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STATE OF ARIZONA
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July 21, 2010

Members of the Arizona Legislature

The Honorable Janice K. Brewer, Governor

Governing Board
Williams Unified School District

Mr. Stephen L. Hudgens, Superintendent
Williams Unified School District

Transmitted herewith is a report of the Auditor General, a review of Williams Unified School District's Structured English Immersion and Compensatory Instruction budget requests. This review was prepared pursuant to and under the authority vested in the Auditor General by Arizona Revised Statutes §15-756.12.

My staff and I will be pleased to discuss or clarify items in the report.

This report will be released to the public on July 22, 2010.

Sincerely,

Debbie Davenport
Auditor General

DD:bl
Enclosure

ELL Review

Summary

Williams USD's Structured English Immersion (SEI) and Compensatory Instruction (CI) budget requests were supported by district records.

The District spent its FY 2009 SEI monies to provide English language development instruction to students in kindergarten through 3rd grade in three classrooms based on grade and proficiency level. It also provided language development instruction to students in grades 4 through 12 using individual language learner plans (ILLPs), as well as instruction in individual pullout sessions.

Williams USD spent its FY 2009 CI monies to provide extended-day classes and a summer program for ELL students.



2010

English Language Learner programs, costs, and funding

The Office of the Auditor General has conducted a review of the Williams USD's Structured English Immersion and Compensatory Instruction budget requests pursuant to A.R.S. §15-756.12. Auditors reviewed these budget requests to determine whether district records supported them. In accordance with statute, Williams USD was selected for review because its SEI program was monitored by the Arizona Department of Education. The District is located in western Coconino County in northern Arizona and serves students in kindergarten through 12th grade. In fiscal year 2009, Williams USD identified 45 of its 656 students as English Language Learners.

Background

English Language Learners are students whose native language is not English and who are not currently able to perform ordinary classroom work in English. ELL students are identified through a state-adopted language proficiency test. School districts are required to administer this test to students if the primary language spoken at home is other than English, and then retest annually those students identified as ELL. School districts must then report the test results to the Arizona Department of Education (ADE).

Levels of English Language Proficiency:

Pre-emergent—Student does not understand enough language to perform in English.

Emergent—Student understands and can speak a few isolated English words.

Basic—Student may understand slower speech, and speak, read, and write simple words and phrases, but often makes mistakes.

Intermediate—Student can understand familiar topics and is somewhat fluent in English, but has difficulty with academic conversations.

Proficient—Student can read and understand texts and conversations at a normal speed, and can speak and write fluently with minor errors.

Source: Arizona Department of Education.

By reporting their numbers of ELL students, districts are eligible for additional monies for ELL programs through the State's school funding formula (known as ELL Group B Weight monies) and the federal Title III program. In addition, school districts may submit budget requests to ADE for monies to implement SEI and CI programs. SEI provides English language development during the normal school day, while CI provides English instruction outside of the normal school day in

programs such as after-school tutoring and summer school. However, if a district's Group B Weight monies are sufficient to cover the incremental costs of its SEI program, no additional SEI monies are awarded through the budget request process.

Fiscal year 2009 SEI program

FY 2009 SEI budget request provided \$163,508 primarily for teachers—The District's fiscal year 2009 ADE-approved SEI budget request was \$163,508. These monies, along with Group B Weight funding, provided for three incremental teachers, instructional materials, and training costs.

SEI program in compliance with model requirements—In October 2008, ADE monitored the District's SEI program and found it to be in compliance with the ELL Task Force model. Figure 1 provides an overview of the model requirements for Arizona school districts. During the monitoring reviews, ADE determines if districts are complying with the model requirements such as providing 4 hours of ELD instruction in appropriate groupings, implementing proper time allocations of the language development components, and ensuring required teacher qualifications.

Incremental costs are the costs, as defined by the ELL Task Force, that are associated with an SEI program and that are in addition to the normal costs of conducting programs for English proficient students.

Fiscal year 2009 SEI monies spent for purposes approved in the budget request—The District spent \$148,256 of its approved budget request to pay for SEI teacher salaries and benefits and to purchase instructional materials. In fiscal year 2009, the District offered language development instruction to ELL students through a combination of SEI classrooms and ILLPs. ELL students in kindergarten through 3rd grade received 4 hours of ELD instruction in self-contained classrooms. ELL students in grades 4 through 12 received ELD through the use of ILLPs. These students received their language instruction in mainstream classrooms and also attended 1 to 4 hours of small group instruction with an SEI resource teacher. About \$15,000 of the approved monies remained at fiscal year-end because actual teacher salaries were lower than the average salaries used for budgeting purposes. Unspent SEI monies remain with the District to be used in future years.

