**California Department of Education  
California Collaborative for Educational Excellence**

# California Community Engagement Initiative Lead Agency 2.0 **REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS INSTRUCTIONS**

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| **California Department of Education State Logo** | **California Collaborative for Educational Excellence Logo** |

**Application Due Date:   
February 28, 2023**

California Department of Education

Student Achievement and Support Division

System of Support Office

1430 N Street, Suite 6208

Sacramento, CA 95814-5901

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**California Community Engagement Initiative 2.0 Lead Agency   
Request for Applications Instructions**

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## OVERVIEW

The California Department of Education (CDE) and California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE) invite interested county offices of education (COEs), on behalf of a consortium of entities (e.g., local educational agencies [LEAs], institutions of higher education, nonprofit educational services providers), to apply to be named as the Lead Agency for the California Community Engagement Initiative (CEI).

### Background and Goals

The CEI was established in 2018 under Assembly Bill 1808, Section 140 (Chapter 32 of the Statutes of 2018) as part of California’s Statewide System of Support as a key lead initiative, with a $13.2 million investment. The CEI is tasked with building the capacity of communities and school districts to conduct meaningful engagement by:

1. Building capacity in communities and school districts to have difficult conversations with each other and build trust, with a focus on improving outcomes for all pupils, particularly the subgroup(s) which have pupils with the highest needs;
2. Identifying effective models of community engagement and metrics to evaluate those models;
3. Developing effective peer-to-peer partnerships between school districts and COEs; and
4. Scaling up the work to improve community engagement statewide and incorporate practices that prove effective toward school district and county office of education continuous improvement efforts.

Currently, the CEI represents 44 LEAs statewide, which include schools, districts, and COEs. A full list of the CEI partners can be found on the CEI website at <https://californiaengage.org/>.

Through the initial investment in CEI, LEAs have been able to create authentic partnerships among pupils, families, districts, and communities that nurture relationships, build trust, ensure cultural, racial, and linguistic equity, and lead to transformative pupil outcomes.

The 2022–23 Education Omnibus Budget Trailer Bill (Assembly Bill 181, Chapter 52 of the Statues of 2022) funded and established an expansion of the CEI with an additional $100 million investment. The administrative agent of the CCEE, pursuant to policy and program direction from the CCEE’s governing board, shall develop the budget for CEI 2.0, subject to approval by the Department of Finance.

The expansion of the CEI program, also known as CEI 2.0, builds on the existing professional learning networks for the purpose of improving local pupil outcomes and community engagement. CEI 2.0 expands the initial CEI work for the following purposes:

1. Increasing and enhancing the emphasis on the engagement of pupils, families, and communities in all aspects of the CEI.
2. Expanding the use of the CEI’s identified metrics to create a common definition and clear standards for meaningful engagement at the local and state levels.
3. Developing an in-depth training series on meaningful pupil, family, and community engagement and engaging LEAs and school site staff in those trainings to build the knowledge, skillsets, and commitment of key staff in improving pupil, family, and community engagement.
4. Increasing the capacity of the CCEE and the selected lead agency to scale up the initiative and improve alignment with the statewide system of support.

The CCEE and the CDE will select a Lead Agency to co-administer CEI 2.0 with the CCEE, with approval from the Executive Director of the State Board of Education (SBE) by May 1, 2023. The grant period begins July 1, 2023, and ends June 30, 2029.

### Responsibilities

The Lead Agency selected for this work must demonstrate the capacity to do all of the following:

1. Develop and share expertise in community engagement;
2. Work collaboratively with the CCEE and a diverse group of education partners.
3. Communicate regularly with the CDE, the CCEE, and other members of the Statewide System of Support;
4. Document outcomes of CEI 2.0 activities and, in partnership with the CCEE and CEI 2.0 participants, develop resources based on the experiences and conclusions of the CEI 2.0 participants from their specific contexts that are broadly applicable and actionable statewide;
5. Play a leadership role in disseminating the information throughout the Statewide System of Support and serve as a resource to LEAs and educational partners in applying that information to their local context; and
6. Perform other responsibilities required to successfully achieve the goals of CEI 2.0.
7. Create a common definition and clear metrics for effective, equitable community engagement that draw upon the metrics developed pursuant to Section 140(f)(3) of Chapter 32 of the Statutes of 2018 (which can be found at <https://ccee-ca.org/community-engagement-initiative/>). Metrics must mirror the original purpose of the CEI, which is to engage underrepresented pupils, families, and communities, build trust and have authentic and productive conversations, and link engagement to efforts that improve student outcomes.
8. In cooperation with CCEE, develop a Scope of Work and Budget.

