

Submitted Testimony



New York State Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages

Box 185, Teachers College, Columbia University

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NYS TESOL is an association of professionals concerned with the education of English Language Learners (LEP students) at all levels of public and private education in New York State. Our interests include classroom practices, research, program and curriculum development, employment, funding and legislation

February 4, 2015

TO: Clinton Freeman, Committee on Ways and Means
New York State Assembly
Legislative Office Building 923
Albany, NY 12248

CC: Angélica Infante-Green, Deputy Commissioner of Instructional Support of NYSED
Lissette Colón-Collins, Deputy Commissioner for the Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages

RE: Comments on Proposed Increase to CTE Program Funding

Dear Assemblyman Freeman:

The New York State Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (NYS TESOL) submits these comments in response to the New York State Education Department (NYSED) proposal to increase funding to address Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs access barriers faced by students with disabilities and English language learners (ELL).

NYS TESOL is a statewide, educational organization, of over 1,000 members, including educators of ELLs in K-12 and beyond, university faculty, parents, ELL students, and advocates. Our students include, but are not limited to, ELLs with disabilities, economically disadvantaged ELLs, and young, unaccompanied, immigrant ELLs.

Our students possess a multitude of skills, talents, and capacities that are often overlooked. The ELL student's attributes can be developed in high quality CTE programs, thus they, and society as a whole, stand to benefit greatly from the expansion of the proposed funding. It is well known that ELLs face multiple barriers to educational success, not the least of which is to achieve academically while acquiring English, a major endeavor. A lesser-known fact is that when they achieve English proficiency, they often outperform their monolingual peers in measures of academic achievement. At present, the ELL graduation rate is 31%. High quality CTE programs, leveraging ELLs' talents in technical careers will help improve this dismal statistic, and serve to develop ELLs as a resource.

We applaud the proposed \$1 Million in grants to eliminate barriers to CTE programs for ELLs, and appeal to the Committee on Ways and Means to approve the proposed funding increase. Our students need your support to graduate and move forward in productive careers.



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Thank you for taking our comments into consideration. If you have any questions or would like to discuss these issues further, you can reach us at pres@nystesol.org and vpadvocacy@nystesol.org.

Sincerely,

Sarah Elia
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NYS TESOL

Juliet M. Luther
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