# Specialized Secondary Programs Request for Applications Cohort 11 2024–25

**California Department of Education**



**Application Due Date: Wednesday, May 29, 2024**

Administered by the:

High School Innovations and Initiatives Office

Career and College Transition Division

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### Specialized Secondary Programs (SSP) Activity Dates

#### SSP Cohort 11 Planning Grant Period:

July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025

#### SSP Planning Grant Activities:

| **Activity** | **Date** |
| --- | --- |
| Release of Request for Applications (RFA) | February 1, 2024 |
| RFA Technical Assistance Webinar | February 21, 2024 |
| Applications Due by Email | May 29, 2024 |
| Applicants Notified (Grant Award Letter or Letters of Regret) | July 2024 |
| Planning Grant Progress Report | April 18, 2025 |
| SSP Planning Grant Funds Expended | June 30, 2025 |
| Annual Expenditure Report | July 31, 2025 |

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### Grant Information

The SSP is authorized by the California *Education Code* (*EC*) sections 58800–58806, that provide start-up funds for the establishment of a new specialized program or school, to provide advanced instruction and training in high technology fields and in the performing arts, for pupils in grades nine through twelve in high schools. The identified SSP teachers, lead teacher and second teacher, providing instruction in specialized secondary programs, shall develop model curricula which the state superintendent of public instruction shall make available to other school districts in the state.

All California public high schools, county offices of education, consortium of local educational agencies (LEAs), and direct-funded charter schools are eligible to apply. New schools without a full complement of grade levels, nine through twelve, must explain how the sequence of courses are different from what will be offered in the high school course offerings. Alternative education schools, of any kind, may apply only if they are structured to support the development, and sustaining of a cohort of students for the identified SSP.

Programs selected for funding must be new to the identified school site(s) and will provide students with advanced instruction and training in high technology fields and in the performing arts. Programs are designed for students to develop knowledge and skills that will prepare them for careers and postsecondary education. Programs selected will plan two new, yearlong sequenced courses (i.e., concentrator course and capstone course) in two consecutive grade levels. The sequenced courses will align to one career technical education (CTE) industry sector and one corresponding CTE career pathway. Funds provided pursuant to this section shall supplement, and shall not supplant, funds provided pursuant to Section 58801.

The SSP grant consists of three (3) grant periods:

* Planning Year
* Year 1 Implementation
* Year 2 Implementation

To advance into Implementation Years 1 & 2, Planning grant recipients must successfully complete all SSP requirements, including curriculum development, posting, and reporting. There is no application process for planning grant recipients to advance into Implementation Years 1 & 2. However, continued funding is not guaranteed.

The SSP planning grant will be funded at $35,000. The grant period is from July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025. Up to **21** planning grants may be awarded through the selection process.

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

### Eligibility Requirements

All California public high schools, county offices of education, consortium of LEAs, and direct-funded charter schools are eligible to apply for the SSP planning grant.

The SSP planning grant provides start-up funds to plan and design new, specialized programs by the two identified SSP teachers; the lead teacher and second teacher.

Applicants must identify and describe the content of the two new, yearlong, sequenced courses to be planned. Applicants must identify oneCTE industry sector and onecorresponding CTE career pathway, as described in the *Career Technical Education (CTE) Course Code Definitions by Sector and Pathways 2023–24 Users Guide* available at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/ct/ig/> and *California Career Technical Education Model Curriculum Standards* available at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/ct/sf/ctemcstandards.asp> that best align with the SSP. If integrating multiple pathways, applicants must identify the pathway that contains the majority of the CTE standards specific to the SSP course content.

The SSP curriculum developed may include and/or draw from: commercial industry/career pathway curriculum, publicly available resources such as University of California A-G portal, district course outlines or newly written original curriculum.

The SSP funding cannot be used to supplement an existing California Partnership Academy, Linked Learning pathway, career academy, or other existing pathways, programs, competitions (on or off campus), or clubs at the school.

The identified SSP courses must be taught by district employees and taught during the regular school day at the same school site. County offices, Reginal Occupational Programs (ROPs), and other LEAs applying for an SSP grant must identify the site(s) where the courses will be taught. If a county office of education/LEA or ROP applies for a grant on behalf of a consortium of schools, both courses in the sequence must be offered at each site.

