# California State Preschool Program Achieving Success in Positive Interactions, Relationships, and Environments Grant

**California Department of Education**  
**Early Education Division**

## REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS INSTRUCTIONS



**Application Due Date:**   
**On or Before April 4, 2024**

California Department of Education

Early Education Division

Early Education System Improvement Office

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**California State Preschool Program**

**Achieving Success in Positive Interactions, Relationships, and Environments Grant**

**Request for Applications Instructions**

## Overview

The California Department of Education (CDE) is committed to supporting continuous quality improvement and responsive teacher-child interactions in the California State Preschool Program (CSPP). Responsive teacher-child interactions require intentional work to address potential implicit and explicit adult bias to transform environments and ensure that the culture and climate of all CSPPs reflect inclusion and a sense of belonging for all children, regardless of any disabilities and the race, religion, gender identity, or sexual orientation of the child or children and their families. This is particularly critical for children from historically marginalized Black and Tribal communities, children with disabilities, and children whose home language is not English. To best support an educator-first system of improving adult-child interactions and enhancing equity for all children, the CDE is implementing the CSPP Achieving Success in Positive Interactions, Relationships, and Environments (ASPIRE) grant program to support the use of Teachstone Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) 2nd Edition® and CLASS Environment® tools across all CSPPs (refer to Management Bulletin [MB] 23-10 for details).

One ASPIRE grant will be awarded to a county office of education (COE) to serve as the state lead and provide overall coordination of CLASS and CLASS Environment implementation to the entire state. Four additional ASPIRE grants will be awarded to COEs to serve as regional leads supporting CSPPs in multiple counties in their region. COEs must reside in one of the counties in the region to be considered for the grant, and as a result, a COE may not apply for more than one regional grant. Please note, it is possible for a COE to apply for both the statewide lead and regional lead and be awarded both grants. However, if a COE is awarded both the statewide and regional grant, the CDE requires that each grant have its own separate budget and that each grant be implemented by separate staff within the COE according to the requirements of the grant funding set forth within this request for application (RFA).

* + 1. **Opportunity 1: This funding opportunity is to be selected as one of the four regional leads** for the CSPP ASPIRE program for supporting continuous quality improvement and effective teacher-child interactions with a deep focus on inclusion, supporting multilingual learners (MLLs) and addressing bias and equity. Regional lead responsibilities are outlined in Section IV of this RFA. The regional leads must serve one of the geographic areas below (regions A-D) which are geographically defined by the California County Superintendents, the organizational mechanism for the 58 County Superintendents of Schools.
       1. **Region A: Northern**  
            
          **Counties Supported by Region A:** Butte, Del Norte, Glenn, Humboldt, Lake, Lassen, Mendocino, Modoc, Plumas, Shasta, Siskiyou, Sonoma, Tehama, and Trinity
       2. **Region B: Greater Sacramento and Bay**  
            
          **Counties Supported by Region B:** Alameda, Alpine, Amador, Calaveras, Colusa, Contra Costa, El Dorado, Marin, Monterey, Napa, Nevada, Placer, Sacramento, San Benito, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, San Francisco, San Joaquin, San Mateo, Sierra, Solano, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tuolumne, Yolo, and Yuba
       3. **Region C: Central Valley and Coast**  
            
          **Counties Supported by Region C:** Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, Mariposa, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Tulare, and Ventura
       4. **Region D: Southern and High Desert**  
            
          **Counties Supported by Region D:** Imperial, Inyo, Los Angeles, Mono, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and San Diego
    2. **Opportunity 2. This funding opportunity is to be selected to the role of statewide lead** for the CSPP ASPIRE program to support continuous quality improvement and effective teacher interactions. The statewide lead responsibilities are outlined in Section IV of this RFA.

## Legislative Authority, Background, and Goals

### Legislative Authority

The ASPIRE program is funded by Provision 6 of Item 6100-194-0001 and Provision 6 of Item 6100-196-0001 of the Budget Act of 2023 (Assembly Bill [AB] 102, [Chapter 38, Statutes of 2023]). According to AB 102, a total of $1,075,000 million was allocated to the CDE to fund a tool to strengthen teacher-child interactions and to support quality improvement. In addition, Section 106 of Senate Bill (SB) 114 (Chapter 48, Statutes of 2023) was adopted requiring the CDE to issue guidance to implement the tool funded through the Budget Act of 2023, until formal regulations can be initiated on or before December 31, 2024. That guidance, found in MB 23-10, requires that all CSPPs implement CLASS and CLASS Environment according to the timeline and in the manner prescribed in MB 23-10. Please refer to MB 23-10 found on the CDE Early Education Management Bulletin web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/ci/mb2310.asp>.

The ASPIRE grant program was developed to support the implementation of the CLASS and CLASS environment requirements set forth in MB 23-10. In addition to the $1.075 million in funding awarded in the 2023 Budget Act, $4.5 million of the ASPIRE program comes from AB 210 (Chapter 62, Statutes of 2022) which appropriated up to $50 million to the CDE to address state-level systems building and align local practice with the research and practice-based strategies that support inclusive fiscal and programmatic educational planning and best promote pupil outcomes and program quality improvement.

