



TONY THURMOND
State Superintendent
of Public Instruction

Solicitation of Proposals for the Independent Evaluation of Technical Assistance and Intervention Provided to Local Educational Agencies for Differentiated Assistance

**California Department of Education
OCTOBER 2021**



Introductions to the CDE System of Support Staff



Lindsay Tornatore
Division Director
Student Achievement and
Support Division



Anissa Sonnenburg
Education Administrator
System of Support Office



Felicia Novoa
Staff Services Analyst
System of Support Office



Art Cruz
Education Programs Consultant
Student Achievement and
Support Division

Accessing this Solicitation of Proposals

We will be reading all contents of the slides of this webinar for accessibility purposes.

The next few slides provide a few logistical, housekeeping facts that will help you navigate through the application and submission process for this solicitation of proposals

The Solicitation of Proposal has been posted on the CDE website and can be accessed by going to the CDE website to the System of Support webpage or by clicking on the link below:

www.cde.ca.gov/fg/fo/r8/solicitationofproposalsrfp.asp

Questions and Contact Information, 1 of 2

Prior to submitting questions to the CDE, System of Support Office, please ensure that you have:

- Read the Solicitation for Proposals in its entirety
- Reviewed the Questions and Answers (Q & As) located at: www.cde.ca.gov/fg/fo/r8/solicitationofproposals.asp
- Viewed this Webinar in its entirety.

Questions and Contact Information, 2 of 2

- All questions and correspondence regarding the application process for this Solicitation of Proposals must be submitted by **5 p.m. on Tuesday, November 2, 2021** by email through the System of Support Help desk at CASystemofSupport@cde.ca.gov
- All submitted supplemental questions with answers will be posted on the Q & A web page on Thursday, November 4, 2021

The Importance of this Evaluation

- California's Statewide System of Support (System of Support) was established in 2017 and is a key component of California's accountability system
- The System of Support is designed to build capacity at all levels to support the improvement of student outcomes
- Up to this point, California has not had a statewide effort to measure and assess the effectiveness of the technical assistance and interventions that are being provided to local educational agencies throughout the state
- The implications from the findings of this evaluation will inform California's continuous improvement work regarding the System of Support

Section I. Critical Dates for the Application Process

Critical Dates for the Application Process

- November 12, 2021 - The original proposal packets must be received by the CDE by 4 p.m. to the mailing address on p.2 and one electronic copy of the proposal packet must be submitted to the CDE at CASystemofSupport@cde.ca.gov also by 4 p.m. on Friday, November 12, 2021.
- November 15-18, 2021 – Proposals are reviewed and scored.
- November 19, 2021 - Interviews for all applicants with passing score.
- Week of November 22, 2021 - The Intent to Award will be posted.
- January 1, 2022 is the contract start date with an end date of June 30, 2023.

Section II. Purpose

Purpose, 1 of 3

- The CDE Student Achievement and Support Division (SASD) is soliciting proposals from eligible applicants for a contract to conduct an independent evaluation of the technical assistance commonly referred to as Differentiated Assistance or Level 2 support, pursuant to Sections 47607.3, 52071, and 52071.5 of California *Education Code*.
- Differentiated Assistance is provided to Local Education Agencies (LEAs) that have been identified for individually designed assistance to address performance issues, including significant disparities in performance among student groups based on the California School Dashboard.

Purpose, 2 of 3

- \$400,000 is provided to contract for the independent evaluation.
- The CDE in consultation with the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE) and the executive director of the State Board of Education (SBE), is soliciting proposals for evaluation.
- Any resulting contract shall be subject to the approval of the executive director of the State Board of Education.