The SSP curriculum developed will serve as models for other high schools in the state, as prescribed in *EC* Section 58802, and is the grant deliverable. All SSP curriculum must comply with copyright laws for posting on the California Educators Together (CaET) SSP Group Page. The SSP curriculum developed may not be copyrighted by schools/LEAs or ROPs.

### Allowable Grant Fund Expenditures

Grant funds are to be used in accordance with the *California School Accounting Manual*. The following are examples and is not a complete or exhaustive list. For expenditure questions contact the California Department of Education (CDE) consultant.

Expenditures may include, but are not limited to:

* SSP courses planning and design
* Open-source curriculum (commercial or newly developed)
* Ongoing curriculum development
* Supplemental resource materials
* SSP supplies
* Visit other California school sites with comparable programs
* SSP teacher(s) industry/career pathway professional development
* SSP Capital Outlay
* SSP equipment repair/maintenance

### Non-Allowable Grant Fund Expenditures

The following are examples and is not a complete or exhaustive list. For expenditure questions contact the CDE consultant.

Expenditures may not include, and not limited to:

* Contract out curriculum development
* Food/drink
* Honorarium/speaker fees
* Remodel, demolition, new construction
* Property improvements
* Consultant services
* Memberships/dues
* Subcontracts/service contracts
* Teacher credentials
* Tuition
* Vehicle purchase

### Administrative Indirect

Indirect costs shall not exceed the CDE-approved indirect cost rate for the applicable fiscal year in which the funds are expended. The approved rates can be found at [www.cde.ca.gov/fg/ac/ic/index.asp](http://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/ac/ic/index.asp).

### Program Requirements

Each grant recipient is expected to fulfill the following requirements:

1. Plan a new SSP sequence of two courses (i.e., concentrator course and capstone course). The sequence of courses must align to oneCTE industry sector and one correspondingCTE career pathway as described in the *Career Technical Education (CTE) Course Code Definitions by Sector and Pathways 2023–24 Users Guide* available at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/ct/ig/> and *California Career Technical Education Model Curriculum Standards* available at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/ct/sf/ctemcstandards.asp>.
2. Develop and post a course outline, through the ‘unit’ level, for each course. All curriculum and resource materials, when developed, must be posted, and stored on the CaET SSP Group Page and must comply with its requirements and copyright laws. All developed curriculum and resource materials must be posted in a format that is accessible to all schools (e.g., Microsoft Word, PowerPoint).
3. Submit all required reports and curriculum according to the reporting timelines.
4. Changes to the SSP, as it was described in the original grant application, may not be made.
5. Participate in two (2) in-person program convenings, and monthly virtual meetings to network and share practices with other SSP Planning grantees. Details to follow.
6. Attend the annual Educating for Careers Conference.

### Remote, Smaller LEAs

To include high schools and LEAs of different sizes and from more regions of California, as well as assist with student success in LEA’s experiencing high levels of chronic absenteeism or At-Promise populations, selection of participating high schools and LEAs will include consideration of factors related to the geographic diversity, school geography/locale classification (city/suburban/town/rural), size of the LEA, as well as curricular area addressed, and School Dashboard information. High schools and LEAs located in “Town” or “Rural” will receive an additional five (5) points towards the total application score. Locale classifications may be found on the National Center for Education Statistics website at <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/edge/Geographic/LocaleBoundaries>.

### State Performance Overview

Schools experiencing higher than the state average of Chronic Absenteeism of 30%, lower than 87% graduation rate, or a population higher than 60% of Socioeconomically Disadvantaged students will receive an additional five (5) points towards the total application score. This data can be found at the State Performance Overview website at <https://www.caschooldashboard.org/reports/ca/2022>.

### Application Review

Applications will be read and scored by a minimum of two reviewers.

Reviewers may utilize every available resource to verify information provided or inferred in an application.