### Background

The CDE is working to align investments and programs to provide high-quality prekindergarten (pre-K) learning experiences for all children to support the implementation of Universal Prekindergarten (UPK). To ensure all children have access to high-quality learning experiences, the CDE is building an educator-first system of improving adult-child interactions and enhancing equity for all children. The CSPP ASPIRE program is an integral piece of this system which will support the use of CLASS 2nd Edition® and CLASS Environment® tools across all CSPPs.

The CLASS instrument is an empirically validated system originally developed by University of Virginia's Center for the Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning at the Curry School of Education that has been shown to produce gains in children’s math, literacy, social, emotional, and cognitive abilities. Delivery of the CLASS tool and supporting professional development and technical assistance is provided by Teachstone. Specifically, CLASS 2ndEdition and CLASS Environment are observation instruments that assess the quality of teacher-child interactions and the physical learning environment in preschool classrooms. The CLASS is a quality component of California’s Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS), of which 2,461 of the 3,449 CSPP sites participated in during fiscal year 2020–21. Pursuant to *Education Code* Section 8203.1, the CDE administers the CSPP QRIS Block Grant, which is allocated to local Quality Counts California (QCC) entities with the intention of supporting the local early learning QRIS.

CLASS is widely used across the country by the Office of Head Start as a quality monitoring tool and is required within every Head Start program to ensure quality within their programs. Many CSPP contractors are also grantees of the federal Head Start program. Additionally, over 10 states use the CLASS tool in their state-funded preschool programs. Teachstone has published research reviews and over 200 independent empirical research studies that substantiate the positive effects the CLASS tool and coaching has on early learning programs. Specific information on the CLASS and CLASS Environment tools to be used in CSPP is below:

* + 1. CLASS 2nd Edition updates the original CLASS*®* 2008 tool, with a focus on three priority areas: 1) a center on ***equity*** to ensure CLASS reflects and supports the diverse communities it serves, 2) an increase to the ***accessibility*** and ease of use for CLASS users, and 3) a ***measure for impact*** to drive actionable insights for educators to make optimal improvements in the areas that matter most for children. CLASS 2nd Edition was developed in close consultation and collaboration with experts, including educators, from varied and diverse backgrounds and with expertise representing a range of settings and perspectives, including extensive engagement with the California early childhood community. California's historical use of the CLASS tool to measure interactions and support coaching options in mixed delivery programs creates an opportunity to efficiently transition existing infrastructure—currently certified CLASS observers, trainers and coaches—to the CLASS 2nd Edition. The transition to the CLASS 2nd Edition in California’s state subsidized programs is currently specific to the pre-K CLASS tool.
    2. CLASS Environmentis used with the CLASS 2nd Edition to measure and improve the features of the learning environment that matter most for supporting high quality interactions between teachers and children. CLASS Environmentmeasures 29 specific elements of the environment alongside CLASS2nd Edition, which helps to reduce time spent observing with multiple tools, further streamline data collection and reporting, and strengthen opportunities for efficiency and impact. Teachstone closely collaborated with experts representing diverse backgrounds to develop the CLASS Environment and create a measure that supports educators working in diverse settings, including programs serving MLLs and children with disabilities. Throughout the measure, items reflect the most important ways the environment can support children by providing equitable, diverse, and inclusive materials, displays, and arrangements.

The myTeachstone is an interactive database that captures data that creates consistent and quality data reports that drive quality improvement initiatives. With myTeachstone, CLASS data collection and reporting can be streamlined into one easy-to-use platform that saves time, enables continuous monitoring, and drives data-informed learning.

### Goals

ASPIRE regional leads, under the leadership of the ASPIRE statewide lead in collaboration with the CDE and Teachstone, will build regional capacity to support continuous quality improvement focused on adult-child interactions within CSPPs across settings, including community-based organizations and local educational agency (LEA) administered center-based settings and Family Child Care Homes operating through Family Child Care Home Education Networks (FCCHENs).

The ASPIRE program builds upon over a decade of investments in early care and education quality improvement, from state, federal and local sources, under QCC, California’s existing QRIS. This work has included many years of investment to support CLASS observations in early care and education programs across the state and provides training and professional development to early educators to improve interactions and support high-quality learning opportunities for all children. The ASPIRE program will align the CSPP’s continuous quality improvement system with a longstanding practice in Head Start programs of using the CLASS to inform coaching and professional development. The ASPIRE program will build upon this essential foundation to ensure robust statewide and regional capacity to support early educators across all CSPP classrooms and settings.

