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# **MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** August 16, 2019

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

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

**SUBJECT:** Update on California’s Implementation of the California system of support

## Summary of Key Issues

This memo provides an update on the continuing implementation of California’s system of support for local educational agencies (LEAs) and schools. Since August 2016, the State Board of Education (SBE) has received a total of 13 updates regarding the development of the California system of support, each building on the previous and providing an update on the progress, implementation, and continuous improvement of initiatives, policies, and assistance efforts of stakeholders engaged in California’s system of support.

Since its inception, details about the system of support have been clarified and refined collaboratively by the agencies charged with providing assistance and support under the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), based on feedback from stakeholders and the SBE. The core design of the system of support, including the overall goal and design principles articulated in the State Superintendent of Public Instruction’s February 2019 Information Memorandum (<https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/pn/im/documents/memo-pptb-amard-feb19item04.docx>), remain unchanged. There are components of the system that continue to evolve.

This memo provides a review of the system of support’s development and implementation to date, with particular attention to areas where the initial design has evolved or become further defined over the past year.

## Overview of the System of Support

The LCFF requires county offices of education to provide additional assistance to school districts that have one or more student groups in the lowest performance level for the California School Dashboard (Dashboard) indicators in two or more LCFF state priority areas. LEAs may be subject to more intensive state intervention due to persistent low performance by multiple student groups. LCFF also created a new state agency, the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE), to provide assistance and support to LEAs. Finally, LCFF gave new responsibilities to the California Department of Education (CDE) to support county offices of education, in addition to CDE’s existing responsibilities to provide guidance and support to LEAs related to the state accountability system.

Through a collaborative process spearheaded by SBE staff and informed by input from educational stakeholders, the CDE, CCEE, and county offices developed a common framework with three levels of support for LEAs and schools. The goal at all three levels is to help LEAs and their schools meet the needs of each student, with a focus on building capacity to sustain improvements and address student opportunity and outcome gaps.

* ***Support for All*** (Level 1): All school districts and schools can access resources and assistance, such as trainings, conferences, voluntary technical assistance, and various tools. This support builds the overall capacity of school districts and schools to improve opportunities and outcomes for all students.
* ***Differentiated Assistance*** (Level 2): County offices of education (COEs) are required to provide customized assistance to school districts that meet eligibility criteria based on student performance.
* ***Intensive Intervention*** (Level 3): The State Superintendent of Public Instruction may intervene in school districts if there are persistent performance issues over multiple years.

The following graphic illustrates the system of support’s design and how the agencies responsible for providing assistance work together to support and build capacity of LEAs. The support agencies work together to help school districts get what they need to improve outcomes for students and to improve the reliability, timeliness, quality, and local relevance of support provided to school districts. An accessible description of this image can be found in Appendix A.



In the coming months, the CDE, CCEE, and county offices, with input from SBE staff and stakeholders, will begin the work of aligning support activities for LEAs and schools to maximize available resources and improve outcomes for California’s diverse students.

## New Statutory Requirements

Section 39 of the Education Omnibus Trailer Bill (Senate Bill 75) for the 2019–20 California State Budget amended California *Education Code* (*EC*) Section 52073 to require the CDE and the CCEE, in consultation with the Executive Director of the SBE, to establish a formal process to coordinate the activities of the CDE, the CCEE, geographic lead agencies, the expert lead agencies (e.g., Community Engagement, Math Initiative, Equity Lead, Multiple-Tiered System of Support (MTSS), and regional English learner Specialists) and Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) leads to provide coherent and effective support to LEAs, and specifies that the CCEE, in consultation with the CDE, is to facilitate this formal process. This amendment serves to further clarify roles within the system of support and formalizes the partnership between the CDE, the CCEE, and the Lead Agencies in support of LEAs.

### 21st Century California School Leadership Academy

*EC* Section 44690(c)(1) directs the CDE and the CCEE to establish a process to organize and offer professional learning opportunities and to select providers of high-quality professional learning for administrators and other school leaders. These providers will apply for grants in a manner that ensures the availability of professional learning through the 21st Century California School Leadership Academy (21 CSLA), free of charge, to local educational agencies that receive federal Title II funds on a statewide basis, and is consistent with the statewide system of support.

The Executive Director of the SBE is responsible for approving professional learning providers selected through the CDE/CCEE established process, and consult with the CDE/CCEE to identify critical areas for training and coaching for principals and other school leaders. Additional information regarding the 21 CLSA is available at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ai/ca21csla.asp>.