Figure 1: Structured English Immersion Model Requirements

- **English language development (ELD) components**—Students receive 4 hours of ELD instruction daily in the following instructional areas: oral English and conversation, grammar, reading, writing, and vocabulary.
- **Grouping requirements**—ELL students are placed into SEI classrooms according to ELL proficiency level in class sizes not exceeding the non-ELL average class size in the district. In addition, the following maximum class sizes apply:
 - Pre-Emergent and Emergent—23
 - Basic and Intermediate—28
- **Teacher qualifications**—All teachers in SEI classrooms must be highly qualified and have an SEI, English as a Second Language, or Bilingual endorsement. Additionally, SEI teachers at the middle school and high school level must be highly qualified in English or language arts.
- **Individual Language Learner Plans (ILLP)**—Schools with 20 or fewer ELL students within a three-grade span may choose to create ILLPs for those students. These students may be placed in classrooms with English-proficient students. The ILLPs should detail how each individual student will receive the 4 hours of ELD instruction in this setting.

Source: *Structured English Immersion Models of the Arizona English Language Learners Task Force-5/14/08 and Arizona Department of Education Guidance on ILLP 8/2008.*

Fiscal year 2010 SEI program

Fiscal Year 2010 SEI budget request is supported—Because the District has few ELL students, it qualified to use ILLPs for all ELL students and therefore had no incremental costs based on its original budget request. This original budget request was supported by district records. However, the District appealed and ADE agreed to approve the District for one incremental teacher to provide some small group instruction time for ELL students. The revised budget request, as shown in the textbox to the right, was approved by ADE in February 2009 and includes salary and benefits for one incremental teacher.

Approved SEI Budget Fiscal Year 2010

Costs:	
Incremental teacher salaries	\$44,967
Incremental teacher benefits	11,242
Textbooks, instructional aids, and assessments	0
Transportation for itinerant teachers	0
Travel expenses for training—administrators	0
Travel expenses for training—teachers	0
Teacher stipends for training time outside of regular school days	0
Classroom substitutes	0
Other expenses	0
Total incremental costs	<u>56,209</u>
State and local offsets:	
ELL "Group B Weight"	<u>28,307</u>
Net budget request	<u><u>\$27,902</u></u>

Fiscal year 2009 CI program

CI budget request is supported—For fiscal year 2009, Williams USD requested and was approved by ADE for a CI budget of \$21,220 to provide 26 weeks of extended-day classes and a 16-day summer program for ELL students. Based on district projections of program participation, optimal class sizes, program schedule, and estimated hourly salaries, auditors determined that the District's budget request was supported. The District's budget request was based on the following estimates and projections:

Extended-day classes—\$11,045 for teacher compensation

The District received monies to provide after-school English language development instruction for ELL students for 1 hour per day, 4 days per week, for 26 weeks. The CI monies were to pay three teachers \$30 per hour of instruction plus related benefits. Instruction was to focus on speaking, reading, and writing objectives outlined in students' written individualized compensatory instruction plans.

Summer classes—\$10,175 for teacher compensation and student transportation

The District requested monies to provide a 16-day summer program for ELL students. The request was based on offering summer classes for 5 hours each day during the program. Three teachers were to be paid \$30 per hour of instruction plus related benefits. The District also received funding to provide student transportation for the summer program.

Fiscal year 2009 CI monies were spent for purposes requested—The District spent \$16,565 of its fiscal year 2009 CI budget for salaries and benefits offering extended-day and summer classes for ELL students.

Extended-day classes—\$8,645 for teacher salaries

The District's extended-day CI program ran for 17 weeks beginning in January and ending in April. Two teachers provided instruction in classes for students in kindergarten and

grades 1 through 3. According to district records, 14 students participated in the program. District officials stated that the program was limited to students in these grade levels because transportation was not provided and students in these grade levels were released from school an hour earlier than other students and therefore could attend the one-hour extended-day program and still be able to ride later bus routes with other students.

Summer classes—\$7,920 for teacher salaries

The District's CI summer program operated for 16 days during June 2009. Three teachers provided the classes and district records indicated that 19 students participated. Although the request included monies for student transportation, district officials stated that transportation was not necessary for the students who chose to participate in the program.

Unspent CI monies remain with the District and offset future budget requests.