The ASPIRE program funds support the phase-in of CLASS implementation across CSPPs (as articulated in MB 23-10). The ASPIRE program will build upon existing efforts and current capacity to achieve the following overarching goals:

* + 1. Transform classroom and learning environments and ensure that the culture and climate of all CSPPs reflect inclusion and a sense of belonging for all children, regardless of disability and the race, religion, gender identity or sexual orientation of the child or children and their families. Through continuous quality improvement and support for administrators, teachers, and teacher aides, CSPPs will address any potential implicit and explicit biases and provide responsive teacher-child interactions.
    2. Build capacity for CSPP administrators, teachers, and teacher aides to understand and use data from the CLASS 2nd Edition and CLASSEnvironment to inform instruction, through training on bias, training on the needs of children with disabilities, and resources designed to support Multi Language Learners (MLLs)[[1]](#footnote-2)and other priorities for California.
    3. Build observer capacity across the state to support CLASS observations of all CSPPs, by providing direct support for CLASS observations via continuous quality improvement and coaching, as necessary, and by including smaller CSPPs (rural, one classroom model, and so on) where internal capacity building is more difficult. Observer capacity should be built to reflect the linguistic diversity of programs in the region, including staff and children served, and must include the CLASS Observer Support Series on bias, children with disabilities, and resources designed to support MLLs and other priorities for California. Capacity building will also include the transition for CSPPs and observers currently using the CLASS 2008 Edition to CLASS2nd Edition and CLASSEnvironment, including:
       1. increasing existing observer and coach capacity among current CSPP contractors;
       2. increasing existing observer and coach capacity within CSPP QRIS Block Grantees, and to support the local QCC system, as appropriate; and
       3. developing an infrastructure for culturally, linguistically, and racially affirming coaching and quality improvement work driven by CLASS data, child outcomes data (Desired Results Developmental Profile [DRDP], including structured prompts), and California Preschool/Transitional Kindergarten Learning Foundations [PTKLF]).
    4. Support inclusive practices and teacher-child interactions that foster belonging for all children across all CSPPs, through CLASS observation and coaching, in coordination with the Inclusive Early Education Expansion Project (IEEEP) and the Statewide System of Support Special Education Resources leads and the Supporting Inclusive Practices (SIP) Project system improvement leads.
    5. Support coordination and communication across quality improvement efforts including current work that is underway as part of the UPK Planning and Implementation Grant. ASPIRE includes developing partnerships across regional entities, including but not limited to, local UPK coordinators, Local Planning Council coordinators, CSPP QRIS Block Grantees, Head Start grantees, IEEEP grantees, Statewide System of Support Special Education Resources Leads and the SIP Project system improvement lead.

The ASPIRE program is intended to support the first four years of the six-year phase-in of CLASS 2nd Edition and CLASS Environment across all CSPPs (as articulated in MB 23-10).

## Award Amounts

This request for applications covers awards for years one and two from spring 2024–June 30, 2025.

| **Award Type** | **Award Amount, Year 1**  *Spring 2024 -*  *June 30, 2024* | **Award Amount, Year 2**  *July 1, 2024-*  *June 30, 2025* |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Statewide Lead** | $1,375,000 | $1,975,000 |
| **Regional Lead- Region A** | $168,000 | $243,000 |
| **Regional Lead- Region B** | $325,000 | $577,000 |
| **Regional Lead- Region C** | $235,000 | $382,000 |
| **Regional Lead- Region D** | $472,000 | $898,000 |
| **Total Amount of Awards** | **$2,575,000** | **$4,075,000** |

## Grantee Responsibilities

### Regional Lead Responsibilities

The focus of regional leads during this project period is to conduct a regional needs assessment, develop a regional plan to support CLASS capacity building activities to meet the needs of all CSPPs in the region, and begin building capacity across the region. Capacity building activities must utilize needs assessment data to prioritize support for programs with historically limited access to existing CLASS implementation resources and/or limited staffing to support CLASS implementation activities (for example, rural programs and one classroom models). Regional leads will be required to meet monthly with the CDE and work with the statewide lead on the implementation of these plans, working directly with Teachstone as appropriate.

Between spring 2024–June 30, 2025, regional leads will be required to participate in regular meetings set by the CDE and work with the statewide lead, the CDE, and as appropriate Teachstone, Head Start Region IX, and CSPP contractors and CSPP QRIS Block Grantees in their region to perform the following tasks:

