Policy

Parent Involvement Plans

The School parent involvement plan is reviewed and revised annually with parents and other stakeholders (teachers, site directors, administrators, and other school personnel). All Title I parents, teachers, administrators, and other school personnel in the school are invited to the meetings to provide input. Notifications of the meetings are posted on the website, letters, robo calls and all available communication venues of the meeting dates to parents and other stakeholders are also notified by invitation sent to each individual

site. Parent notices are sent home from the school. The Title I Director will be responsible for collecting the required Information (agenda, meeting notes, and sign in sheets). The Parent Involvement Policy checklist is applied to the policy. The revision date is clearly marked on each plan. An invitation is given to all stakeholders in the school and meeting dates are given in school newsletters and through the school's web site. The FEL in each school is responsible for meeting set up and collecting the required Information (agenda, meeting notes, and sign in sheets). Plans include the required components of the parent involvement checklist.

Plans include activities/workshops that have been identified and requested through the previous year's annual parent involvement survey. School improvement and parent involvement plans are posted on the website, available at the school or hard copies may be sent home upon request.

Parent involvement workshops and activities are planned for the following year from the annual spring survey results. Many opportunities are provided for building strong parent capacity. The purpose is to ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among the school, parents, and the community to improve student academic achievement through at minimum, the following activities:

- Monthly contacts with mentors
- Annual meetings
- Conferences
- E-mail communications
- Phone calls
- Parent workshops and activities
- Family nights
- Volunteering
- Open Houses
- Newsletters/flyers/brochures
- Website information
- Board of Education meetings

Procedures on How Parents Are Able to Provide Input on the School Parental Involvement Plan

Information is provided to school personnel and parents on how to build parent capacity through presentations made during meetings, through response to parent needs on surveys, and through student handbooks, newsletters/flyers. Each student at MECH has a mentor this individual makes monthly contacts with student and parents. These mentors are work closely with these students and parents to communicate and build capacity. MECH is required to have a school/district parent involvement plan. It is the responsibility of the Federal Programs Director to make sure that our plan is reviewed and revised annually. The review and revision will occur in the spring of the year. Revision dates will be clearly marked on the plan. Parents will be notified using a variety of methods (based on preferred means of communication) of meeting dates at each site to review the school/district plan. Also parents may review and provide feedback by viewing the plan, which is available on the school webpage. Additionally, Parents complete surveys in the spring regarding parent involvement practices and activities. The Family Engagement Liaisons (FEL) will be responsible for setting up meetings and collecting required information (agenda, meeting notes, and sign in sheets) from each site.

Districtwide Parental Involvement Plan

Mountain Education Charter High School Title I Parent Involvement Plan 2016-2017

MECHS is taking ambitious steps to ensure that our students have the skills and knowledge that their future success requires. To accomplish this goal of preparing students, we are setting higher standards and expectations for our school and for all students. To meet our goal, it is critical that we forge strong parent school relationships through parent involvement activities.

In the fall an annual Title I meeting will be conducted to inform parents and stakeholders about the Title I program. These meetings will occur at each site at various times and dates. The school will utilize various sources for informing parents about Title I: Title I section on the webpage, which includes parent plans, compacts and access to newsletters and events. The parent involvement plan is also placed in the student handbook and available at each site. Compacts are presented to students and parents during the registration

process.

Each school year, MECHS will hold public meetings in the spring. Parents, teachers, and school personnel will be invited to attend. At the meeting, there will be an opportunity for input into the Title I Program, the Parent Plan, Parent Compact and CLIP. The Parent Involvement Program will be assessed annually as to the overall effectiveness. Parents will be involved in the planning, review and improvement of the Title I Program through surveys, conferences, meetings, and parent compacts. The school will collect all non-satisfactory parents' comments regarding school plans. Information from annual evaluations will be used to improve the Title I programs overall, to update the policies and procedures as appropriate, to increase the effectiveness of the parent program, to increase parent participation.

Two-way communication will be encouraged through meetings, conferences, newsletters, phone calls, parent visitation and our website. Sharing student's performance and assessment will be accomplished through school reports, student records and reports, Mountain Education Charter School's website, test results reports, progress reports, and conferences. Title I funding will be reserved each year for parent involvement and MECHS staff will work to build ties between home and school.

Activities and information provided during the school year:

- Reports and notifications on student progress and assessment results
- A mentor assigned to each student who will communicate monthly with parents and students regarding academic progress and school events
- Information concerning the Title I program, compacts, parent plans and CLIP
- Opportunities for parents to understand the curriculum, and achievement standards
- Notification of school distinctions based on ESEA
- Meetings at each site on the following topics: Financial Aid, Post Secondary Options, College/Technical School visits, Spring Senior Parent Night, Career Nights, GA Apply to College Night, Dual Enrollment, Family Holiday Event, additional topics will vary at sites
- Life Action Plans developed for each student and shared with parents
- Family Engagement Liaisons at each site to assist parents and provide resources
- Student Services staff work together to coordinate parental involvement and resources

Updated 5/18/2016

Distribution of Completed Plans

Mountain Education Charter High School posts the following plans on the school website:

Plans include: parent involvement policies, Title I schoolwide plans, school compacts, parents' right to know, complaint procedures. Parental input into the content of each plan is solicited during multiple meetings throughout the school year.