### Eligibility Requirements

The application may be submitted by a COE on behalf of a consortium of entities (e.g., LEAs, institutions of higher education, nonprofit educational services providers) that demonstrates the capacity to meet statutory goals and responsibilities outlined herein.

## Accountability

### Reporting Requirements

The selected expert CEI Lead Agency will be part of continuing conversations among the California Statewide System of Support Lead Agencies, the CCEE, and the CDE. Additionally, the Lead Agency shall provide the following:

1. Regular progress reports at CEI meetings;
2. Data requested by CCEE in support of the external evaluation;
3. A quarterly fiscal activity report to be submitted to the CCEE’s administrative agent; and
4. Other reports as requested by the CCEE or its administrative agent; and
5. By June 30, 2027, a report to the CCEE, other Statewide System of Support Lead Agencies, Superintendent of Public Instruction, the SBE’s Executive Director, and the chairpersons of each of the Legislature’s appropriate policy and fiscal committees, which shall include all of the following:

* A description of best practices for improving community engagement identified by the professional learning networks established under the Community Engagement Initiative and the expansion, and any changes in the understanding of best practices throughout the duration of the expansion.
* Using an identified definition and metrics, an analysis of the impact of the work done by each team through the professional learning networks on their home communities and school districts.
* Feedback to improve the community engagement professional learning network protocol and metrics, and additional activities or resources that would assist in continued development of capacity within LEAs and local communities for conducting meaningful educational partner engagement.

If the administrative agent of the CCEE does not receive the required reports, programs activities are not completed, or there is a lack of participation in meetings, funding for the Lead Agency could be reduced.

### Program Deliverables

On or before December 1, 2023, the selected Lead Agency, in collaboration with CCEE, must provide an in-depth training series and resources on meaningful pupil, family, and community engagement (Training Series and Resources). The Training Series and Resources must be able to accomplish, at a minimum, all of the following:

1. Develop professional development through train-the-trainer models or online training modules that are scaffolded to support the continued professional development and deeper expertise of educators;
2. Provide technical assistance to LEAs; and
3. Develop a network of educators, especially those selected to participate- in previous CEI professional learning networks, who can provide coaching and training to other LEAs.

In addition, the Training Series and Resources must include content on areas including, but not limited to, all of the following:

1. How to have conversations on complex issues such as race, language, disability, understanding community expertise, and sharing power;
2. Engaging LEA and school site staff in those trainings to build the knowledge, skillsets, and commitment to key staff in improving pupil, family, and community engagement;
3. Focusing on and centering the voices of pupils, families, and communities in decision making processes;
4. Protocols for facilitating professional learning networks to help other communities and school districts improve and deepen their interactions, including the CEI Protocol Toolkit developed and tested by previous CEI professional learning networks;
5. Metrics for measuring increases in community engagement;
6. How to leverage the CEI for transformational school investments and authentic pupil, family, community and educator engagement, including but not limited to local control and accountability plans, expanded learning opportunity programs, and California Community School Partnership Act grants; and
7. Common characteristics and best practices of communities where engagement among the community, its students, and schools is strong.

The Training Series and Resources must be made publicly available, at no cost, to LEAs statewide. Additionally, the selected Lead Agency, in collaboration with CCEE, must periodically update the Training Series and Resources, as needed, based on the findings of future CEI professional learning networks and other research.

The Lead Agency must provide a summary of its activities that includes, but not limited to, the following:

1. Actionable statewide resources developed based on CEI 2.0 activities and outcomes.
2. Support provided to community engagement professional learning networks across the state.
3. Other activities as specified by the CCEE.