* + 1. Conduct a regional needs assessment, utilizing local data, including, at a minimum, QRIS regional, Teachstone, and CSPP data. Regional leads must report data sources used in the regional needs assessment to the CDE. The regional needs assessment must identify at a minimum:
       1. Existing CLASS observer capacity,[[2]](#footnote-3) including number of observers currently certified in CLASS2008, CLASS2nd Edition, or trained on CLASS Environment and will identify the following:
          - Location and demographics of existing observers, including language(s) spoken
          - Existing CLASS observer training capacity, including number of affiliate trainers
          - Existing CLASS coaching and other quality improvement capacity
          - Number and location of CSPPs and classrooms, or Family Childcare homes
          - Existing QRIS and CSPP data, including data specific to provision of services to children with disabilities
          - As applicable, date of the last CSPP CLASS assessment for each program or classroom to inform assessment of CSPPs familiarity with the CLASS tool and regional implementation plan
    2. Develop a regional coordination plan, in collaboration with CSPPs in the region, that must be reviewed and approved by the statewide lead and the CDE, balancing needs throughout the region. The regional coordination plan must utilize the regional needs assessment and be designed to ensure an infrastructure for regional CLASS capacity, including the use of myTeachstone, across CSPP QRIS Block Grantees and all CSPPs. The regional coordination plan must include:
       1. Activities and an implementation timeline to build regional leadership and staff buy-in for CLASS2nd Edition and CLASSEnvironment and increase knowledge of the importance of teacher-child interactions, including how the CLASS tool can help inform culturally, linguistically, and racially responsive practices, support inclusion of children with disabilities, and continuous quality improvement on teacher-child interactions.
          - These activities should explicitly address implicit and explicit adult bias to ensure that the CSPP environments reflect inclusion and a sense of belonging for all children, regardless of any disability and the race, religion, gender identity, or sexual orientation of their families, particularly for historically marginalized Black and American Indian/Alaskan Native children, children with disabilities, and children whose home language is not English.
    3. Activities and an implementation timeline for how capacity will be built to support all CSPP programs and classrooms within the region to understand and use data from the CLASS2nd Edition and CLASSEnvironment tools, as well as ensuring all CSPPs are assessed using the CLASS2nd Edition and CLASSEnvironment tools. Activities will include the following:
       1. training and certification of existing observers on CLASS2nd Edition and training on CLASSEnvironment, including the CLASS Observer Support Series on bias, children with disabilities, and resources designed to support MLLs and other priority topics for California;
       2. recruitment of additional observers (as needed) to reflect the linguistic, cultural, and ethnic diversity of programs in the region, including with attention to the primary languages spoken in CSPP programs within the region (as provided by the CDE from the Preschool Language Instrument System [PLIS] data);
       3. direct support as necessary, including for smaller CSPPs (rural, one classroom model, etc.) where internal capacity building is more difficult, including CLASS observations and coaching;
       4. ensuring that sites with license exempt classrooms will be prioritized for capacity building, especially for the CLASSEnvironment tool;
       5. ensuring that observers will be deployed to meet the needs of all CSPP programs in the region and support adherence to benchmarks articulated in the CLASS MB; and
       6. ensuring that observers will be trained to implement inclusive practices and support educator capacity to foster a sense of belonging for all children.
    4. Activities and an implementation timeline for observers to input data into myTeachstone in collaboration with the statewide lead.
    5. Activities related to continuously assessing needs and deploying resources effectively throughout the region.
    6. An implementation timeline for providing professional development for program leaders and teachers on the CLASS2nd Edition and CLASSEnvironment tools including:
       1. Orientation to the CLASS2nd Edition and CLASSEnvironment tools
       2. Implementation of inclusive practices in coordination with the IEEEP and the Statewide System of Support Special Education Resources leads, and the SIP Project system improvement leads.
       3. Resources to utilize CLASS data, child outcomes data (DRDP, including structured prompts), and the PTKLF to inform continuous improvement
       4. Coaching capacity including support for culturally, linguistically, and racially affirming coaching and quality improvement work driven by CLASS data
       5. Accessible ways to integrate work on CLASS into existing professional learning opportunities and teaching practice reflection processes
       6. How the region will continuously review local and current needs and update the regional plan as necessary and directed by the CDE
    7. Actively recruit CSPP program staff and administrative staff throughout the region to participate in leader and educator events provided by the statewide lead including through communication to CSPPs in the region about opportunities.
    8. Support all CSPPs in the region to develop program-level CLASS2nd Edition and CLASSEnvironment annual observation and implementation plans, informed by the regional plan, to meet requirements articulated in the CLASS MB, through regional lead observations or other external observations.[[3]](#footnote-4)
    9. Participate in additional evaluation activities conducted by the CDE or by an independent, external evaluator on behalf of the state.

### Statewide Lead Responsibilities

The focus of the statewide lead during this project period is to coordinate efforts across regional leads in collaboration with the CDE and Teachstone, and support statewide access to resources, including training, and an infrastructure for CLASS2nd Edition implementation and CLASSEnvironment data reporting. As part of performing these duties, the statewide lead will be required to enter into a contract with Teachstone. Please note that the CDE, as a third-party beneficiary of the contract, has the right to participate in contract negotiations to ensure that the contract incorporates the necessary elements for the statewide lead to perform their duties.