### Educator Workforce Investment Grant Program

Section 84 of the Education Omnibus Trailer Bill (Senate Bill 75) for the 2019–20 California State Budget established the Educator Workforce Investment Grant Program to support one or more competitive grants for professional learning opportunities for teachers and paraprofessionals across the state. The CDE and CCEE are directed to establish a process to select one or more institutions of higher education or nonprofit organizations to conduct activities in the following areas:

* Professional learning activities to implement the California English Learner Roadmap Policy
* Special education-related professional development
* Professional learning for teachers and paraprofessionals statewide in the following areas:
	+ Practices and strategies to create a positive school climate, including social-emotional learning and restorative justice
	+ Strategies for providing high-quality instruction and computer science learning experiences aligned to the 2018 California Computer Science Standards
	+ Practices to support the 2020 Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum

Positive consideration will be given to applicants that propose to partner with a county office of education or a consortium of county offices of education. Activities will be conducted in a manner that aligns with the statewide system of support and, to the extent practicable, grantees will coordinate activities with the California Subject Matter Projects. The Executive Director of the SBE is responsible for approving grantees selected through the CDE/CCEE established process. The CDE and CCEE are currently developing the process to select grantees.

## Geographic Lead Agencies Update

The goal of the geographic lead agencies is to support the continuous improvement process and connect COEs and school districts to California’s system of support. The geographic lead agencies are guided by locally identified needs and have the expertise to build COE capacity to support school districts in each of the state priorities across student groups within their defined geographic area.

This status update for the geographic lead agencies builds on the information provided to the SBE at the March 2019 meeting (<https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr19/documents/mar19item02.docx>).

### Bay Area Consortium for Student Success

Alameda County Office of Education is the geographic lead for the Bay Area Consortium for Student Success (BACSS), comprised of Alameda, Santa Clara, San Mateo, Contra Costa, and Solano counties. In analyzing its data, the consortium identified that nearly 20 percent of the LEAs eligible for differentiated assistance based on the homeless student population are found within their geographic area. In light of this data, the consortium is focusing its efforts on developing targeted resources and supports to address the needs of homeless students. The consortium is moving forward with plans to conduct an equity audit with a multi-agency lens and to develop and pilot a toolkit of resources to address the unique needs of students impacted by homelessness.

### Kern County Office of Education

Kern County Superintendent of Schools, in partnership with the counties in its geographic area (Fresno, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Ventura, and Los Angeles), have identified a particular need to increase support for students with disabilities throughout the geographic area. The geographic area has partnered with WestEd to create an asset map matrix of the resources and supports available throughout the geographic area and is incorporating a train the trainer model to continue building the system capacity. The geographic area is also engaged in analyzing case studies and how lessons learned can be leveraged by each county office in the providing differentiated assistance to eligible LEAs.

### Capitol Central Foothill Area Consortium

Placer and Sacramento Counties serve as co-leads of the Capital/Central/Foothill Area Consortium (CCFAC), in support of Colusa, Yuba, Sierra, Nevada, El Dorado, Alpine, Yolo, Sutter, Tuolumne, San Joaquin, Amador, and Calaveras Counties. Based on an analysis of geographic area data, asset mapping, needs assessment, and collaborative conversations, CCFAC has identified key areas of focus in the areas of Equity, Improvement Science, Implementation Science, Universal Design for Learning, and Data Systems. The consortium is working to identify an outside agency to partner with in identifying expertise in the state priority areas across student groups, to coordinate and calibrate services for LEAs within the geographic area, and to determine capacity to mutually support one another. The consortium has established an advisory committee to provide overall leadership and decision-making based on a shared leadership approach and disseminates information through regular meetings.

### Southern California Consortium

Riverside County Office of Education and San Diego County Office of Education have developed a multi-faceted approach to supporting their geographic region, which also includes San Bernardino, Imperial, and Orange Counties. Utilizing a three-pronged approach focusing on cultivating a data culture, building capacity through equity leadership, and propigating a continuous improvement mindset, these county offices, collectively known as the Southern California Consortium, are working to develop and utilize high-quality resources, enhance skills and capability development, and facilitate high-quality evidence-based networks focused on increasing positive student outcomes. In the 2019-20 school year, the consortium intends to assemble three key work groups that will serve as the regional teams in the focus areas of Data Culture, Leading Equity Conversations, and Continuous Improvement, as well as partnering with WestEd to collectively engage in needs sensing and asset mapping to capture the collective skills and desired growth areas across the region.