For the 2022–23 fiscal year to the 2026–27 fiscal year, inclusive, the selected Lead Agency, in collaboration with the CCEE, must convene 30 community engagement professional learning networks. These community engagement professional learning networks must be similar in composition to the teams described in Section 140(d) of Chapter 32 of the Statutes of 2018 (which required that the teams “include community members, pupils, school site staff and leadership, school district staff and leadership, and COE staff and leadership affiliated with a common single school district.”). The community engagement professional learning networks must be willing to do all of the following:

1. Participate in the professional learning network for no less than two years;
2. Engage in open dialogue on issues related to improving local pupil outcomes; and
3. Partner with other communities and school districts on improving community engagement.

For the 2022-23 fiscal year, each of the community engagement professional learning networks created shall include as cofacilitators members of a team that participated in the initial community engagement professional learning networks established pursuant to Section 140(e) and (g) of Chapter 32 of the Statutes of 2018. Beginning on July 1, 2024, the professional learning networks may also include as cofacilitators members of a team and participated in the initial community engagement professional learning networks established pursuant to Section 140(k) of Chapter 32 of the Statutes of 2018.

Each of the community engagement professional learning networks shall do both of the following:

1. Deepen the community engagement of the school districts and communities participating in each professional learning network, including by engaging with the Community Engagement Protocol Toolkit developed by the networks established pursuant to Section 140 of Chapter 32 of the Statutes of 2018.
2. Use the metrics developed pursuant to Section 140(f)(3) of Chapter 32 of the Statutes of 2018 to measure changes in community engagement in each of the participating communities and school districts.

### Allowable Activities and Costs

The CEI 2.0 budget will be developed by CCEE, subject to the Department of Finance’s approval. The selected Lead Agency’s specific program budgets will be developed in cooperation with CCEE. The proposed use of grant funds will be reviewed and any items that are deemed non-allowable, excessive, or inappropriate will be eliminated. Generally, all expenditures must contribute to the goals and objectives outlined in Section I.

### Assurances

In addition to complying with all terms, conditions and requirements specified in this RFA, the selected Lead Agency must also abide by the current “General Assurances and Certifications” on the CDE Funding Forms web page located at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/fo/fm/ff.asp>. Applicants do not need to sign and return the General Assurances and Certification with the application; instead, they must download them and keep them on file to be available for compliance reviews, complaint investigations, or audits.

### Administrative Indirect Cost Rate

The selected Lead Agency must limit total administrative indirect costs (for itself and, if applicable, any other entities in the consortium) to the rate approved by the CDE for Lead Agency for the applicable fiscal year in which the funds are spent. For a listing of indirect cost rates visit the CDE Indirect Cost Rates web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/ac/ic/>.

## Application Procedures and Process

The process for the selection of the CEI 2.0 Lead Agency is a multistep process that will consist of the following:

1. Application
2. Presentation to demonstrate the ability to meet the goals and responsibilities of the CEI 2.0.
3. Interview

All interested consortium meeting the eligibility requirements are required to develop and submit an initial application package with the following.

1. Letter of Interest
2. Resumes of key personnel
3. Form A: Description of Experience and Capacity with signatures

### Application Timeline

| **Activity** | **Due Date** |
| --- | --- |
| Request for Applications Release Date | January 23, 2023 |
| Questions for RFA Q&As must be submitted | February 3, 2023 |
| Answers for RFA Q&As will be posted | February 7, 2023 |
| Applications Due | February 28, 2023 |
| Applicant Presentations (via Zoom) | March 28 and 29, 2023 |
| Finalist Interviews (Via Zoom) | April 2–4, 2023 |
| Announce Initiative Lead Agency | May 1, 2023 |
| Appeals received at the CDE | June 1, 2023 |
| The Initiative Begins | July 1, 2023 |

### Application Process

Email all application components listed on Form B: Application Checklist as attachments no later than February 28, 2023, to [CASystemofSupport@cde.ca.gov](mailto:CASystemofSupport@cde.ca.gov) with “CEI 2.0 Application” in the subject line.

### Application Review

All applications will be screened and rated for completeness (up to 5 points), quality (up to 10 points), and experience (up to 10 points) by CDE and CCEE staff. Each application will be read and scored by a minimum of two reviewers. The application review process will occur in February—early March 2023. Applications will be randomly assigned to readers, taking into consideration any conflicts of interest. Readers will base their scores on the degree to which an applicant provides evidence that it meets the RFA eligibility and experience requirements. Readers will independently evaluate and score the applications using the Scoring Rubric (see Appendix A), and the two scores will then be averaged to determine a final score.

