California Department of Education

Executive Office

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# **MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** December 11, 2020

**TO:** MEMBERS, State Board of Education

**FROM:** TONY THURMOND, State Superintendent of Public Instruction

**SUBJECT:** Comprehensive Literacy State Development Grant Update: State Literacy Plan Development

## Summary of Key Issues

On June 3, 2019, the California Department of Education (CDE) applied for the federal Comprehensive Literacy State Development (CLSD) grant and received notification of a grant award in the amount of approximately $37.5 million on September 27, 2019. This information memorandum details progress on the State Literacy Plan (SLP), a key grant deliverable.

## Background

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 authorizes the CLSD grant program. This five-year competitive grant advances literacy skills through the use of evidence-based reading and writing instructional practices and interventions, including pre-literacy. The grant serves children from birth through grade twelve, with an emphasis on disadvantaged children, including children living in poverty, English learners, and children with disabilities. The grant also has two priorities: (1) projects that include evidence-based family literacy strategies, and (2) projects that increase educational options for groups of students who have traditionally been underserved. California’s award will be used to leverage and expand existing statewide infrastructure, guidance, and expertise to bring coherence to the system of literacy supports to improve student outcomes over a period of five years.

The CDE presented the grant application to the State Board of Education (SBE) as an agenda item in July 2019 with a request to ratify the submission of the proposal to the U.S. Department of Education. The full proposal, including project objectives, is available as an attachment to the July 2019 agenda item. In August 2020, the CDE presented an updated timeline to the SBE in an information memorandum. This memorandum explained in detail changes to the grant objectives timeline due to the COVID-19 response.

The July 2019 agenda item and the August 2020 information memorandum are available on the CDE CLSD SBE Agenda Items and Memos web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ps/clsdsbeitems.asp>.

## State Literacy Plan Development Overview

The CDE, with support from the Region 15 Comprehensive Center at WestEd, convened a group of literacy experts and educators in February 2020. The purpose of this meeting was to assist the CDE with the interpretation of California’s comprehensive statewide literacy needs assessment, disseminated to local educational agencies (LEAs) in December 2019, and provide recommendations for the SLP.

CDE staff, with input from collaborating grant partners, then developed a draft SLP and convened a State Literacy Team (SLT) in March 2020 to provide input. During this meeting, the SLT reviewed the needs assessment data, helped to prioritize evidence-based strategies, and identified resources to include within the SLP, ensuring the document may be used as a tool and model for subgrantees and LEAs as they develop their own local literacy plans. Due to changes in the grant timeline, the CDE had an opportunity to convene the SLT for a second meeting in August 2020 to provide overall input on the revised draft SLP, along with specific feedback on the age and grade span sections.

Additional information regarding the SLT is available on the CDE State Literacy Plan Team web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ps/clsdteam.asp>.

## State Literacy Plan Stakeholder Feedback

Based on the feedback and suggestions obtained during the development process outlined above, the CDE revised the SLP and presented it to the Instructional Quality Commission (IQC) in September 2020 with a request to post the draft for public comment. The online input survey was promoted through stakeholder updates, listserv communications, and social media. Additional feedback was solicited from CDE directors, stakeholder organizations, and CLSD grant partners. The CDE also provided the following presentations to share the draft SLP and request additional stakeholder input:

* Bilingual Coordinators Network meeting on August 27, 2020
* State and Federal Program Directors meeting on October 16, 2020
* Advisory Commission on Special Education meeting on October 21, 2020

Through the public comment process, the CDE received 347 distinct comments, including comments from 62 individuals and 12 stakeholder organizations representing students with disabilities, English learners, multilingual learners, teachers, parents, and librarians. For a complete list of comments and proposed actions, see Agenda Item 3 on the IQC web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/cc/cd/sept2020iqcagenda.asp>.

As approved by the IQC, the CDE made multiple revisions to the SLP based on public comment, including but not limited to: incorporating the California Model School Library Standards and guidance, adding additional existing guidance on biliteracy and primary language development, removing the designation of the *Dyslexia Guidelines* and the *Practitioner’s Guide for Educating English Learners with Disabilities* as “additional resources,” adding a Glossary of Terms, and including the *Common Core en Español* and the *Spanish Language Development Standards* to the description of primary resources. Additionally, the CDE added language to emphasize the importance of collaboration between early childhood education and kindergarten through grade twelve programs. For a complete list of revisions made to the SLP based on public comment, please see Attachment A: Public Comment Responses for the Draft Comprehensive State Literacy Plan available at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/cc/cd/documents/elaelditem3atta.docx>.

## State Literacy Plan Next Steps

The current draft of the SLP is available on the CDE CLSD web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ps/clsd.asp>. The CDE continues to revise the draft based on the recommendations from the IQC and will present a draft to the SBE in January 2021 to request member feedback. The CDE plans to present a final draft to the SBE in March 2021, which adheres to the timeline shared with the SBE in August 2020. Upon SBE approval of the SLP, a Request for Applications for subgrant awards will be disseminated in May 2021. The CDE anticipates that subgrantees will begin work in fall 2021.

The updated CLSD timeline is available as an attachment to the August 2020 information memorandum on the CDE CLSD SBE Agenda Items and Memos web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ps/clsdsbeitems.asp>.