The Parent Involvement Plan is, also, distributed in the School Handbook upon student registration.

Process to Collect/Review Effectiveness of District PI Policy

Information is provided to school personnel and parents on how to build parent capacity through presentations made during meetings, through response to parent needs on surveys, and through student handbooks, newsletters/flyers. Each student at MECH has a mentor this individual makes monthly contacts with student and parents. These mentors work closely with these students and parents to communicate and build capacity. MECH is required to have a school/district parent involvement plan. It is the responsibility of the Federal Programs Director to make sure that our plan is reviewed and revised annually (ESEA Sec. 2101(2), Sec. 2122(b)(2); 2 CFR §200.328(a)). The review and revision will occur in the spring of the year. Revision dates will be clearly marked on the plan. Parents will be notified using a variety of methods (based on preferred means of communication) of meeting dates at each site to review the school/district plan. Also parents may review and provide feedback by viewing the plan, which is available on the school webpage. Additionally, Parents complete surveys in the spring regarding parent involvement practices and activities. The Family Engagement

Liaisons (FEL) will be responsible for setting up meetings and collecting required information (agenda, meeting notes, and sign in sheets) from each site.

Procedures on How Parents Are Able to Provide Input on the School Parent Compact

Parents Are Able to Provide Input on the School Parent Compact

MECHS is required to have parent compacts. It is the responsibility of the Title 1 Director to make sure that our compact is reviewed and revised annually. The review and revision will occur in the spring of the year. Revision dates will be clearly marked on the compact. Parents will be notified using a variety of methods (based on preferred means of communication) of meeting dates at each site to review the school compact. Family Engagement Liaison's at each site will collect feedback regarding compacts and deliver any feedback to the Federal Programs Director. Also parents may review and provide feedback by viewing the compact, which is available on the school webpage.

Parent compacts will include responsibilities for the teacher, parent, and students. Compacts will be distributed to all parties involved for signatures in the fall of the year. Copies of the signed parent compacts are kept on file at each site and a copy will be maintained by Title 1 at the central office.

Procedures for Building Capacity for Parent Involvement

Information is provided to school personnel and parents on how to build parent capacity through presentations made during meetings, through response to parent needs on surveys, through information received from the GADOE Parent Engagement department, and through student handbooks, newsletters/flyers. The Parent Involvement Coordinator considers and plans based on the six requirements for building capacity by answering the following questions:

1. What strategies/materials have been offered to parents on understanding academic content standards?
2. What training has been offered to parents related to literacy and the use of technology?
3. How have faculty and staff been encouraged to communicate with and involve parents in their child's education?
4. What efforts have been made to foster parental involvement in Pre-K programs? (N/A)
5. What attempts have been made to communicate parental involvement information to parents using language parents can understand?
6. What other support do parents receive for parental involvement activities?

SECTION 10 - SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT 1003(A)

MECHS is not classified as an alert, focus or priority school. In the event that MECHS begins to receive these funds, this handbook will be amended to reflect all requirements for the funding.

Section 11 - SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT 1003(G) (SIG)

MECHS is not an alert, focus or priority school and does not receive School Improvement 1003(G) (SIG) funding. In the event that MECHS begins to receive these funds, this handbook will be amended to reflect all requirements for the funding.

SECTION 12 – SERVICES FOR HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Procedures for Education for Homeless Children and Youth

The McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Act was reauthorized in January of 2002 under Title VII-B (42 USC 11431et seq.). The following is the policy of the United States Congress:

- Each State educational agency shall ensure that each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as provided to other children and youths
- In any State that has a compulsory residency requirement as a component of the State's compulsory school attendance laws or other laws, regulations, practices, or policies that may act as a barrier to the enrollment, attendance, or success in school of homeless children and youths the State will review and undertake steps to revise such laws, regulations, practices, or policies to ensure that homeless children and youth are afforded the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youths
- Homelessness alone is not sufficient reason to separate students from the mainstream school environment
- Homeless children and youth should have access to the education and other services that such children and youths need to ensure that such children and youths have an opportunity to meet the same challenging State student academic achievement standards to which all students are held

Procedures:

Procedures are to be based on the requirements set forth in the McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Act and guidance documents from the Georgia Department of Education and National Center for Homeless Education. These procedures are to ensure the following:

- Homeless children have equal access to the same public preschool programs, administered by the State agency, as provided to other children in the State
- Homeless youth and youth separated from the public schools are identified and accorded equal access to appropriate secondary education and support services
- Homeless children and youth who meet the relevant eligibility criteria are able to participate in Federal, State, or local before and after school care programs.

1. Assignment of Homeless Liaison

The Superintendent or designee will designate a district level certified employee to serve as the Homeless Liaison for students in Mountain Education Charter High School. The Liaison shall be familiar with community agencies and resources that would be beneficial for families experiencing homelessness.