The applicants with the top five scores will be invited to deliver a presentation to a panel consisting of representatives of the CDE, CCEE, and SBE to demonstrate their ability to meet the goals and responsibilities of CEI 2.0.

### Questions and Contact Information

Prior to submitting questions to the CDE, Student Achievement and Support Division, please ensure that you have:

1. Read the RFA in its entirety
2. Reviewed the Questions and Answers (Q & As) located at:

<https://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/fo/r16/documents/cei2leadagencyrfa.asp>.

1. Viewed the RFAs – Community Engagement 2.0 Webinar posted on the CDE web page [https://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/fo/r16/documents/cei2leadagencyrfa.asp](https://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/fo/r16/documents/cei2leadagencyrfa.asp" \o "California Community Engagement Initiative Lead Agency Request for Applications web page.).

All questions and correspondence should be submitted by email through the System of Support Helpdesk at [CASystemofSupport@cde.ca.gov](mailto:CASystemofSupport@cde.ca.gov) using “Community Engagement Initiative RFA” in the subject line.

NOTE: All questions regarding the RFA and related requirements need to be submitted by 5 p.m. on Friday, February 3, 2023. All submitted supplemental questions with answers will be posted as part of the Q & As located at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/fo/r16/documents/cei2leadagencyrfa.asp> on Tuesday, February 7, 2023.

### Appeals Process

Applicants who wish to appeal a grant award decision must submit a Letter of Appeal to

Community Engagement Initiative Application Appeals

California Department of Education

Student Achievement and Support Division

System of Support Office

1430 N Street, Suite 6208

Sacramento, CA 95814-5901

The CDE must **receive** the Letter of Appeal, with an authorized signature, no later than 5 p.m. on June 1, 2023. Fax or letters submitted via email will not be accepted. Upon receipt of appeals, the CDE and the CCEE staff will reevaluate the application.

**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. An Applicant may be represented by counsel.

**The CDE must receive the Letter of Appeal** **within 30 calendar days of the email notification of disqualification or the Intent to Award announcement posted on the CDE web page. Postmarks will be honored. Emailed letters of appeal will not be accepted.**

The letter of appeal shall include the following:

1. A clear and concise statement of the action being appealed;
2. The legal authority (statute and/or regulation) relied upon for the appeal position;
3. The specific evidence being submitted to support the appeal; and
4. The specific remedy sought.

## APPENDIX A: Scoring Rubric

### Completeness (5 points)

| **Complete**  **(5 points)** | **Incomplete**  **(0 points)** |
| --- | --- |
| Application package included all required elements: Letter of interest, resumes, Form A, and signatures. | Application package did not require one or more of the required elements. |

### Experience and Capacity (10 points)

| OUTSTANDING/EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS  (8–10 points) | STRONG/MEETS EXPECTATIONS (5–7 points) | GOOD/APPROACHES EXPECTATIONS (4–6 points) | MINIMAL/DOES NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS  (0–3 points) |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| The description **thoroughly** and convincingly demonstrates the proposed COE consortium’s capacity to act as a Lead agency including staff and organizational capacity, knowledge, experience, description of each partner’s experience and effectiveness, centering the voices of pupils, families, and communities in decision making processes in order to meet the expected outcomes of CEI 2.0. | The description **clearly** demonstrates the proposed COE consortium’s capacity to act as a Lead agency including staff and organizational capacity, knowledge, experience, and description of each partner’s experience and effectiveness, centering the voices of pupils, families, and communities in decision-making processes in order to meet the expected outcomes of CEI 2.0. | The description **adequately** demonstrates the proposed COE consortium’s capacity to act as a Lead agency including staff and organizational capacity, knowledge, experience, and description of each partner’s experience and effectiveness, centering the voices of pupils, families, and communities in decision-making processes in order to meet the expected outcomes of CEI 2.0. | The description **does not** demonstrate the proposed COE consortium’s capacity to act as a Lead agency including staff and organizational capacity, knowledge, experience, and description of each partner’s experience and effectiveness, centering the voices of pupils, families, and communities in decision-making processes in order to meet the expected outcomes of CEI 2.0. |

