

TITLE III CONSORTIUM – Overview and Guidance Document

Under Section 3114(b) of *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)*, a State educational agency shall not award a sub-grant from an allocation made under subsection (a) if the amount of such sub-grant is less than \$10,000. Therefore, LEAs who would not otherwise qualify for an individual sub-grant because they do not qualify for an award of at least \$10,000 may submit a joint application with one or more LEAs to qualify. The Office of English Language Acquisition Services (OELAS) provides the following guidance on consortia.

WHAT IS A CONSORTIUM?

A consortium is a collective group of LEAs who are eligible to receive Title III funds but are below the threshold for an individual application. One LEA or County Superintendent's Office must agree to serve as the Lead LEA/Fiscal Agent of the consortium.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF A CONSORTIUM?

LEAs are able to access Title III funds to provide supplemental support for English learners. Title III-funded support must include:

1. Programs that increase English language proficiency and student achievement in core content classes; and
2. Effective professional development opportunities for classroom teachers, principals, administrators, and other school personnel designed to improve instruction and assessment of ELs; and
3. Effective strategies and activities for parents and family members of ELs that enhance or supplement language instruction educational programs for English learners.

WHO MAY JOIN A CONSORTIUM?

Any LEA may choose to join a consortium, regardless of allocation amount; however, an LEA with an allocation below the required \$10,000 threshold **MUST** join a consortium in order to receive funds. The combined Title III original allocations of all members must meet or exceed \$10,000. Carryover amounts are not included when determining the required threshold.

HOW IS A CONSORTIUM FORMED?

- An individual LEA or a County Agent may form a consortium.
- An LEA interested in forming a consortium can reference the Title III Allocations List on the OELAS website and contact other LEAs to determine interest. The combined Title III allocations of all participating LEAs must meet or exceed \$10,000.
- The LEA agreeing to serve as the Lead LEA/Fiscal Agent must notify OELAS of its intent to form a consortium.
- The Lead LEA/Fiscal Agent must notify OELAS of its participating members. The Lead LEA/Fiscal Agent must complete the **CONSORTIA – Lead Agent Funding Forms**. These documents can be found in the Required Documents section of the Title III Consortium application as well as in the Document Library in the Grants Management Enterprise system (GME).
- To acknowledge its consortium participation, each LEA member must complete the packet **CONSORTIA - Participating LEA Member – Certification and Assurances** found in the Required Documents section of the Title III Consortium application or in the Document Library in the Grants Management Enterprise system (GME).

WHAT ARE THE OPTIONS FOR TITLE III CONSORTIUM GRANTS?

LEAs participating in a Title III Consortium have options for how their consortium will function. Each of the available options are listed below and **MUST** be determined at the time of consortium formation and fully outlined in the required **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)**.

OPTION #1:

- Each participating LEA member will create a unique plan for spending the full amount of its individual Title III budget (current year allocation and carryover, if applicable).
- The Lead LEA/Fiscal Agent will keep all separate budget plans on file and disseminate the appropriate funds to each member. The grant application will separately identify each LEA member's budget.

OPTION #2:

- Participating LEAs will collaborate to design one comprehensive plan which combines the allocations of all members **AND** benefits all members of the consortium.
- This option must be clearly outlined in the **Memorandum of Understanding**, or alternate agreement, created by the Lead LEA/Fiscal Agent **AND** agreed upon by all members. The grant application will also identify how funds have been combined for a common purpose which benefits all consortium members.

Example: The allocations of all members will be combined and used to pay for the services of a consultant who will provide professional development to all members of the consortium. All members equally share the cost and receive benefit of the services.

OPTION #3:

- The consortium will use a combination of Option #1 and Option #2 by collaborating with some LEA members and disseminating funds separately for other LEA members.
- Budget items which are a collaborative request must be clearly detailed as such in the grant application.

Note: Regardless of consortium grant option, a breakdown must be provided for any items included in the grant application in which multiple LEA members are contributing to one specific expense.

Examples: Indirect Costs, administrative expenses