### Far North Partnership

Shasta County Office of Education leads the improvement efforts of the Far North Partnership, which includes Del Norte, Humboldt, Siskiyou, Modoc, Trinity, Lassen, Tehama, Plumas, Butte, and Glenn Counties. Following an analysis of data for the geographic area, the partnership identified an area-wide focus on math and is working with local curriculum experts to develop a tool kit to support schools throughout the region. Three additional tool kits, focusing on behaviors/suspensions, Chronic absenteeism, and the College and Career Indicator are also being planned. The partnership has leveraged virtual meetings to participate in regular “huddles” where consortium members can discuss support strategies for Native American students, students who are foster youth, chronically absent students, and other topics as needed. The partnership has also focused on data visualization and is providing time and opportunity for each member to create and discuss data displays for each of the Dashboard indicators.

### North Bay/North Coast

The North Bay/North Coast geographic area includes Lake, Marin, Mendocino, Napa, and Sonoma counties, with Sonoma County serving as the geographic lead. Since the initial launch of the geographic leads the counties of the North Bay/North Coast region have worked collaboratively to discuss the successes and challenges of the differentiated assistance process, to engage in a consultancy protocol focused on a challenge in engaging with a district partner, to review improvement science training, and to identify opportunities for continuing to build improvement capacity and capability in the coming year. The counties have also developed a Theory for Improvement and guiding principles to guide the ongoing work in the region. Sonoma COE has contracted with Stephanie Evergreen to host workshops in data driven analysis and continue the Improvement Science Frameworks within the Geographic Lead community and is exploring opportunities to leverage existing expertise to provide professional learning opportunities.

### Mid-State Collaborative

The work of the Mid-State Collaborative is lead by Tulare County Office of Education and is comprised of Tulare, Kings, Madera, Merced, Mariposa, Stanislaus, Inyo, Mono, San Benito, Monterey, and Santa Cruz Counties. Initial efforts of the collaborative focused on developing relationships and establishing advisory structures, including developing working agreements and a schedule for 2019-20. The collaborative initiated its first affinity cohort which meets regularly for the purpose of discussing differentiated assistance facilitation and the sharing of resources. An advisory group of key county office of education personnel meet in person twice yearly, and virtually every six weeks to identify assets, strengths and needs. Portable audio/video systems have been purchased for counties in the collaborative, allowing members to participate in virtual meetings; this not only increases attendance at meetings but facilitates collaboration with county offices statewide, increasing the capacity of the counties to support LEAs.

## SELPA System Improvement Leads Update

The purpose of the SELPA System Improvement Leads (SIL) is to work collaboratively within the California system of support to build the capacity of SELPAs and LEAs with a common goal to improve outcomes for students with disabilities. The SELPA System Improvement Lead partners are focusing their efforts to build the capacity of SELPAs to support LEAs in the areas of data use and governance, building a culture of continuous improvement, and implementation of high leverage practices.

As an initial step in the area of data use and governance the SIL recently completed the development and publication of the State Performance Plan (SPP) Indicator Guide. The guide is designed to assist SELPAs and LEAs in understanding the indicators included in California’s SPP, a federally required state plan that includes 17 measures related to the state’s implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and student outcomes. The SIL intend to launch an Improvement Data Portal to as a resource hub for data tools in September and are developing professional learning modules to accompany the SPP Indicator Guide.

To assist LEAs in building a culture of continuous improvement the SIL has developed four professional learning modules designed be used in tandem with CCESA’s Improving Performance of Students with Disabilities Handbook to support COEs in providing technical assistance to LEAs. The SIL is also working to develop a suite of professional learning opportunities for SELPA teams in the areas of improvement science and SELPAs in the California system of support. Professional learning related to the system of support will focus on Data Tools, Including Students with Disabilities in LCAP Goals and Activities, the Dashboard, and Quality Assurance Processes.

To build the capacity of SELPAs to support LEAs in participating in resource networks and implementing high leverage practices the SIL is taking the initial step of launching platforms to serve as resource connectors and resource hubs for all SELPA System Lead resources and tools, including a SELPA System Improvement Lead Website and establishing a presence on social media. The SIL is also providing workshops focused on the implementation of Universal Design for Learning and developing professional learning networks around improving outcomes for students with disabilities.

## School Climate Lead Agency––Multi-Tiered System of Support

In July 2019, as part of the ongoing work of the Scaling up MTSS Initiative, the Orange County Department of Education, the Butte County Office of Education, and the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) Center for the Transformation of Schools, in collaboration with the CDE, hosted the California MTSS Professional Learning Institute. With a theme of “All Means All - Know My Name, Face, and Story", presenters representing a wide range of LEAs, institutes of higher learning, service organizations, and state agencies provided over 150 unique sessions centered around building capacity in the following areas:

* Exploring strategies, tools and resources for addressing persistent issues of access and equity in underserved populations.
* Drawing linkages between meaningful learning, instruction and MTSS.
* Deepening knowledge of how to implement the CA MTSS framework to create equitable and inclusive learning environments for all.
* Understanding new research around school culture, climate, discipline and its connection to MTSS implementation.
* Learning from practitioners across the state how they are successfully creating positive school conditions and a climate that ensure everyone in the school community feels socially, emotionally, and physically safe, supported, connected, and engaged in learning and teaching.