Purpose, 3 of 3

- The selection of applications shall use a standardized scoring criteria.
- Any contract executed to implement this section shall be exempt from the Public Contract Code and other such requirements listed in the section on pages 6 and 7 of the Solicitation of the Proposals.
- Ultimately, this evaluation will result in a report developed under the contract with recommendations regarding improvements listed in **Section IV. Funding and Scope of Project** and the Superintendent of Public Instruction shall provide the evaluation report to the chairs of the relevant policy committees and budget subcommittees of the Legislature, the executive director of the SBE or their designee, and the Director of Finance by January 15, 2023.

Section III. Background

System of Support, 1 of 5

The Statewide System of Support provides assistance to school districts to meet the needs of each student they serve, with a focus on building local capacity to sustain improvement and to effectively address disparities in opportunities and outcomes. At its heart, California's System of Support is focused on improving the outcomes of California's students with a focus on building local capacity in the following areas:

System of Support, 2 of 5

- Support the continuous improvement of student performance in each of the eight state priorities areas described in *EC 52060(d)* and *52066(d)*;
- Address the gaps in achievement between student groups identified in *EC 52052*; and
- Improve outreach and collaboration with educational partners to ensure that goals, actions, and services described in school district and county office of education local control and accountability plans reflect the needs of students and the community, especially for historically underrepresented or low-achieving groups.

System of Support, 3 of 5

The System of Support is designed to offer such services effectively by

- Reducing redundancy across state and federal programs,
- Integrating guidance and resources across state and federal programs, and
- Supporting LEAs to meet identified student needs through the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) process.

System of Support, 4 of 5

The System of Support provides three levels of support to LEAs and schools, which are listed below.

- Level 1 – Support for all LEAs and Schools
- Level 2 – Differentiated Assistance
- Level 3 – Intensive Intervention

Note: The three levels of support are outlined in detail on the table on page 7 of the Solicitation of Proposals.

System of Support, 5 of 5

- The CDE, the CCEE, and the SBE work collaboratively as the three state agencies to advance the purpose of the statewide System of Support (EC 52073). The state agencies are tasked with the responsibility of facilitating the work and supports being provided by the Geographic Lead Agencies and other lead agencies.
- Geographic Lead Agencies provide assistance and support to County Offices of Education within their defined geographic area through capacity building, identifying existing resources and professional development opportunities, in order to provide technical assistance to school districts, including Differentiated Assistance.

California School Dashboard, 1 of 5

- The California School Dashboard (the Dashboard) was created to help parents and educators identify strengths and areas for improvement of their schools by reporting how districts, schools, and student groups are performing across state and local indicators. Based on its performance, an LEA may be identified for support to improve student outcomes.
- The Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) law requires that the SBE to adopt “evaluation rubrics” which have been incorporated in the design of the Dashboard. One purpose of the evaluation rubrics is to determine whether LEAs are eligible for Differentiated Assistance based on student group performance across the eight state priorities.

California School Dashboard, 2 of 5

The Dashboard reports performance and progress on both state and local indicators. State indicators apply to all LEAs, schools, and student groups and are based on data that is collected consistently across the state, and consist of the following:

- Chronic Absenteeism
- Suspension Rate
- English Learner Progress
- Graduation Rate
- Academic Performance
- College and Career

California School Dashboard, 3 of 5

- Local indicators apply at the LEA and charter school level and are based on data collected at the local level. Both indicators are drawn from the ten priority areas of the LCFF.
- For details and more information about the State and Local indicators for each of the LCFF priority areas, see the CDE web page at www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/cm/.

California School Dashboard, 4 of 5

- Performance on the **state indicators** is based on data from both the current and prior years.
- Any LEA, school, or student group with at least 30 students in both the current and prior year receives a **performance level** for each applicable state measure.
- There are **five** performance levels, and each is assigned a different color: Red is the lowest performance level, Orange is the second lowest, Yellow is the middle point, Green is the second highest, and Blue is the highest performance level.

California School Dashboard, 5 of 5

- Due to the circumstance of the COVID–19 pandemic and the suspension of certain data provided on the Dashboard, the CDE has not identified new LEAs for eligibility for Differentiated Assistance since 2019.
- Pursuant to AB 130, Section 123, LEAs identified for Differentiated Assistance based on the 2019 Dashboard shall retain that identification until the release of the 2022 Dashboard.