During the project timeline from spring 2024–June 30, 2025, the statewide lead in collaboration with the CDE, Teachstone, Office of Head Start Region IX, and regional leads will:

* + 1. Develop a statewide work plan with the CDE, informed by all regional plans, that articulates successful criteria for statewide CLASS implementation, including ensuring all CSPPs meet the requirements articulated in MB 23-10. The work plan should also include how CSPPs will use the CLASS information to improve program practice, and a communication plan between all regional leads, the CDE, Head Start Region IX, and Teachstone. The statewide lead shall be required to update the submitted work plan during the project timeline if needs and priorities shift.
    2. Work with regional leads on developing and implementing regional plans, connecting regional leads directly with Teachstone as appropriate.
    3. Enter into a contract with Teachstone using funding from the ASPIRE statewide lead award. The contract must cover activities for implementing CLASS 2nd Edition and CLASS Environment statewide for the fiscal year periods of 2023–24 and 2024–25. The budget for the Teachstone contract is anticipated to be $1 million for year one and $1.5 million for year two. The contract and scope of work (SOW) must be developed in collaboration with the CDE and must include the following at minimum:
       1. launch webinar event(s) for educators and leadership to provide a high-level overview of CLASS Implementation including a customized overview of CLASS 2nd Edition;
       2. regional events, customized, one full day or two half days of sessions for leaders, coaches, educators and also, to include CLASS Environment overviews for leaders and educators;
       3. transitioning 2008 CLASS observers, training new CLASS 2nd Edition observers, and providing all observers with CLASS Environment training;
       4. training to become certified to deliver CLASS group coaching and the cost of participant materials;
       5. supporting the transition of 2008 CLASS trainers, training new Affiliate CLASS trainers, and their annual recertification fees;
       6. establishing access to myTeachstone for all observers throughout the state, group calibrations, observers, CLASS 2nd Edition/CLASS Environment scoring books for observations, and data management consultation; and
       7. provision for CDE access to CLASS data throughout the state, including access to myTeachstone.
    4. Develop a statewide implementation plan and timeline based on the workplan described in Subsection I that strategically compiles regional coordination plans and implementation timelines with the CDE and Teachstone to support the following:
       1. Build a broad understanding of CLASS2nd Edition and CLASSEnvironment as a tool to improve teacher-child interactions and strengthen programs
       2. Explicitly address any implicit and explicit adult bias to ensure that the culture and climate of all CSPPs reflect inclusion and a sense of belonging for all children, regardless of any disabilities and the race, religion, gender identity, or sexual orientation of their families, particularly historically marginalized Black and American Indian/Alaskan Native children, children with disabilities, and children whose home language is not English
       3. Build capacity by training observers to ensure they are certified in CLASS2nd Edition and CLASSEnvironment, including the CLASS Observer Support Series on bias, children with disabilities, and resources designed to support MLLs[[4]](#footnote-5) and other priority topics for California
       4. Document observations and other relevant data as requested by the CDE on CLASS implementation, including, when applicable, myTeachstone data
       5. Support continuous quality improvement within programs through CLASS observations, myTeachstone data, and CLASS-aligned continuous quality improvement resources as well as local coaches and other supports
    5. Implement the statewide implementation plan, as outlined above, after it is approved by the CDE. In addition, build shared readiness through leader and educator launch events across the state, including, but not limited to:
       1. Hosting a webinar series for CSPP educators, delivered virtually and recorded, to increase awareness and create shared interest in and support for CLASS2nd Edition and CLASSEnvironment to increase knowledge of the importance of teacher-child interactions and how CLASS can inform continuous quality improvement on teacher-child interactions and classroom practices
       2. In collaboration with regional leads, provide regional in-person event(s) to (1) share information with CSPP leaders, program administrators, and educators on CLASS2nd Edition and CLASS Environment; (2) support understanding of how to utilize CLASS for continuous quality improvement; and (3) facilitate regional and local communication about CLASS to the field
    6. Agree to participate in any additional evaluation activities conducted by the CDE or by an independent external evaluator on behalf of the state.

## Accountability

### Regional Lead Reporting Requirements

Regional leads will submit programmatic and fiscal reports on a quarterly basis to the CDE. Reports will be submitted via email to [QCC@cde.ca.gov](mailto:QCC@cde.ca.gov) and be completed on the templates provided by the CDE. The first quarterly reporting due date will be approximately 90 days after the grant award notification (GAN) is issued, and the actual dates will be reflected in the GANs. Reporting must consist of:

* + 1. Quarterly fiscal reports to include details of expenses and activities
    2. Quarterly programmatic reports will include details of:
       1. Progress on or completion of regional needs assessment including data points on the following:
       2. CLASS observer capacity,[[5]](#footnote-6) including number of observers currently certified in CLASS2008, CLASS2nd Edition, or CLASSEnvironment
       3. Location and demographics of existing observers, including language(s) spoken
       4. CLASS observer training capacity, including number of affiliate trainers
       5. CLASS coaching and other quality improvement capacity,
       6. Number and location of CSPPs and classrooms
       7. As applicable, date of the last CSPP CLASS assessment for each program or classroom to inform assessment of CSPP’s familiarity with the CLASS tool and regional implementation plan
       8. A list of all data sources used to inform the needs assessment
    3. Estimation of the total number of CLASS observers still needed to serve all CSPPs
    4. Progress on the development of and revisions to, as applicable, the regional coordination plan including but not limited to, connection with CSPPs in the region, observations completed, CLASS observation results, professional development experiences completed including number of Introduction to CLASS participants and number of CLASS pre-K Observer training participants, and other data related to support implementation priorities
    5. As applicable, barriers for regional implementation (for example, CSPPs not currently supported)
    6. Progress on implementation of regional plans (beginning July 1, 2024)