### Technical Assistance

Charlene Cowan, Education Programs Consultant

916-319-0388

[ccowan@cde.ca.gov](mailto:ccowan@cde.ca.gov)

Sarah Barnett, Fiscal Analyst

916-319-0474

[SSPrograms@cde.ca.gov](mailto:SSPrograms@cde.ca.gov)

### Incomplete and Late Applications

Incomplete applications will not be considered. Late applications will not be accepted.

### Appeals Process

Appeals are limited to the grounds that the CDE failed to correctly apply the standards for reviewing the application as specified in this RFA. Appeals based on a disagreement with the professional judgment of the grant reader will not be considered.

The appellant must file a detailed and complete written appeal, including the issue(s) in dispute, the legal authority or other basis for the appeal position, and the remedy sought. Appeal letters should be sent to:

Pete Callas, Director

Career and College Transition Division

California Department of Education

1430 N Street, Suite 4202

Sacramento, CA 95814

The CDE must receive the letter of appeal, with an original signature by an authorized person, no later than 10 calendar days following the posting of the Grant Award List on the SSP Funding Results web page.

### Application Submission

Applications must besubmitted by email to [ssprograms@cde.ca.gov](mailto:ssprograms@cde.ca.gov) on or before May 29, 2024. Elements 1 through 5 of the application, listed below, must be submitted as a continuous PDF document. Submit the Project Budget (Attachment 1) as a separate Excel attachment, included in the email submission, with the PDF application document.

1. Form A: Application Cover Sheet
2. Form B: Supplemental School Information
3. Form C: Project Abstract
4. Narrative Questions Response
5. Letters of Commitment
6. Grant Budget/Budget Narrative (Attachment 1)



## Narrative – Instructions

There is a 10-page limit to the narrative, double-spaced, with one-inch margins, and a minimum of 12-point Arial font size. Tables or boxes used to present narrative information in text form must be in 12-point Arial font.

Applications should clearly identify and number the prompts in the narrative section.

### Element 1: Curriculum Development (40 pts)

The SSP must design at least two new yearlong courses.

1. a. Name the SSP courses new to the applicant school. Identify the Industry Sector and corresponding Career Pathway the SSP aligns with. Identify who will plan and design the new course curriculum (at least two teachers from the applicant school). Include discussion on curriculum selection from existing or open-source, and/or developing new curriculum.
2. Explain how these courses are new to the applicant school and how courses are aligned with careers in high technology or the performing arts. Explain how the applicant school is in close proximity to industry.
3. Describe the process of choosing these courses to add to the school (i.e., advisory committee, industry partner survey, workforce survey…etc.).
4. Identify industry partners, community members, parent volunteers, etc. who will partner with the school to provide meaningful, industry sector/career pathway expertise to the SSP. Partners should ensure what is proposed in the SSP represents current industry practices. Include the name, company or organization, and job title for each of the outside expert(s) and how they will participate in the SSP. Letters of commitment, from individuals/entities identified, must be included with the application. Letters of commitment do not count towards the 10-page narrative limit.

### Element 2: Local Work Based Learning Opportunities Provided for SSP Students (10 points possible)

Describe four local work-based learning (WBL) opportunities that will be provided for students who participate in the SSP sequence of courses. WBL opportunities may include, but are not limited to, student internships, school/district funded field trips (to WBL partners), guest speaking, apprenticeships, job shadowing, and mentoring.

### Element 3: Professional Development (10 points possible)

The goal of the SSP is to develop model curriculum for two new, yearlong courses aligned to one CTE industry sector and one corresponding CTE career pathway. Refer to the Career Technical Education (CTE) Course Code Definitions by Sector and Pathways 2023–24 Users Guide available at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/ct/ig/>.

Professional development opportunities support the SSP teachers in building individual and collective capacity to meet the school, student, and performance objectives of the SSP program. Refer to the Quality Professional Learning Standards website at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ps/qpls.asp> if there are any questions.

1. Identify the industry sector/career pathway specific professional development needs of the SSP teacher(s) to ensure the two SSP courses are aligned with the CTE Model Curriculum Standards and current industry practices available at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/ct/sf/ctemcstandards.asp>.
2. Explain how the professional development will adhere to the high-quality standards that address student performance data, particularly as they relate to gaps among sub-groups of special population, labor market needs, and equity and access for special populations.