2. Responsibilities of the Homeless Liaison

- a. To ensure homeless children and youths are identified by school personnel and through coordination activities with other entities and agencies;
- b. To ensure homeless children and youth enroll in and have a full and equal opportunity to succeed in school;
- c. To ensure homeless families, children and youth receive educational services for which such families, children and youth are eligible (including Head Start and Even Start programs and preschool programs administered by the school system) and referrals to health care services, dental services, mental health services and other appropriate services
- d. To ensure the parents or guardians of homeless children and youth are informed of the educational and related opportunities available to their children and are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children;
- e. To ensure public notice of the educational rights of homeless children and youth is disseminated where such children and youth receive services under the McKinney Vento Act;
- f. To ensure enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance with regulations
- g. To ensure that parents or guardians of homeless children or youth and any unaccompanied youth, are fully informed of all transportation services, including transportation to the school of origin

3. Identification

The Homeless Liaison shall meet with Registrars and site Social Workers to provide training in identifying students who may qualify as homeless. The information should include the importance of sensitivity in dealing with families experiencing homelessness. Staff should be provided with written materials and given opportunities to ask questions. In addition, posters about the McKinney-Vento Act shall be displayed in the areas in or near the enrollment offices of each school site and local agencies that offer services for families experiencing homelessness.

During the enrollment process each parent/guardian is given the *Residency Questionnaire* to screen for students who may be potentially eligible for the McKinney Vento Program. When either of the first two questions are marked “Yes”, the Social Worker for the site is to be contacted to further investigate eligibility. After obtaining additional information the Social Worker is to contact the Homeless Liaison for Mountain Education Charter High School. The Homeless Liaison will have the final determination of eligibility.

The Homeless Liaison shall be responsible for updating State Reporting screens in the student data system for each eligible student with appropriate current criteria.

- 1) Code Homeless as “Yes”
- 2) Code Primary Night Shelter: 1- Shelters, 2- Double-Up, 3-Unsheltered or 4-Hotel/Motel.
- 3) Code Environment: 1-intitution for neglected, 2- institution for delinquent, 3- homeless, or 4- unaccompanied youth

The School Social Workers should maintain familiarity with community agencies that have resources to help families experiencing homelessness. Posters about the McKinney Vento Program are to be given to these agencies by the social workers at each site.

4. School Selection

Students will be eligible to attend their school of origin according to the child’s best interest. In determining the best interests of the student, efforts shall be made to consider the wishes of the parent, the distance from home to school of origin and other factors that may apply or be considered by the parent.

5. Enrollment

After students have been identified as eligible for homeless status under the McKinney-Vento Act they shall be immediately enrolled in school. As directed by The Act, the requirement to produced required documents for enrollment (birth certificates, discipline record, grades, residence, immunization, etc.) shall be waived. The Registrar, Homeless Liaison or site School Workers will assist the parent/guardian in obtaining the documents so as to complete the academic record for the student.

6. Transportation

Mountain Education Charter High School does not provide transportation to school. In order to help reduce transportation as a barrier to school attendance gas cards are given to students. For homeless students who have no way to get to school, site personnel, the homeless liaison, and central office personnel coordinate taxi services. In the case of students traveling to and from their school of origin, appropriate assistance to access transportation will be coordinated.

7. Disputes

When families or unaccompanied youth disagree with a decision (i.e., school enrollment or school selection) made by the school or Homeless Liaison the parent/guardian shall be given written explanation of the decision. The explanation letter should also contain the rights of the parent/guardian as well as the right to appeal the decision.

Complaints made to the School System regarding the disagreement should be processed in accordance with the complaint policy of Mountain Education Charter High School, titled *Equal Opportunity Employment*, Descriptor Code: GAAA. The Homeless Liaison shall keep parents/guardians informed until the disagreement is resolved.

8. School Services

The Homeless Liaison is to update eligibility with the nutrition director as students are approved. School supplies will be issued as needed and/or requested. A portion of donated supplies shall be retained by each school for the purpose of assisting homeless students. When donated supplies have been depleted, students enrolled in Title I schools shall use Title I resources.

The Homeless Liaison shall ensure that school personnel assist students in the McKinney Vento Program to access comparable services such as Title I programs, career and technical programs, gifted and talented, transportation and nutrition.

9. Community Agencies

Communication with agencies which offer services to homeless families should be maintained. The social worker at each site is knowledgeable about the community agencies in his/her county and the type of assistance that can be provided to our students.

10. Comprehensive Local Implementation Plan and Descriptors

The Homeless Liaison collaborates with the Title I Director to write the descriptors for the Comprehensive Local Implementation Plan. The annual Homeless Children and Youth Survey shall be completed by the Liaison. The amount of the Set-Aside is to be determined after a review of the expenses from the previous fiscal year and needs of the students.