Regional leads will also be required to submit monthly programmatic reports to the statewide lead as directed by the statewide lead, in collaboration with the CDE, that include but are not limited to:

* + 1. Information on the progress and completion of the needs assessment
    2. Details on the regional coordination plan and implementation timeline
    3. Information about activities completed
    4. Additional data points as requested by the statewide lead in collaboration with the CDE

### Statewide Lead Reporting Requirements

The selected statewide lead will confer with the CDE on all key decisions related to statewide planning and implementation and collaborate with all regional leads and Teachstone to ensure a sufficient and streamlined system to support continuous improvement aligned with the goals of the ASPIRE program. The statewide lead must participate in monthly meetings with the CDE and Teachstone, as needed, and provide relevant updates and review decision points and action items during these meetings. Additionally, the statewide lead is required to submit programmatic and fiscal reports on a quarterly basis to the CDE. Reports will be submitted via email to [QCC@cde.ca.gov](mailto:QCC@cde.ca.gov). Fiscal reports must be accompanied by quarterly programmatic reports following the template provided by the CDE. Reporting must consist of:

* + 1. A quarterly fiscal report to include details of expenses and activities
    2. Quarterly programmatic reports, which will be informed by regional lead reporting, must provide an overview of the state level implementation and progress, and must include:
       1. updates on regional plan development and implementation including, but not limited to, progress of plans, number of observations completed, CLASS and CLASS Environment observation results, professional development experiences completed including number of introduction to CLASS participants and number of CLASS pre-K observer training participants, and other data related to support implementation priorities throughout the state;
       2. updates and details on the statewide work plan;
       3. updates and details on the statewide implementation plan;
       4. as applicable, information on current barriers to statewide implementation; and
       5. information on statewide leader and educator launch events.
    3. Other Reporting:
       1. Information on the progress of the contract, including draft SOW, deliverables, and other negotiations, which should be based on regional plans for services or resources with Teachstone including, but not limited to, CLASS2nd Edition and CLASSEnvironment observer training, train-the-trainer, and training focused on use of the CLASS tool with diverse populations (including children with disabilities, MLLs, etc.). This information must be shared with the CDE biweekly or otherwise determined by the CDE.
    4. By the end of each project year (June 30, 2024 for year one and June 30, 2025 for year two), a final fiscal report and a programmatic report to the CDE, which shall include all the following:
       1. A final expenditure report
       2. A final summary of work performed during the grant period, including:
          - Implementation successes and challenges
          - A summary of grant activities including number of people who participated in observer training, train-the-trainer certification, and descriptions and number of participants for all other training and related professional development activities

If the CDE does not receive the required reports, program activities are not completed, or there is a lack of participation in meetings, the CDE will withhold the final 10 percent of the grant award for the statewide or regional leads as appropriate.

Note: Reporting requirements are subject to change at the discretion of the CDE.

## Definitions and Requirements for ASPIRE-funded CLASS Observations

For the purposes of this RFA please refer to MB 23-10 available at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/ci/mb2310.asp>, for definitions and requirements for CLASS 2nd Edition and CLASS Environment observations.

### Program Deliverables

**Regional Leads:** The selected regional leads must provide the following to the CDE:

| **Deliverable** | **Due Date** |
| --- | --- |
| The regional needs assessment as set forth in Section IV (A) (1) (a) with needs for CSPPs in the region, observers, and continuous quality improvement supports clearly identified | Within 45 calendar days of the date the GAN is issued |
| The regional coordination plan and implementation timeline(s) as set forth in Section IV (A) (1) (b) to build observer and leader or educator capacity | Within 75 calendar days of the date the GAN is issued |
| Evidence of outreach to CSPP programs in the region in advance of leader and educator launch events webinar series including attendance profiles for leader and educator launch events webinar series as set forth in Section IV (A) (1) (b) of this RFA | Within 10 calendar days of launch events |

**Statewide Lead:** The selected statewide lead must provide the following to the CDE:

| **Deliverable** | **Due Date** |
| --- | --- |
| Executed Contract SOW with Teachstone as set forth in Section IV (B) (3) | Within 30 calendar days of the date the GAN issued |
| A copy of the contract with Teachstone | The copy of the contract must be submitted to the CDE within 10 days of the contract being executed |
| The Statewide work plan, as set forth in Section IV (B) (1), informed by all regional plans, that articulates the roles and responsibilities of success criteria for statewide CLASS implementation, a communication plan between all regional leads, CDE, and Teachstone | Within 90 calendar days of the date the GAN is issued |
| A list of scheduled leader and educator events to build statewide capacity among key interest holders on CLASS2nd Edition and CLASS Environment as set forth in Section IV (B) (5) | 1. Before October 1, 2024 2. Before December 31, 2024 |
| The Statewide Implementation Plan, as set forth in Section IV (B) (4), that strategically compiles regional coordination plans and implementation timelines | Within 120 calendar days of the date the GAN is issued |