## Community Engagement Initiative

The Community Engagement Initiative (CEI) is an integral part of the California statewide System of Support, designed to build the capacity of communities, school districts, and County Offices of Education (COEs) statewide to engage each other more meaningfully in the local control and accountability plan development process, to engage in difficult conversations with each other, to build trusting relationships, and to identify effective models of community engagement and metrics to evaluate those models with a focus on improving outcomes for pupil. The CEI Lead Agency Consortium co-directs the CEI with the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE).

CEI Lead Agency Consortium Members

* San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools (SBCSS)
* California Association for Bilingual Education (CABE)
* Families In Schools (FIS)

The statewide Community Engagement Initiative (CEI) selected six school districts to join the groundbreaking effort to build capacity for meaningful community engagement in California’s public schools, who will convene a Peer Leading and Learning Network (PLLN). Each selected district possesses a deep, systemic commitment to community engagement and the ability to help the CEI strengthen the capacity of school districts and communities to authentically engage each other in difficult conversations and build trusting relationships. Below are the six districts

* Anaheim Union High School District
* Azusa Unified School District
* Cajon Valley Union School District
* East Side Union High School District
* Ontario-Montclair School District
* Oxnard School District

Each of the six districts that make-up the CEI’s inaugural *Peer Leading and Learning Network* is comprised of:

* District staff and leadership
* School site staff and leadership
* Students and/or family members
* A representative from the county office of education
* A representative from a community-based organization

## Statewide Early Math Initiative

The Statewide Early Math Initiative (Initiative) is intended to result in resources, communications and professional learning that will improve immediate and long-term mathematical outcomes for children from birth through age eight. The Initiative is expected to provide scalable, regionally responsive professional learning and coaching for early learning and care and early elementary teachers, leaders and administrators and is expected to result in the development and dissemination of materials, tools, and strategies that will give educators, communities, and families the resources they need to introduce mathematical concepts effectively and confidently. The Initiative aims to increase awareness of the importance of early math, support the adults who work with young children in providing high-quality, frequent, engaging early math experiences and to reshape perceptions and understanding about early math.

In June 2019, the Early Math Project, consisting of staff from the SBE, CDE, Commission on Teacher Credentialing, and First 5 California, with the assistance of Initiative partners, held a symposium at California State University East Bay.

In July 2019, staff from 30 LEAs and agencies tasked with scaling up the work of the Initiative attended a week-long initial training. This training is the first in a series of monthly ongoing training and professional coaching provided to participants through the AIMS Center for Math and Science Education (AIMS) and from Fresno County Superintendent of Schools (FCSOS) math content specialists. Staff will reconvene for a three-day follow up meeting in June 2020.

FCSOS and its project partners are beginning work on ten public service announcements in English and Spanish encouraging family engagement with early math development. Accompanying vignettes will provide examples of how parents can support their children’s mathematical success at school; incorporate informal math activities (play, outings, exploration, etc.) into daily routines; understand the California Common Core Math Standards; provide effective support at home; and engage children in mathematical conversations. These two-minute demonstration vignettes will be produced in English and Spanish and made widely available via a link on a host website.

Initiative partners are also engaged in the following activities:

* WestEd is compiling research-based early math resources for inclusion in a searchable database that is anticipated to be complete by mid-December.
* Initiative partners are developing children’s literature reviews, related math activities, and guidance documents on hosting community math events, as well as research-based strategies for using children’s literature to support early math. These resources will be posted on the Early Math Website and will be made available in English and Spanish.
* A group of doctoral students is developing interactive early math exhibits that can be replicated in community spaces; these will be piloted in Fall 2019 in Fresno.
* Community math nights are being hosting in Fresno County and piloting math literature stories and accompanying activities that can be sent home with preschool age children are being piloted.
* Efforts are underway to expand the number of affordable math-based children’s stories available in a Spanish dialect suitable to students in California; many currently available titles are for European markets and are often more expensive. Harper Collins will be translating and publishing five math related books that are currently sold in English as part of the Math Start Series.