Questions to guide the discussion could include the following:

- Who are the key partners serving students and families?
- What information do these partners have about our students and families?
- What if any, barriers exist to providing services to our students and families?
- How much did we spend last year?
- Where do we expect to spend next year?
- How many students were identified as homeless last year compared to this year?
- What does the assessment data tell us about the academic needs of our students?

11. Professional Development

Current information on regulations and interpretation of regulations for the McKinney Vento Act shall be considered an important part of the program. As such, the Homeless Liaison would be granted permission to participate in programs presented by the Georgia Department of Education. Webinars and guidance documents from National Center for Homeless Education are encouraged.

12. Awarding Partial Credit

Registrars complete intake surveys of students making an initial identification of McKinney Vento. MECHS Registrars then contact the McKinney Vento Liaison to fully assess the student and identify as McKinney Vento. Once identified as McKinney Vento student then, the Central Office counselor is notified regarding McKinney Vento status. Prior school is notified by Central Office Counselor to consult with them regarding their prior coursework and knowledge of McKinney Vento status. MECHS will then move forward with the course(s) the student was previously working in and allow for test out options taking each Unit Test. As identified with code 160-5-1.15, student will receive credit based off of a 70 average or higher on a numerical scale. Once Partial Credit is awarded, McKinney Vento student will work in a self-paced manner on all future courses.

LEA Procedure for Providing Awareness & Contact Information

School Social Workers at each Mountain Education site have been given posters on the educational rights of students experiencing homelessness to post at their sites. Additional posters have been supplied to the social workers to ensure that information is posted at the local Department of Family and Children Services, Department of Juvenile Justice, Department of Health and local mental health centers. The posters have the name and contact information of the Homeless Liaison for Mountain Education and the regional contact person for the Georgia Department of Education.

Section 13- SERVICES FOR NEGLECTED AND DELINQUENT CHILDREN

MECHS does not serve centers for neglected and delinquent children or receive funding for these services.

Section 14- PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN WHO ARE NEGLECTED, DELINQUENT, OR AT-RISK

MECHS does not receive funding for children for neglected, delinquent or at-risk.

MECHS does recognize that the students who are enrolled at MECHS may be considered at-risk and in our coordination of efforts, we state the following:

“ At-Risk in Mountain Education Charter High School (MECHS): Due to the fact that MECHS is a second-chance school for students who have dropped out of high school in their area of residence, all of MECHS’s students are seen as “at risk”. MECHS has a TEAM Mentoring Program in which staff members track and mentor all students for their attendance, academic success, and being on track for graduation. Mountain Education Charter High School (MECHS) collaborates with Piedmont Migrant Agency, DFACS, Family Connections, DJJ, and social workers to monitor mobility/identification and needs of the at-risk population. As these students enter the school system, registrars ask a series of questions in conjunction with the Home Language Survey to assess the status of students. Following the initial interview, the social worker may meet with the students and families and DFACS to determine student/family needs. Students are administered the appropriate screening tests and interviewed to determine needs. Among the educational services offered to these students are regular education setting, Remedial education services, special education services, English language learner services, and mentoring/counseling services. “At risk” and mobile students are referred on an ongoing basis by directors, counselors, TEAM mentors, and teachers at each satellite site to the system social worker. Teachers report academic achievement to the specific parties and parents on an ongoing basis. Additionally, the social worker monitors and reports status to other necessary agencies throughout the school year.”

Section 15- SERVICES FOR FOSTER CARE CHILDREN

Transportation

Mountain Education Charter High School is a nontraditional public evening high school. MECHS staff coordinates with other agencies, as necessary, to support transportation of any student in foster care to retain continuity at student's school of origin.

LEA Foster Care POC

LEA Superintendent

LEA Federal Program Director

Central DFCS Director

DFCS Director- By County

DFCS EPAC Support Monitor

Others as appropriate- DFCS Case Manager, CASA, DJJ, Site SSW

LEA and DFCS will work cooperatively to ensure that transportation is not a barrier to the educational stability of children in foster care. To that end, the partners will follow the steps outlined below if they face difficulty reaching an agreement on how to pay for additional transportation costs:

1. As outlined in Section A, it is pre-determined that DFCS will assume financial responsibility for costs associated with reimbursing foster parents for travel or the cost of contracting with local transportation companies.
2. Initial transportation planning will occur at the lowest level and may include other key players. Disputes will be forwarded to the LEA Federal Program Director and DFCS County Director for resolution.
3. Every effort will be made by the LEA and DFCS to avoid disrupting the daily attendance of students in foster care due to transportation disputes. In accordance with ESEA section 1112(c)(5)(B)(i), the LEA will provide or arrange for adequate and appropriate transportation.

The LEA Foster Care POC will collaborate with local DFCS and other key players to ensure the smooth implementation of the provisions outlined in ESSA to include: best interest determinations, appropriate and timely transportation plans, managing disputes, training for LEA staff with regards to the unique challenges of children in foster care, and ensuring the monitoring of attendance and progress of foster children enrolled in the LEA.