### Allowable Activities and Costs

Applicants for both the statewide and regional lead roles will develop and submit program budgets to the CDE for the two years as part of the RFA process. The proposed use of grant funds will be reviewed and any items that are deemed non-allowable, excessive, or inappropriate by a successful applicant will be flagged by the CDE and required to be clarified or changed. All expenditures must contribute to the goals and objectives outlined in Section I. Please note that funds for the ASPIRE program grant are awarded to COEs to perform their duties in this RFA and may not be subcontracted in whole to another agency to perform.

The ASPIRE grant program funds are not intended for direct CSPP services but are intended to support continuous quality improvement and responsive teacher-child interactions in CSPPs. No project or activity can be approved that proposes to provide direct services (for example, home visiting, increasing early learning program slots, bonuses or salaries for CSPP personnel), nor provides a service already required by state or federal law. For example, any project that provides special education services for children with disabilities cannot be approved because special education is already required by state law with special funds appropriated to pay for it.

Funds can be used only for costs incurred for the successful implementation and administration of the CLASS 2nd Edition and CLASS Environment tools across all CSPPs and include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following allowable expenditures:

* + 1. Costs associated with agreements with one or more COE, LEA, institution of higher education, not-for-profit educational service provider, independent consultant, or community-based organization to assist in fulfilling the responsibilities of the grant
    2. Communications and outreach
    3. Data collection and storage
    4. Equipment (non-furniture/non-capitalized) with a unit cost of $5,000 or less (unit cost includes all costs required to make the item serviceable, such as taxes, freight, installation costs, site preparation costs, etc.)
    5. In-state travel specifically related to CLASS implementation (this will be reimbursed in accordance with state travel guidelines; all costs exceeding state rates will not be covered through these funds)
    6. Materials and supplies, including CLASS publication costs; marketing materials to promote awareness of CLASS
    7. Meetings and conferences (note: any conference expenses must be approved in advance by the CDE)
    8. Printing and copying costs
    9. Rental of a venue to provide professional learning or orientation events (note: the expenses must be approved in advance by the CDE)
    10. Training specifically related to the CLASS tools implementation, including professional development and technical skill development

Grantees may use funding to cover administrative costs (both direct and indirect as defined below) related to the CLASS implementation. For budgeting purposes, administrative costs directly related to CLASS implementation should be reflected in the personnel or operating expenditure categories.

* + 1. “Direct costs” include the salaries, wages, and benefits of employees only while they are working exclusively on the delivery of a specific project or service related to this RFA (preparing action plans, developing budgets, monitoring activities, and so on), as well as any materials, supplies, equipment, utilities, rent, training, travel, or other costs related to implementing the goals listed in the RFA. These costs should be easily identifiable with a specific project or directly assigned with a high degree of accuracy.
    2. “Indirect costs” are shared costs that benefit or support multiple projects or services administered by a lead agency and that cannot be readily identified with a specific project or service (for example, legal, accounting, human resources, procurement, facilities, maintenance, technology, and so on). These costs should be apportioned by a systematic and rational allocation methodology; the methodology should be documented by the lead agency and available upon request. The lead agency shall identify and justify direct costs and indirect costs, including employee fringe benefits, in accordance with State Contracting Manual Volume I, Section 3.17.2, subsection A.1. An applicant's indirect costs for this project must not exceed the LEA's CDE-approved indirect cost rate. More information on approved indirect cost rates can be found on the CDE website at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/ac/ic/>.

**Non-allowable Activities and Costs**

Funds provided under this grant may ***not*** be used for the following purposes. Please note this is not an exhaustive list.