Differentiated Assistance, 1 of 3

- Differentiated Assistance, referred to as technical assistance in the Education Code, is designed to reinforce the expectation that everyone can improve while also ensuring additional support is provided to LEAs that are struggling.
- Differentiated Assistance is intended to be targeted and customized assistance to LEAs that is consistent with the intent under the LCFF by providing the following:
 - Support providers work alongside LEAs and their schools to identify key challenges and opportunities;
 - Systemic approach tailored to locally identified needs and strengths; and
 - Engaging with local educators and communities as part of decision making.

Differentiated Assistance, 2 of 3

- For an LEA to be eligible for Differentiated Assistance, the same student group must meet the criteria in two different state priority areas.
- Eligibility for Differentiated Assistance is based on performance criteria set by the SBE.
- More details of Differentiated Assistance criteria can be found on tables located on pages 10-12 of the Solicitation of Proposals, including information on Charter School's eligibility.

Differentiated Assistance, 3 of 3

- The support provider provides Differentiated Assistance focused on building an LEA's capacity to develop and implement actions responsive to pupil and community needs by identifying its strengths and weaknesses in regard to state priorities.
- This support includes the use of the Dashboard data or other relevant local data, including for the data requirements in Section 122 of AB 130 for the 2021-22 school year.
- As part of the process, LEAs need to document the continuous improvement work. Ultimately, the progress and activities part of the continuous improvement process shall be reflected in an LEA's LCAP or annual update.

Section IV. Funding and Scope of Project

Funding

- The applicant as a potential contractor must plan and budget for the costs of all tasks/subtasks and activities for an amount not to exceed \$400,000.
- The proposed term of the contract to be awarded under this Solicitation of Proposals is from January 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023. The term covers a period over two fiscal years, and a total of 18 months. The fiscal years defined in this Solicitation of Proposals are as follows:
 - 2021–22: January 1, 2022—June 30, 2022
 - 2022–23: July 1, 2022—June 30, 2023

Scope of the Project, 1 of 4

The evaluation conducted shall include, but not be limited to, an examination of the state's current accountability structures for Differentiated Assistance based on implementation beginning in the 2017–2018 school year, and recommendations regarding improvements in all of the following areas:

1. Delivering support to address needs identified by the Dashboard and other relevant federal, state and locally collected data.
2. Improving pupil outcomes, including those measured by state and federal accountability systems.

Scope of the Project, 2 of 4

3. Improving the linkages between the Dashboard, technical assistance and intervention, and local control and accountability plans.
4. Aligning state and federal accountability, compliance, and support systems.
5. Identifying strategies and challenges for funding and supports in the current model and any recommended models.

Scope of the Project, 3 of 4

- The evaluation shall include input from a diverse group of educational partners, including, but not limited to, county, school district, and charter school administrators, school board members, members of governing bodies of charter schools, teachers, noncertificated staff, and parents and guardians of pupils enrolled in public schools.
- On or before January 15, 2023, the Superintendent of Public Instruction shall provide the evaluation report to the chairs of the relevant policy committees and budget subcommittees of the Legislature, the executive director of the SBE or their designee, and the Director of Finance.

Scope of the Project, 4 of 4

- This Solicitation of Proposals seeks proposals for a contract that describe how applicants plans to effectively conduct an examination and provide recommendations of the state's current accountability structures for Differentiated Assistance.
- If awarded, the contractor will be responsible to work with the assigned contract monitor and other CDE staff to develop and finalize the Scope of Work in a timely manner in order to ensure contract execution for the start date of January 1, 2022.