Transportation plans that include negligible or minimal costs will be absorbed by the LEA. In the event that additional transportation costs are unavoidable, the LEA and DFCS will share transportation costs. The DFCS will assume financial responsibility for extraordinary costs such as contracting with transportation companies or (Pending County DFCS Board Approval and funding availability). The LEA will assume financial responsibility for costs associated with re-routing LEA transportation.

MECHS does not have transportation. We have multiple sites that serve multiple counties. MECHS offers gas cards to individuals and families in need.

SECTION 16 - Title IV, PART A STUDENT SUPPORT AND ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT

SECTION 17 - Title V, PART B – RURAL AND LOW-INCOME SCHOOLS PROGRAM

MECHS does not receive Title V, Part B funding for Rural and Low-Income Schools Program. In the event that MECHS receives funding for the Rural and Low-Income Schools Program, this handbook will be amended to reflect all program requirements.

Section 18 - Title III, Part A – LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION FOR LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT AND IMMIGRANT STUDENTS

Process for Ensuring Private Schools Have Opportunity for Accessing Title III, Part A Programs and Services for Eligible Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Children

MECHS does not serve private school students.

Services for EL Students

Purpose

An ESOL program plan is designed to provide consistent and non-discriminatory procedures throughout each school within Mountain Education Charter High School as recommended by the U.S. Office for Civil Rights, Department of Education. The Civil Rights Acts of 1964 requires local school districts to provide an alternative program of service when there are students who are limited English proficient and are unable to participate effectively in the district's regular instructional program.

Coordination of Efforts

Immigrant: Mountain Education Charter High School (MECHS) collaborates with DFACS, Family Connections, and the social worker to monitor mobility/identification and needs of the immigrant population. As these students enter the school's satellite sites, registrars ask a series of questions in conjunction with the Home Language Survey and occupational survey to access the status of students. Following the initial interview, the appropriate staff meets with the students and families and the previously named agencies to determine student/family needs and a plan to meet the needs. Among the educational services offered to these students are regular education setting, Remedial education services, special education services, English language learner services, and mentoring/counseling services. Teachers report academic achievement to the specific parties and parents on an ongoing basis. Additionally, the social worker monitors and reports status to other necessary agencies throughout the school year.

EL-Related Procedures; Staff Interview Responses

Services for EL Students

The following information was derived from documents/guidance provided by the United States Department of Education Office for Civil Rights and the Georgia Department of Education Title III/ESOL Program.

The Registration Process

1. Parents/Students are given a new student registration packet, written in their native/primary home language and also English. If needed, a translator is available. The translator will ask questions and record responses on both forms. The packet includes registration documents, school information, student handbook, and a nutrition application in the primary home language.

2. Included in the Student Registration Packet is a Home Language Survey. The Home Language Survey includes the following questions:

Which language does your child most frequently speak at home?

Which language do adults in your home most frequently use when speaking with your child?

Which language(s) does your child currently understand or speak?

If possible, would you prefer notice of school activities in a language **other than** English? If yes, which language?

Students who answer any one of the PHLOTE questions with a language other than English shall be assessed for ESOL services. Site registrars are responsible for sending in the names of students to the ESOL director whose answers indicate that they may need ESOL services. See Assessment of ESOL Eligibility below. Transfer students' original HLS and possible EL documents take precedence in this process.

Additionally, parents are asked on the system registration form about prior ESOL services, date of entry into the United States, and date of entry into a United States school.

Assessment of ESOL Eligibility

Students who answer any one of the PHLOTE questions with a language other than English and have never been tested for qualification of ESOL services shall be administered the WIDA-Screener within the first 30 days of enrollment to determine their English language proficiency level and if they qualify to receive ESOL services.

Students who have attended US schools in the past, who answer any one of the PHLOTE questions with a language other than English, will be checked for eligibility using ACCESS scores from previous schools, SLDS information, and GUIDE reports. Transfer students' original HLS and possible EL documents take precedence in this process.

Once it is determined that a student qualifies for ESOL services, ESOL teachers are notified so that the EL/TPC can be created. ACCESS scores are looked at to determine the student's schedule of courses. Newly screened ESOL students are given Communication Skills I as their first course.

Course Descriptions for ESOL Students

55.02100 Communication Skills I This course will focus on the acquisition of social and instructional language across the four language domains as prescribed in WIDA Standard 1. The suggested proficiency level of the student is CPL 1-2. (Scheduled Class Model)

55.02200 Communication Skills II This course is an expansion of Communication Skills I with the inclusion of some content language, particularly the discipline of English language arts. The five WIDA standards serve as its basis with emphasis upon proficiency in Standard 2 regarding the communication of information, ideas and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of language arts. The suggested proficiency level of the student is CPL 1-2. (Scheduled Class Model)

23.09100 English ESOL I This course incorporates both the WIDA English Language Proficiency Standards and the GSE for English Language Arts. English 10 credit may be given for this course. (Sheltered Content Model)

23.09200 English ESOL II This course incorporates both the WIDA English Language Proficiency Standards and the GSE for English Language Arts. English 12 credit may be given for this course. (Sheltered Content Model)

****ESOL students are also provided support in their academic courses using the GADOE approved push in model with a content teacher and ESOL teacher.***

Exiting ESOL

All eligible ESOL students are issued the Access for ELLs 2.0 in the spring of the school year.

