

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 a 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 ESEA Programs 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 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 serving English learners (ELs) may choose to join a consortium, regardless of the allocation amount or the number of ELs; 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 LEA interested in forming a consortium can reference the Title III Preliminary Allocations Notice on the NHDOE website and contact other LEAs to determine interest. The combined Title III allocations of all participating LEAs must meet or exceed \$10,000. LEAs are encouraged to contact the State Title III Consultant for help identifying other LEAs interested in forming a consortium.
- To acknowledge its consortium participation, each LEA member must complete sign the Title III Cooperative Agreement (Title III Application, Section B).

- LEAs/Charters entering a consortium must establish a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). A sample MOU is available below (Appendix A).
- The Lead LEA/Fiscal Agent must notify NHDOE of its participating members via the Title III application, Section B.

WHAT ARE THE OPTIONS FOR MANAGING TITLE III CONSORTIUM GRANTS?

OPTION #1:

- Each participating LEA member will create a unique plan for spending the full amount of its individual Title III budget.
- 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 plan which combines the allocations of all members **AND** benefits all members of the consortium.
- This option must be clearly outlined in the MOU 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, coaching, parent trainings, etc. to all members of the consortium.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LEAD LEA/FISCAL AGENT

The **Lead LEA/Fiscal Agent** assumes the responsibility of completing and submitting the Title III application, reimbursement requests, and completion report on behalf of the consortium.

Responsibilities:

- Collect the required signed **CONSORTIA - Participating LEA Member Certification and Assurances** documents to each participating LEA member (Title III Application, Section B).
- Submit a *Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)*, or alternate agreement, that outlines how the consortium will meet all Title III grant requirements. This *MOU*, or alternative arrangement, must be signed by superintendents of all districts/charter representatives agreeing to be members of the consortium. A sample MOU is available on NHDOE [Office of Title ESEA Programs website](#).
- Abide by and communicate all grant dues dates and deadlines.
- Obtain any and all information from LEA members necessary for submission of the original application, application revisions, reimbursement requests, and completion reports.
- Ensure all sections of the funding application have been completed and uploaded into NHDOE GMS, including the Sections C-E for all LEAs in the consortium.
- The Lead LEA/Fiscal Agent is the point of contact with NHDOE for all communication regarding the Title III application.
- Seek technical assistance as needed from NHDOE.
- Communicate to LEA members all changes regarding the funding application and grant.
- Verify that each LEA member's budget aligns with their current year allocation.
- Ensure the professional development and family engagement requirements have been included in each LEA member's budget.
- Ensure members have not exceeded the allowable costs for direct administrative expenses.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LEA MEMBERS

LEA members must comply with all Title III grant requirements.

Responsibilities:

- Read and acknowledge the required *Title III Program Assurances* included in the **CONSORTIA - Participating LEA Member Certification and Assurances** document (Title III Application, Section B).
- LEA members must complete the required Sections C-E of the Title III Application and submit to Lead LEA/Fiscal Agent following established timeline.
- Ensure all requested items in **Budget Narrative and Summary of Proposed Activities** worksheet (Title III Application, Section E) are supplemental.
- LEA members must create effective narratives, performance measures and outcomes in the Title III Application, Section E which fully describe all Title III-funded programs and services.
- Confirm professional development and parent/family engagement for ELs has been included in the Title III Application, Section E.
- Verify supplanting does not exist.
 - Supplanting exists if an LEA uses Title III funds to provide programs and/or services that the LEA is required to make available under Federal, State or local laws.
 - Supplanting exists if an LEA uses Title III funds to provide services that the LEA provided in the prior year with State, local, or other Federal funds.
 - Supplanting exists if an LEA uses Title III funds to meet its Civil Rights obligations to EL students.
- Ensure budget requests do not exceed the total of the current year allocation.
- Ensure direct administrative expenses of the grant do not exceed the allowable allocation amount.
- Notify the Lead LEA/Fiscal Agent of any fiscal and/or programmatic changes needed to an approved budget in the GMS system—allow for 14 days processing.
- Identify all Title III-funded materials and equipment with a Title III tag

Appendix A: Sample Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

SAMPLE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

XYZ Consortium
Memorandum of Understanding
FY 20__-20__

This Memorandum of Understanding represents the agreed-upon program, services and products to be provided to LEP students in the ABC School District, the DEF School District, the GHI School District and the XYZ School District, (Members), during the 20__-20__ project year. The XYZ School District will act as the lead local education agency (LEA) and member. The consortium shall be named the XYZ Consortium (the Consortium).

The XYZ County School District will be responsible for acting as the fiscal agent for the Consortium and will file the required expenditure reports and maintain fiscal records. The Consortium will plan to expend all Title III funds during the 20__-20__ project year.

The XYZ Consortium will coordinate quarterly meetings for the purpose of assessing the needs of the Consortium. In the event that a member of the Consortium fails to meet the Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs) for one year, all parents of LEP students must be notified.

Lastly, the XYZ Consortium will be responsible for completing and submitting expenditure reports, and any other requests of information from ADE. Signature of the LEA representative represents the consortium has met and conferred and the member LEAs are in agreement to all stated.

Signatures of Authorized Representatives:

Print Name
Consortium Lead LEA Representative
(Superintendent or Designee)

Signature of Consortium Lead LEA
Representative

Date

Print Name
Consortium Member LEA Representative
(Superintendent or Designee)

Signature of Member LEA Representative

Date

Print Name
Consortium Member LEA Representative
(Superintendent or Designee)

Signature of Consortium Member LEA
Representative

Date

Print Name
Consortium Member LEA Representative
(Superintendent or Designee)

Signature of Member LEA Representative

Date