

TESTIMONY PROVIDED TO: Senate Education Committee

FROM: Jennifer Gresham, Education Division Director, Federal & Education Support Programs

TOPIC: Supports for English Learners (ELs) in K-12

DATE: March 31, 2017

Title III, ESSA – federally-funded State Formula Grant program administered by the Vermont Agency of Education

Purposes:

- ensure that English Learners attain high levels of English proficiency in order to meet challenging standards for academic achievement in content areas;
- assist SEAs, LEAs, and schools to establish, implement, and sustain *effective* language instructional educational programs (LIEPs) designed to prepare ELs to participate meaningfully in all-English instructional settings;
- develop and enhance knowledge and skills of educators to provide effective instructional programs designed to prepare ELs, including immigrant children and youth, to enter all-English instructional settings;
- Promote opportunities for parents, families, and communities of ELs to participate in LIEPs.

Funding:

- Title III formula subgrants to LEAs or Consortia which enroll at least the minimum number of eligible ELs to qualify for at least \$10,000 (based on a per-pupil formula);
- Title III also includes a set-aside of up to 15% of the total allocation for LEA(s) experiencing a “significant increase” in number of students meeting Title III “immigrant definition”;
- Some programs also eligible to use Title I funds to support English Learners
- LEAs that receive Title III funds include: Burlington, Winooski, Chittenden Central, Chittenden South, Colchester, South Burlington, and Barre/Montpelier (as a consortium)

Uses of funds for Supports to English Learners and Immigrants:

- Allowable Activities or Examples of Currently Funded Activities
 - identifying and implementing effective LIEPs, curricula, assessment practices and measures designed to improve the achievement and progress of ELs (from different grades, ELP levels, prior schooling, and from diverse cultures and life experiences) in meeting challenging State long-term goals for ELP and academic standards;

- sustained professional development to build capacity of educators in providing language and academic instruction and learning, assessment practices and measures of ELs;
- Provide parent, family, and community engagement activities and strategies that enhance LIEPs for ELs and are coordinated and aligned with related programs.
- All activities must “supplement, not supplant” Federal, State, and Local funds for meeting civil rights obligations under Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964
- LEAs submit local plans with strategies, budget, and assurances for meeting grant requirements through an application process

Inter-Agency Coordination

- Agency of Education communicates with the Office of Refugee Resettlement through the Title III Director to enhance supports for schools and LEAs