The ACCESS measures a student's listening, speaking, reading, and writing abilities in both social and academic skill areas. Language assessment results and documentation from other states may be considered when enrolling students. A student is limited to only one administration of the ACCESS. If a student has been screened and determined ineligible for language support services, the student may not be screened again at a future date for reconsideration of eligibility.

Students in grades 9-12 scoring below a 5 Overall Score on the ACCESS are eligible to receive English language assistance in the ESOL Program.

Students in grades 9-12 scoring above a 5 Overall Score on the ACCESS will be exited from the ESOL program and put on monitoring status for 4 years. The first two years, students may still be eligible for standard accommodations in the regular classroom and on state standardized tests.

Procedures Regarding Parental Waiver of Direct ESOL Services

Some parents of students identified as ELs may choose to waive language assistance services for their child; however, school districts are still held responsible for providing language support under Office for Civil Rights law. The district must find alternate means of providing the student with support for language development and proficiency outside of structured ESOL classes. Parents who waive services must do so in writing on an annual basis and the district must maintain evidence of the written documentation. A form for waiving services is available in the Form Bank under the Georgia Guidance link on the Ga DOE ESOL & Title III webpage. Although the parents may have chosen to waive a formal language assistance program, the student has been identified and coded as an EL and will continue to be coded as such until the student reaches an English proficiency level that meets the state requirements for exiting language assistance services. ELs whose parents have waived services are still eligible for accommodations on standardized tests and their English language proficiency skills must be assessed on an annual basis until they meet eligibility criteria.

Title III Language Instruction Education Programs for English Learners

At one of our sites, MECHS has a high population of students who have never attended a US school and are entering a US high school for the first time. This is the reason a language program is so important. A Title III tutor is employed at this site and will work with students who score below a 2.0 on the WIDA Screener for language acquisition. The tutor will use a variety of activities and materials including scavenger hunts, websites, and Rosetta Stone supplemental resources. The student will exit the tutoring program when he/she scores above a 2.0 on the ACCESS test. The tutor will work approximately 10 hours per week. He/she will also use this time to do progress monitoring on the Title III students, create a Title III newsletter for Title III parents, and invite and meet with Title III parents.

EL-Focused Professional Development

Most of MECHS's teachers have a teaching job during the day and teach with us during the evening hours. This makes attending professional learning for MECHS difficult for our teachers since most workshop, etc. are offered during the day hours. Many of our teachers attend professional learning with their day schools. MECHS teachers have the opportunity to participate in the WIDA eLearning. This will allow them to work at their own pace, outside of the classroom, and during the times they are employed with MECHS. Teachers will be provided access to the eLearning through their WIDA login. They will complete at least one eWorkshop throughout the year and will be asked to post a discussion about their insights into the workshop on a Google classroom platform. The ESOL director will get documentation from Google classroom and will be sent the completion certificate presented by WIDA at the conclusion of the eLearning. In August, all staff have professional learning conducted on our ESOL program by ESOL staff members.

Parent Engagement for ELs

MECHS will conduct several Title III family engagement pieces throughout the year including invitations to Title III served student parents to attend a meeting with the Title III tutor and a newsletter mailed home that include topics such as curriculum in the tutoring program, resources for parents, and information about the tutoring program.

Section 19 - Title I Part C- EDUCATION OF MIGRATORY CHILDREN (MEP) SERVICES

History and Statutory Purpose

The Migrant Education Program (MEP) is authorized by Part C of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA). The general purpose of the MEP is to ensure that migratory children fully benefit from the same free public education provided to other children. The purposes of the MEP are the following:

- Support high-quality and comprehensive educational programs for migratory children in order to reduce the educational disruption and other problems that result from repeated moves;
- Ensure that migratory children who move among the States are not penalized in any manner by disparities among the States in curriculum, graduation requirements, and State academic content and student academic achievement standards;
- Ensure that migratory children are provided with appropriate educational services (including supportive services) that address their special needs in a coordinated and efficient manner;
- Ensure that migratory children receive full and appropriate opportunities to meet the same challenging State academic content and student academic achievement standards that all children are expected to meet;
- Design programs to help migratory children overcome educational disruption, cultural and language barriers, social isolation, various health-related problems and other factors that inhibit their ability to do well in school, and to prepare them to make a successful transition to postsecondary education or employment; and
- Ensure that migratory children benefit from State and local systemic reforms

Identification and Recruitment

Enrollment packages are to include the most recent Occupational Survey from the Georgia MEP. Surveys in languages other than English are also available on the Migrant Program of the GaDOE website. Once completed, the survey is to be reviewed by the Registrar for responses with either a Yes to a move within 3 years or a check by a qualifying occupation. Surveys with either of these responses are to be scanned and emailed to the Migrant Contact who will then send the survey to either the Consortium Program Specialist or a Regional Recruiter to follow up and determine if a Certificate of Eligibility should be completed.