Section V. Eligibility Requirements

Good Standing

- Applicants submitting proposals must have a minimum of four years of recent (within the last 7 years) full-time experience in conducting evaluation studies within the K-12 education setting.
- Additionally, any potential contractor must be in good standing with the State of California in order to submit a proposal for the purposes of this Solicitation of Proposals. The CDE will check any contractor evaluations on file with the State of California. If performance by the applicant as a previous contractor for the State of California was unsatisfactory, they will be deemed ineligible.

Section VI. Proposal Review and Evaluation

Reading and Scoring of Proposals

- Each proposal will be read and scored by at least two reviewers.
- Only proposals receiving a Sufficient, Comprehensive, and Outstanding quality designation by two readers will be asked to participate in an interview to be scheduled for November 19, 2021; all applicants need to be available for an interview on this date.
- If during the review and scoring process two readers do not calibrate on the quality of the proposal, a third reader will be asked to read and score the application to determine the final quality score.
- See section VI. Proposal Review and Evaluation and Attachment 3 – Scoring Rubric for details on ratings and scoring criteria.

Section VII. Required Signatures in Blue Ink and Assurances

Required Signatures, 1 of 2

- An original, hard copy, “wet” signature, **using blue ink**, is required on the application Cover Page from the organization Contract Designee and is due at the time of application submittal to the CDE by Friday, November 12, 2021 by 4 p.m.
- **Signature stamps, electronic stamps, or any form of reproduced stamp** will not be accepted. Applications without a valid Designee signature **will be disqualified**

Required Signatures, 2 of 2

- Original signatures on the Cover Page represent a certification that all of the forms submitted through this Solicitation of Proposals have been reviewed, acknowledged, and completed and will be binding and enforceable upon the applicant.
- All applicants are required to retain copies of signed documents for their records and for audit purposes.

Section VIII. Cancellation, Modification, Rejection, Waiver and Disqualifications

Cancellation and Modification

- The CDE reserves the right to cancel the solicitation and evaluation. The CDE is not required to award a contract.
- The CDE may modify this Solicitation of Proposals by posting an addendum at www.cde.ca.gov/fg/fo/r8/solicitationofproposalsrfp.asp.

Rejection

The CDE reserves the right to reject any or all proposals for any reasonable cause or reason. Such reasons for rejection include, but are not limited to: conditional or incomplete proposals, proposals containing alterations of form or other irregularities, proposals that do not address all stated requirements or that are otherwise unresponsive, proposals that do not meet technical standards, proposals from an applicant who has a conflict of interest or an unresolved dispute with the CDE, SBE or CCEE, proposals that include the costs for developing proposals or other costs incurred prior to the effective date of the contract, proposals that contain various options or alternatives, and proposals submitted from applicants for whom there is a risk of potential collusion.

Waiver

- The CDE, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to waive immaterial defects, request applicants to correct an immaterial defect or provide clarification at any time during the solicitation and evaluation process.
- The CDE's waiver of an immaterial defect shall in no way modify the RFP document or excuse the applicant from full compliance with all requirements, if awarded the contract.

Disqualifications, 1 of 2

The following items will disqualify applications:

- Application due date: Any proposal received past the due date of 4 p.m. on Friday; November 12, 2021 **will be disqualified**. Due to COVID restrictions, in-person delivery of applications to the CDE is not currently allowed.
- Any applicants with an unsatisfactory performance evaluation for a previous contract with the State of California **will be disqualified**.

Disqualifications, 2 of 2

- Application Cover Page: Any application without an original Designee “wet” signature, **using blue ink, will be disqualified.**
- Applications must be submitted complete. Any submittals with any missing proposal sections or answered questions **will be disqualified.**
- Any other failure to comply with the requirements of this Solicitation of Proposals. Before submitting documents, each applicant should carefully proof-read its proposal for errors and adherence to the solicitation requirements.