### Proposed Structure (10 points)

| **OUTSTANDING/EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS**  **(8–10 points)** | **STRONG/MEETS EXPECTATIONS**  **(5–7 points)** | **GOOD/APPROACHES EXPECTATIONS**  **(4–6 points)** | **MINIMAL/DOES NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS**  **(0–3 points)** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| The description **thoroughly** and convincingly demonstrates that the proposed overall management structure and staffing (including roles of any partners) can fully meet the expected outcomes as a lead agency. The description thoroughly and convincingly demonstrates that the partnership(s) enhance the COE led consortium’s capacity to be the CEI lead agency. | The description **clearly** demonstrates that the proposed overall management structure and staffing (including roles of any partners) can fully meet the expected outcomes as a lead agency. The description thoroughly and convincingly demonstrates that the partnership(s) enhance the COE led consortium’s capacity to be the CEI lead agency. | The description **adequately** demonstrates that the proposed overall management structure and staffing (including roles of any partners) can fully meet the expected outcomes as a lead agency. The description thoroughly and convincingly demonstrates that the partnership(s) enhance the COE led consortium’s capacity to be the CEI lead agency. | The description does not or minimally demonstrate that the proposed overall management structure and staffing (including roles of any partners) can fully meet the expected outcomes as a lead agency. The description thoroughly and convincingly demonstrates that the partnership(s) enhance the COE led consortium’s capacity to be the CEI lead agency. |

## FORM A: Description of Experience and Capacity of the Consortia

**Section 1**

Name of County Office of Education: [Insert Organization Name]

Contact Name: [Insert Contract Designee Name]

Contact Title: [Insert Contract Designee Professional Title]

Address: [Insert Contract Designee Address]

City, State, Zip Code: [Insert Contract Designee City, State, Zip Code]

Telephone Number: [Insert Contract Designee Telephone Number]

Email Address: [Insert Contract Designee Email Address]

Name of Consortia Partner Agency #1: [Insert Organization Name]

Contact Name: [Insert Contract Designee Name]

Contact Title: [Insert Contract Designee Professional Title]

Address: [Insert Contract Designee Address]

City, State, Zip Code: [Insert Contract Designee City, State, Zip Code]

Telephone Number: [Insert Contract Designee Telephone Number]

Email Address: [Insert Contract Designee Email Address]

Name of Consortia Partner Agency #2: [Insert Organization Name]

Contact Name: [Insert Contract Designee Name]

Contact Title: [Insert Contract Designee Professional Title]

Address: [Insert Contract Designee Address]

City, State, Zip Code: [Insert Contract Designee City, State, Zip Code]

Telephone Number: [Insert Contract Designee Telephone Number]

Email Address: [Insert Contract Designee Email Address]

**Section 2**

Applicant and Consortia Member Certification

The Lead Agency and each member of its consortium must have read, acknowledged and agreed to all of the grant terms and conditions stated in the Request for Applications. By having its superintendent, executive director, chief executive officer or other authorized representative sign below, the Lead Agency and each of its consortium members hereby certifies that it has read, acknowledged and agrees to all such terms and conditions and that it is committed to participating in the consortium pursuant to such terms and conditions.

COE Designee Signature and Date (Digital Signature Accepted): [Insert Signature and Date]

Consortia Partner Agency #1 Designee Signature and Date (Digital Signature Accepted): [Insert Signature and Date]

Consortia Partner Agency #2 Designee Signature and Date (Digital Signature Accepted): [Insert Signature and Date]

**Section 3**

Please respond to the prompt below to describe the consortia’s experience and capacity to serve as the CEI 2.0 Lead Agency using Arial 12-point font, 1-inch margins, and not exceed 3 pages. Supporting documentation should not exceed 10 pages.

**Provide a description of the proposed lead agency structure. Include a proposed organizational chart, summary descriptions of each organization, a description of the overall management structure, the roles and responsibilities of each partner, and a description of each partner’s experience and effectiveness,** **centering the voices of pupils, families, and communities in decision-making processes in order to meet the expected outcomes of CEI 2.0. Include supporting documentation of any formal agreements, and/or letter(s) of support that demonstrates high levels of cooperation, commitment, coordination, and formal relationships between the partners, if applicable.**