Upon notification by email from the Georgia Department of Education Migrant Program of New Participant Reports, the Migrant Contact is to access the reports through the MEP District Data Access on the GaDOE portal. The report is to be used to update the students as migrant in the Student Information System. In addition, the Nutrition Director for Mountain Education Charter High School is to be notified of a student's eligibility in the migrant program.

Once students reach their End of Eligibility for the Migrant Program, the Migrant Contact is responsible for mailing a letter to the parents on school letterhead. Copies of these letters are to be mailed to the Consortium Coordinator.

Records Maintenance and Transfer

Registrars are to get student records (to include academic, hearing, vision and immunization) from previous schools and should contact the Migrant Contact to assist with obtaining records when experiencing difficulty in obtaining records. The Migrant Student Information Exchange (MSIX) is to be accessed to gain information on previous school records.

The Migrant Contact will verify immunization records are on file for students new to the Migrant Education Program. In the absence of immunization records, the Migrant Contact will work with the Registrar or family to obtain the records or immunizations. The Data Specialist will then be notified of the presence of the immunization records.

The Migrant Contact is to notify the MEP Consortium staff when students are withdrawn from school or change their address. Required MEP forms are to be completed by consortium staff.

Comprehensive Needs Assessment and Delivery Plan

To be completed by MEP Consortium.

Priority of Services

To be completed by MEP Consortium.

Early Childhood Education

Not applicable to MECHS.

Migrant Services Coordination

The Migrant Contact or designated site personnel are to work with MEP Consortium personnel to coordinate services.

Parent Involvement/Advisory Councils

To be completed by MEP Consortium.

Private School Consultation

The Migrant Education Program is to be included with other federal programs to offer private school consultation.

Professional Development

Staff involved with the education of migrant students shall be given the opportunity to participate in training. The Migrant Contact is to attend all required trainings sponsored by the GaMEP, which generally includes Identification and Recruitment and Data Collections. The Migrant Contact is to provide local training to registrars, administrators and teachers on identification and services available through the local migrant program.

Program Evaluation

To be completed by MEP Consortium.

Use of Title I, Part C Funds

The management of funds received from the Georgia Department of Education for the delivery of services to migrant students will follow the same strict federal guidelines for the expenditure of funds.

Section 20 – INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

Procedure for Referral for Special Education Evaluation- Child Find

The purpose of Child Find is to identify, locate, and evaluate all children, in the district, birth through 21, who may have a disability that adversely affects educational performance. MECHS Serves student's ages 13-22 in grades 9-12 with identified special education needs. Students may be considered for special education in the following disability categories; Autism Spectrum Disorder, Deaf blind, Deaf/Hard of Hearing, Emotional and Behavioral Disorder, Intellectual Disabilities, Orthopedic Impairment, Other Health Impairment, Significant Developmental Delay, Specific Learning Disability, Speech/language Impairment, Traumatic Brain Injury, Visual Impairment. MECHS completes Child Find responsibilities in several ways. MECHS includes public announcements through regional media (web and print sources), meetings with private and home-school representatives, our local public school districts, and through collaboration with other public agencies such as the Divisions of Mental Health, Family and Children's Services, and Community Health, Department of Juvenile Justice, parent requests, Vocational Rehabilitation and through our Response to Intervention (RTI/SST) process at each site.

Parent Requests Procedures

If you suspect your child has a disability and is in need of special education services, please contact the site administrator at your child's MECHS location. A meeting will be scheduled to discuss the request and obtain necessary consents. A referral may be made by anyone who suspects a student has a disability. All referrals are considered confidential. The parent retains the right to refuse services. Students may be referred by any of the following: Parents/legal guardians/foster parents, Other family members, Physicians/health care providers, Local School system personnel, Community agencies, Private school personnel. To make a referral follow the procedures indicated above based on the referral request.

Private and Home School Child Find Procedures

Child find applies to children with disabilities parentally placed in private schools or home schools. They are not entitled to a free appropriate public education (FAPE), but the district will provide services based on a proportionate share of federal funds. If a child is suspected of having a disability that is parentally placed in a private school or home school and needs evaluation for special education and eligibility consideration, please contact: Randall Jarrard, Special Education Director (34 CFR 300.130-144) (ESEA 612 (a) (10)(A))

Procedure for Referral for Special Education Evaluation

Students may be referred for evaluation by parent(s), teacher(s), other MECHS staff, and/or self. If a disability is suspected, MECHS staff should follow the following steps to initiate an evaluation:

1. Obtain Consent to Evaluate (signed by parent(s), or student if 18 or above)
2. Provide copy of Parent Rights (to parents or student - if 18 or above)
3. Complete Health Department Hearing/Vision Referral (student must pass hearing/vision screening, or resolve 'failed' screening before evaluation can proceed)
3. Complete Referral for Evaluation Form
4. Obtain Case History Form (completed by parent)
5. Provide other documentation, if applicable:
 - Standardized Test Record
 - Discipline Record
 - Retention/Assignment Record
 - Prior Evaluation Reports

Once consent to evaluate is "received by the school", a 60-day clock starts ticking. Within 60 days, a meeting must be held to discuss results and the student's eligibility (or ineligibility) for special education services.