Section IX. Proposal Requirements

Submitted Proposals

- Each proposal submitted must contain all the required items described in this section. Any proposal that does not include all the required items may be disqualified from consideration. Proposals should not exceed 15 pages excluding any resumes/curriculum vitae of identified personnel. Proposals can utilize tables and/or bullets to more clearly demonstrate main ideas. Proposals should be organized and submitted according to the order outline in the Proposal Checklist (Attachment 1).
- Proposals submitted should provide the framework for the evaluation of Differentiated Assistance. Proposal questions allow the space to demonstrate the experience and expertise needed to provide a timely, high-quality evaluation, and report with insight and recommendations.

Proposal Elements, 1 of 2

Provide complete responses to the following elements of the evaluation project.

- Description of Organization and Experience (50% weighted score)
- Proposed Project Workplan (30% weighted score)
- Proposed Budget and Costs (20% weighted score)
- Conflict of Interest (Not scored or rated, but required)
- Reference (Not scored or rated, but required)

Proposal Elements, 2 of 2

For details for each and all of the Program Elements, please refer to **Section IX. Proposal Requirements**, which fully outlines the elements of desired applications

Section X. Payments and Invoicing

Submission of Contract Invoices

Once a contract has been executed as part of this Solicitation for Proposal it will contain the final and binding payment and invoicing terms. Generally, once work has begun, the contractor may submit invoices in arrears for work actually performed for CDE's review, approval, and payment. Invoices shall be addressed to the named CDE contract monitor on a quarterly basis. The CDE will process properly submitted and undisputed invoices within 45 days of receipt. Each invoice is subject to a 10 percent withholding that will be released to the contractor after all services have been satisfactorily provided by the contractor and accepted by the CDE contract monitor and the contract is otherwise fully performed and concluded.

Section XI. Appeals

Appeals, 1 of 2

Applicants who wish to appeal the email notification of the CDE screening disqualification decision must submit a Letter of Appeal to the CDE within 15 days of the CDE's action.

Appeals are limited to the ground that the CDE's action(s) violate(s) a state or federal statute or regulation. The professional judgment of the application reviewers will not be considered on appeal absent a showing that the CDE violated a state or federal statute or regulation.

Appeals, 2 of 2

- An applicant may be represented by counsel.
- The Letter of Appeal must have an original, hard copy, “wet” signature, **using blue ink**, from the Authorized Signature or the Designee. The appeal should be mailed or hand delivered to:

Student Achievement and Support Division
California Department of Education
Attention: Lindsay Tornatore, Director
1430 N Street, Suite 6208
Re: Solicitation of Proposals Appeals – DA Evaluation
Sacramento, CA 95814

Attachments

Attachment 1 – Required Proposal Checklist

- Each item listed on Attachment 1 - Required Proposal Checklist must be included in both the hardcopy and electronic copy of the proposal submitted.
- Additionally, the Applicant must sign the application checklist affirming that the proposal is complete and there is understanding that an incomplete submittal with any missing requirements will be disqualified.

Attachment 2 – Application Cover Page

- Each application (both hard copy and electronic copy) must have a completed and signed Application Cover Page upon submission.
- The Application cover page must be fully filled out with all information complete.
- The Contract Designee must sign with wet signature in blue in with date on the bottom of the cover page.

Attachment 3 – Scoring Rubric

- Attachment 3 - Scoring Rubric contains the scoring criteria that delineates how each application will be rated based upon expectations of quality for applications and potential evaluators.
- The Scoring Rubric will be used for three of the five proposal elements—Organization and Experience (with a 50 percent weighted score); Proposed Workplan (with a 30 percent weighted score), and; Proposed Budget and Cost (with a 20 percent of the weighted score)
- Conflict of Interest and Reference are required proposal elements, but are not scored or weighted)

Thank you for your interest!

Send questions and correspondence through the System of Support Helpdesk at with “Solicitation of Proposals” in the subject line to CASystemofSupport@cde.ca.gov

- All questions and correspondence need to be submitted by 5 p.m. on Tuesday, November 2, 2021
- All submitted supplemental questions with answers will be posted on the Q & A web page on Thursday, November 4, 2021