## Title III English Learner Specialist Lead Agency

The San Diego County Office of Education is the representative for the 11 Title III COE Regional English Learner (EL) Specialist (Regional EL Specialist) at the Geographic Lead Agency meetings. The EL Specialist Lead agency in June 2019, provided the CDE and the 11 Regional EL Specialists training on the San Diego English learner data dashboard, designed to assist LEAs to use local data specific to English learners. Each Regional EL Specialist will pilot the project with one LEA in their region. It is also co-sponsoring a Training of Trainers on the English Learner Roadmap on August 26 and 27, 2019, in San Diego.

The EL Specialist Lead Agency attends all System of Support meetings with the Geographic Leads and provides regular updates to the Regional EL Specialists at each of their meetings and reports back to the Geographic leads the work of the 11 Regional EL Specialists. The EL Specialist Lead Agency acts as the liaison between both group and builds collaboration and cohesion among the work that crosses various leads specially the Special Education Leads given the new release of the *California Practitioners’ Guide for Educating English Learners with Disabilities*

In July 2019, the Regional EL Specialists assisted the CDE Language Policy and Leadership Office with reading the LCAP Federal Addendum from LEAs in their region. The Regional EL Specialists are working closely with LEAs on their LCAP Federal Addendum that require additional information prior to approval. The personal contact and subsequent technical assistance has been welcomed and well received by the LEAs.

The Regional EL Specialists completed work on the guidance document that provides information on English learner programs, evaluation, and LCAP Federal Addendum development. The guidance document is used to assist LEAs through the continuous improvement process. Most Regional EL Specialists, along with CDE staff, attended the Improvement Science training provided in Yolo County. Those that did not attend receive ongoing professional learning activities during the Regional EL Specialists’ meetings. The EL Roadmap rubric is a tool that is being promulgated as part of the continuous improvement process particular to ELs in addition to other tools.

The Regional EL Specialists document technical assistance provided to LEAs including the assistance topic and number of LEAs reached each month. A recent report to the legislature identifies baseline data in order to identify the EL Specialists’ accomplishments at the end of a two-year cycle using established metrics.

The EL Specialists meet quarterly in Sacramento with additional virtual meetings as necessary. The upcoming meetings are set for the following dates:

* September 4, 2019
* November 6, 2019 (virtual meeting due to SBE meeting)
* February 26, 2020
* April 29, 2020

The English Learner Support Division and the Special Education Division are working together to disseminate the *California Practitioners’ Guide for Educating English Learners with Disabilities*. This dissemination effort includes presentations at major conferences such as the Multi-Tiered System of Supports Conference and SELPA leads meetings. The SELPA Content Leads are also assisting with the *California Practitioners’ Guide for Educating English Learners with Disabilities* rollout since the funding for the professional development plan was not provided in this year’s budget.

## Upcoming Meeting Dates

The CCEE and CDE, in coordination with their Lead Agency partners and stakeholders, are seeking to solidify dates for geographic lead agency meetings, “All-Lead” meetings, and stakeholder planning meetings through the end of 2020, however the following dates are currently proposed for the remainder of the 2019 calendar year:

* August 23, 2019 – Geographic Lead Agencies virtual meeting
* September 2, 2019 – Stakeholder Planning virtual meeting
* September 18, 2019 – Geographic Lead Agencies in-person meeting
* October 16, 2019 – Stakeholder Planning in-person meeting
* October 24, 2019 – All Lead Agencies in-person meeting
* December 3, 2019 – Geographic Lead Agencies in-person meeting

## Attachment(s)

Appendix A (1 Page)

# **Appendix A**

This Information Memorandum features a pictorial representation of the California system of support. The left side of the graphic descripts the three levels of support:

1. Support for All: The level at which all local educational agencies (LEAs) can receive resources and tools to improve student success.
2. Differentiated Assistance: The level in which County Superintendents, the California Department of Education (CDE), and the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE) will help LEAs to address identified performance gaps among student groups.
3. Intensive Intervention: The level in which the State Superintendent of Public Instruction may require more intensive support for LEAs based on persistent performance issues and lack of improvement over a specific period of time.

The right side of the graphic depicts the structure of statewide system of support for LEAs that are identified for differentiated assistance:

* County offices of education (COEs) are the primary support for districts.
* The Geographic Lead Agency, in turn, supports COEs and may provide direct services to LEAs.
* COEs have a number of resource leads and initiatives that may be utilized to support their LEAs (e.g., Community Engagement, Math Initiative, Equity Lead, Scale Up Multiple-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) Resource Lead, and regional English learner Specialists).
* The California Educational Agencies (CDE and CCEE) support the entire California system of support.