



Title III FAQs

Title III: Supplemental Funding for EL Programs- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. What is the purpose of Title III, as reauthorized by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)?

Title III, Part A, is officially known as the Language Instruction for English Learners (EL) and Immigrant Students Act. Section 3102 lists the purpose of the law: to ensure that EL students, including immigrant children and youth, attain English language proficiency and meet the same challenging state academic standards that other students are expected to meet. The Local Education Agency (LEA) must use Title III funds to supplement state language instruction programs, designed to assist EL students' achievement goals. The state educational agency (SEA), LEAs, and schools are accountable for increasing the English proficiency and core academic content knowledge of EL students. For more information regarding ESSA, visit the [U.S. Department of Education Bills Web site](#) (PDF).

2. Who qualifies for a Title III subgrant?

Any Local Education Agency (LEA) enrolling one or more English Learners (ELs) during the previous school year qualifies for a Title III subgrant. However, under Title III, Part A [Section 3114 (b)], subgrants less than \$10,000 may not be made to individual districts. Individual districts that do not meet the \$10,000 threshold may join together to form a consortium in order to achieve the minimum \$10,000 grant award.

The minimum number of English Learner (EL) students needed to meet the \$10,000 benchmark is approximately 85. This number can change within any given year, and LEAs should contact the Office of Public Instruction (OPI) for the current numbers. The members of a consortium choose the fiscal agent by consensus. The fiscal agent is responsible for all fiscal transactions of the consortium (application filing, requisitions, purchases, and payments) and for maintaining records of all financial transactions carried out on behalf of the Title III consortium.

3. What kind of program is necessary under Title III?

Title III Subgrants support LEAs in order to provide targeted English learning and to help EL students meet challenging state academic standards. LEAs must use effective approaches and methodologies for the following purposes: 1. Developing and implementing new language and academic content instruction programs for all EL students, including early childhood, elementary, and secondary school programs. 2. Carrying out highly focused, innovative, locally-developed activities expanding or enhancing existing language instruction programs and academic content instruction programs for all EL students in elementary and secondary programs. 3. Implementing school-wide programs within individual schools to restructure, reform and upgrade all programs, activities and operations related to language instruction programs and academic content instruction for EL students. 4. Implementing, in a local educational agency, system-wide programs designed to restructure, reform and upgrade all programs, activities and operations related to the education of all EL students.

4. What does “Supplement, Not Supplant” mean?

Title III requires that funds available under a subgrant be used to supplement the level of federal, state, and local funds that, in the absence of such availability, would have been expended for programs for English Learner (EL) students and immigrant students. In no case are these funds intended to supplant such federal, state, and local funds. Supplement means “to add to” and supplant means “to take the place of” or “instead of.”

For example, if a particular activity was paid for using non-federal funds, or other federal funding such as Title II, then the same activity this year cannot be paid for using Title III funds. State-mandated activities must be paid for using state funds first. See more information on the OPI Title III webpage- [Use of Funds](#).

5. Can Title III funds be utilized for English Learner (EL) specific assessments?

No. Assessments of identified EL students are required by the State of Montana, and the use of Title III funds would not be allowable. These assessments include, but are not limited to, initial English language proficiency screener assessments (W-APT) to identify the student as EL or annual English language proficiency assessments (ACCESS for ELLS 2.0).

6. Does Title III allow carryover of funds?

Yes. Carryover of Title III funds is allowed. Under the federal Tydings Amendment, Section 421(B) of the General Education Provisions Act, 20 U.S.C. 1225(b), Title III funds are awarded to the subgrantee for use within a 27-month grant period. Local Education Agencies (LEAs) have a maximum of 15 months to expend and obligate current-year funds from as early as July 1 of any federal fiscal year through September 30 of the subsequent year, or the funds will be reallocated. LEAs have an additional 12-month carryover period extending from October 1 through September 30 of the succeeding fiscal year. Funds not obligated within the Tydings period of the 12 months must be returned through the Montana OPI to the U.S. Department of Education (Tydings Amendment of General Education Provisions Act, Section 76.709 of Education Department General Administrative Regulations).

7. My district has been selected for a Title III technical assistance and focused monitoring review. What does a review entail, and what resources are available to better understand the process?

The OPI monitors and evaluates districts and schools in two ways. On-site visits are conducted to assess how districts and schools monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of their own EL program and services, including the use of Title III supplemental program funding in conjunction with Title I Federal Programs monitoring. This process includes document review of student cumulative files (including parent notification, parent engagement, evidence of program), lesson plans and other artifacts and documents. Further, during on-site visits, program directors, principals, and/or parents may be interviewed regarding the district/school's programs.

Additionally, desktop monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of district and school EL program and services are also conducted through a review of the following data sources:

- District/school data as reported in AIM
- English language proficiency data from the WIDA ACCESS for ELLs®
- Fiscal documentation from E-Grants
- If applicable, documented concerns of parents, community, and others, including complaints from the OCR.

For more information, resources, and forms visit [English Learners \(mt.gov\)](#) or contact Serena Wright (serena.wright@mt.gov), English Learning Specialist.