The evaluation itself is conducted through individual administration of a variety of standardized instruments designed to assess functioning in one or more of the following areas:

1. Academic Achievement

Achievement tests may be group or individual tests given to students to determine the student's current levels of academic functioning. Areas that may be assessed are: oral expression, listening comprehension, written expression, basic reading skills, reading fluency, reading comprehension, mathematics calculation and mathematics reasoning.

2. Motor Skills

Testing may involve the determination of the student's gross and fine motor skill development, including abilities to perform functional school-related tasks and any deficits experienced in physical activities related to the educational program.

3. Cognitive Ability

These tests are individually administered tests of general intelligence. The tests are used to measure different types of cognitive abilities such as comprehension, visual and auditory perception, visual and auditory memory, vocabulary, etc. Results of these tests are required to determine eligibility for some special education programs. These tests may also include assessment of a student's learning styles, academic strengths and weaknesses that may be helpful in determining classroom modifications and adaptations.

4. Speech/Language

Testing includes assessment of a student's articulation, language, fluency, voice, and adequacy of the oral mechanism. For the non-verbal student, evaluation will use alternative communication methods/systems.

5. Social/Emotional/Behavioral

Testing includes an assessment of the student's ability to interact appropriately in everyday situations within the family, school and community. Such evaluations may include checklists, observations, parent and teacher interviews, and other means to assess a student's behavioral and emotional growth.

6. Vocational

Factors related to expected vocational levels are examined. These include assessments that measure career/post-school interests, aptitudes and skills, scholastic abilities, manual dexterity, clerical/technology skills, mechanical reasoning, spatial reasoning and functional motor skills. In Georgia, the data examined by the Eligibility/IEP Committee can differ depending upon the eligibility category which is being considered. Data is gathered in the pertinent areas according to the areas being considered. The following describes the necessary information that must be considered for each eligibility category:

Autism Spectrum Disorder

1. Delay, arrests or inconsistencies in developmental rates and sequences in motor, sensory, social cognitive or communication skills.
2. Difficulties in social interaction and participation.
3. Deficit in the use of verbal/nonverbal language, especially for social communication.
4. Unconventional, unusual or repetitive responses to sensory stimuli.
5. Displays stress over changes and/or engagement in repetitive activities.

Deaf/Blind

1. Hearing impairment and
2. Visual impairment that cause severe communication and educational needs that cannot be accommodated in programs solely for children with deafness or blindness

Deaf/Hard of Hearing

1. Absence of measurable hearing such that primary sensory input for communication is other than auditory or
2. Absence of enough measurable hearing that the ability to communicate is adversely affected but child usually relies on auditory channel for sensory input for communication.
3. Adverse impact on education documented

Emotional Behavior Disorder

Duration, frequency and intensity of at least one of the following documented and analyzed:

1. An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships.
2. An inability to learn that is not explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors.
3. Consistent or chronic inappropriate behavior or feelings under normal circumstances.
4. Displayed pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression.
5. Displayed tendency to develop physical symptoms, pains or unreasonable fears associated with personal or school problems

Intellectual Disability

1. Intellectual functioning based on multiple sources of information documenting IQ scores below 70.
2. Significant limitations in child's effectiveness in meeting standards of maturation, learning, personal, independence or social responsibility.
3. Adaptive behavior in school and home that is at least two standard deviations below the mean in one of three areas: conceptual, social or practical OR composite score that is two standard deviations below the mean.
4. Deficits in intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior existed prior to age 18.

Orthopedic Impairment

1. Medical report indicating the diagnosis and prognosis.
2. Deficits in academic functioning, emotional development adaptive behavior, motor or communication skills.

Other Health Impaired

1. Chronic or acute health problems documented with medical report that indicates limits in strength, vitality, or alertness.
2. Deficits in pre-academic or academic functioning, adaptive behavior, social/emotional development, motor or communication skills as a result of the health impairment.

Specific Learning Disability

1. Primary deficit in basic psychological processes identified.
2. Underachievement in one or more of the following areas: Oral expression, listening comprehension, written expression, basic reading skills, reading comprehension, reading fluency, mathematical calculation, or mathematical problem solving.
3. Progress monitoring over a minimum of 12 weeks that indicates the child is not expected to make progress toward the benchmark.

Speech / Language Impairment

1. An impairment in the areas of articulation, fluency, voice or language that adversely affects educational performance.

Traumatic Brain Injury

1. Deficits in cognitive, social, or motor skills due to acquired injury that adversely impact educational performance in cognition, language, memory, attention, reasoning, abstract thinking, judgment, problem solving, sensory, perceptual and motor abilities, physical functions, communication and information processing
2. Medical report or other that documents a traumatic brain injury has occurred.

Visual Impairment

1. Even with correction, a vision impairment that adversely affects a child's educational performance.