### Element 4: Sustainability (10 points possible)

Describe how the SSP will be financially sustained beyond the funding period (after the planning year and two years of implementation funding). Include cash and in-kind support provided by partners, LEA, and school site level funding.

### Element 5: Grant Budget and Budget Narrative (30 points possible)

Each applicant must submit a signed Grant Budget (Attachment 1). Applicants will project a budget for the Planning grant year, Year 1 Implementation, and Year 2 Implementation. The expenditure of grant funds must support activities described in the narrative sections of the application. Funds from other sources, including cash and in-kind support from district or the community that may demonstrate long-term sustainability, should be depicted although not mandated. The grant funding is for planning costs only, not for program implementation nor to supplant current fixed costs.

The Budget Narrative must include a detailed description of expenses. Planning grant funds should be focused primarily on costs related to curriculum development and professional development. Expenditures in Object Code 1000 for administrative staff are not allowed. Expenditure in Object Code 2000 is not allowed.

Positions supported with SSP grant funds must be for extra-duty pay, beyond regular duties, for current district employees. Other than the identified SSP lead teacher and SSP second teacher, positions must be approved by the CDE and align with the goals of the SSP program.

### Form A: Applicant Cover Sheet

**2023–24 Specialized Secondary Program**

**Cohort 11 Grant Application**

Applicant must provide all requested information in the field descriptor.

**School Name:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**School’s County-District-School Code:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**County Name:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**SSP Name:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**CTE Industry Sector:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**CTE Career Pathway/Pathway # (3 digits):** Click or tap here to enter text.

**School’s Mailing Address:**

Click or tap here to enter text.

Click or tap here to enter text., CA Click or tap here to enter text.

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Principal’s Name:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Phone:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Email:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**SSP Lead Teacher’s Name:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Title:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Email:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**SSP** **Second Teacher’s Name:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Title:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Email:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**CTE Grant Coordinator Name:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Title:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Email:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Phone:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**LEA Fiscal Agent:**

**Name:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Title:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Email:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Phone:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**LEA Superintendent Name:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**LEA Superintendent Email:** Click or tap here to enter text.

I support this application for an SSP at the school listed above. I assure the district and school applying for an SSP grant will adhere to the California *Education Code* sections 58800–58806 along with the grant requirements and requirements identified in the Request for Applications. Sign and date below.

Click or tap here to enter text.

E-Signature of SSP Site Principal Date

Click or tap here to enter text.

E-Signature of LEA Superintendent/Designee Date

### Form B: Supplemental School Information

**2023–24 Specialized Secondary Program**

**Cohort 11 Grant Application**

Only applicants that meet the following will be competitive to receive additional points. This information will be verified by CDE.

1. High schools and LEAs located in designated “Town” or “Rural” locales, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau, will receive five (5) points towards the total application score. Locale classifications may be found on the National Center for Education Statistics website at <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/edge/Geographic/LocaleBoundaries>.

Is your school located in a designated “Town” or “Rural” locale? **Yes or No**

1. Schools experiencing higher than the state average of Chronic Absenteeism of 30%, lower than 87% graduation rate, or a population higher than 60% of Socioeconomically Disadvantaged students will receive five (5) points towards the total application score. This data can be found at the State Performance Overview website at <https://www.caschooldashboard.org/reports/ca/2022>.
2. Applicant schools overall Chronic Absenteeism Rate?
3. Applicant schools overall Graduation Rate?
4. Applicant school’s overall percentage of Socioeconomically Disadvantaged students?

### Form C: Project Abstract

**2023–24 Specialized Secondary Program**

**Cohort 11 Grant Application**

Provide a 1-page overview of the Specialized Secondary Program (SSP) proposed in this application. Describe the vision for the proposed SSP and how it will provide students with a new, focused area of study. Describe how the SSP will provide enhanced learning opportunities and advanced instruction and training in high technology fields and in the performing arts. Explain how the SSP is in close proximity to areas in which these industries are located.

Form B should be 1-page, double-spaced, 12-point Arial font, with one-inch margins.