

Dear Title I Coordinators:

Greetings! As you know, the Bureau of Federal Educational Programs (BFEP) is providing a bi-monthly communications regarding the Title I requirements for private schools. This month's topic is new charter schools opening or existing charter schools that are expanding and the possible implications for Title I services for eligible private school children.

In a situation where an LEA has a new charter school opening or an existing charter that is expanding (i.e. adding additional grades or additional educational programs) in the fall (Survey 2), in which a significant number of poverty children are projected to be enrolled, an LEA has the flexibility to determine the school's poverty ranking, eligibility, and allocation based on projected fall data. The LEA, however, must be prepared to adjust that school's Title I allocation to reflect actual fall data once they become available. Since charter schools typically draw from across an LEA and enrollment in a charter school is usually not based on residence, private school children would not be "zoned" to attend a charter school; consequently, there is no private school consideration in that case.

In the case of a new public school opening or an existing charter school that is expanding in the fall in which a significant number of poverty children are projected to be enrolled, unlike the situation for newly opening or expanding public charter schools, there is no statutory or regulatory requirement that an LEA make a special accommodation for newly opening or expanding public school for which data is not yet available. However, in cases where a newly opened or expanding public school is clearly projected to have a significant number of poverty children, and has a good likelihood of qualifying for and receiving Title I funds, the United States Department of Education (ED) encourages an LEA to be flexible and take these factors into consideration when determining Title I eligibility and distributing funds.

Some of the options concerning the allocation of Title I funds to newly opening or expanding public charter schools within an LEA *could* be applied to a newly opened public school or expanding public school for which actual data are not available. For example:

1. An LEA could reserve an amount off-the-top of its Title I allocation that it believes will be sufficient to fund the new school, should it be eligible using projected data. Once actual data are available, an LEA would determine whether the school is eligible and ranks sufficiently high to receive Title I funds.
2. An LEA may distribute an appropriate amount available from carryover funds to the newly opened school based on projected fall data and adjust after actual data become available.

It may also be possible that the opening of a new public school or an expanding public school results from a consolidation of two or more schools within an LEA; in that case, an LEA should use the enrollment and poverty data from the school or schools that feed into the new school or the expanded school to determine the school's poverty ranking and Title I eligibility.

We hope that you have found this information helpful. Please look for the next bi-monthly communication to be disseminated in October, 2012. If you would like technical assistance on any given Title I private school topic, please contact Sally Hugo at sally.hugo@fldoe.org. We appreciate your input and thoughts!