* + 1. Acquisition of equipment for administrative or personal use
    2. Acquisition of furniture (for example, bookcases, chairs, desks, file cabinets, tables) unless it is an integral part of an equipment workstation, or it provides reasonable accommodations to individuals with disabilities
    3. Bad debts, including losses (whether actual or estimated) arising from uncollectible accounts and other claims, related collection costs, and related legal costs
    4. Capital assets such as equipment, land, buildings, vehicles, and so on. Unallowable costs also include all costs required to make the item serviceable (for example, taxes, freight, installation costs, site preparation costs)
    5. Consumables (for example, food services, refreshments, alcoholic beverages, banquets, meals, and diapers)
    6. Costs of advertising and public relations designed solely to promote the governmental unit, lead agency, or partners; or promotional items or memorabilia, including gifts or souvenirs
    7. Direct service of early learning and care (for example, funding of slots) or home visiting or other CSPP-related program services
    8. Facilities renovation, improvements, and repairs
    9. Entertainment, including amusement, diversion, and social activities, and any expenses directly associated with such costs
    10. Gift cards
    11. Goods or services for personal use of any agency or employees regardless of whether the cost is reported as taxable income to the employees
    12. Idle facilities or idle capacity except to the extent they are: 1) necessary to meet fluctuations in workload, or 2) necessary when acquired and are now idle because of changes in program requirements, efforts to achieve more economical operations, reorganization, termination, or other causes that could not have been reasonably foreseen
    13. Legal costs incurred in defense of any civil or criminal fraud proceeding or legal expenses for prosecution of claims against the state of California
    14. Lobbying costs, whether direct or indirect
    15. Organized fundraising, including financial campaigns, solicitation of gifts and bequests, and similar expenses incurred to raise capital or obtain contributionsforpolitical activities
    16. Purchase of promotional favors, items, or memorabilia, such as bumper stickers, pencils, pens, t-shirts, gifts, or souvenirs provided to the ASPIRE staff and partners
    17. Purchase of space

### C. Assurances

In addition to complying with all terms, conditions, and requirements specified in this RFA, the selected statewide and regional leads 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/generalassurances2023-24.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.

## Application Procedures and Process

### Eligibility

To be eligible to apply for the ASPIRE program grant funding, whether as a statewide or regional lead, applicants must be a COE *and* a current CSPP QRIS Block Grant recipient in good standing with the CDE. Pursuant to 5 CCR 17722, an applicant is not eligible to apply for funding if the CDE is informed that one of the following conditions apply:

1. the applicant had a previous contract with the CDE that was terminated or not continued by the CDE for fiscal or programmatic noncompliance within three years immediately preceding the date the RFA was posted;
2. the applicant has an outstanding accounts receivable balance with the CDE or another state or federal agency;
3. the applicant has a delinquent audit with the CDE pursuant to section 17825;
4. the applicant is currently listed on a state or federal debarment list; or
5. the applicant has in place, or places, a person in a position of fiscal responsibility or control who has been convicted of a crime involving misuse or misappropriation of state or federal funds, or a state or federal crime involving moral turpitude.

Regional lead applicants must be a COE in the region for which they are applying.

### Regional Lead Application Process

All interested COEs meeting the eligibility requirements are required to develop and submit the required information electronically through the portal at <https://surveys3.cde.ca.gov/s.asp?k=170602807347>. Applications are due Thursday, April 4, 2024.

* + 1. **Description of Experience and Capacity (Maximum Point Total: 10)**
       1. Describe the landscape of the applicant’s region with regard to the number of CSPP sites, languages spoken, any current or anticipated barriers to providing quality improvement support in the region to achieve the ASPIRE program grant goals and describe how the applying organization is uniquely qualified to meet the needs of the region to build capacity and support continuous quality improvement in the region, aligned with the goals and regional responsibilities of the ASPIRE program grant.
       2. Provide a summary of experience and existing capacity within the applying organization and proposed local CLASS implementation partners to meet the goals and responsibilities of the ASPIRE grant program, including coaching and using data for continuous quality improvement.
       3. Include supporting documentation of any formal agreements, and/or letters of support that demonstrate high levels of cooperation, commitment, coordination, and formal relationships with proposed contractors, coaches, and observers.
    2. **Key Personnel and Management Structure (Maximum Point Total: 10)**
       1. Provide a description of the proposed lead agency structure and include an organizational chart
       2. Provide a description of the overall management structure
       3. Include resumes of all key personnel
    3. **Description of Regional Plan Design and Regional Implementation Process (Maximum Point Total: 10)**
       1. Describe the proposed process for conducting the needs assessment, including how data available (QRIS regional data and other data systems that support QRIS in the region, myTeachstone data, CSPP data or other local data sources) will be used to inform the planning and implementation processes described below.
       2. Describe the proposed process to *develop* a plan to achieve the goals and regional responsibilities of the ASPIRE program grant and how you will meet the needs of the region or state, including how the applicant will work with the CDE and appropriate partners (the statewide lead, Teachstone, Head Start Region IX, IEEEP grantees, CSPP contractors and CSPP QRIS Block Grantees, as appropriate), to meet the planning expectations of the ASPIRE responsibilities.
       3. Describe the proposed process to *implement* the plan to achieve the goals and regional responsibilities of the ASPIRE program grant, how data will be used to inform the plan implementation, and how the applicant organization will work with the CDE and appropriate partners (the statewide lead, Teachstone, Office of Head Start Region IX, IEEEP grantees, CSPP contractors and CSPP QRIS Block Grantees, as appropriate) to achieve regional goals.
    4. **Budget and Budget Narrative (Maximum Point Total: 10)**
       1. A detailed budget and budget narrative must be submitted. The templates for the grant budget and, the grant budget narrative is available at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/fo/r2/aspire24rfa.asp>.
       2. In the narrative section, provide justification for each expenditure category, and include information about roles, time allocation, and salary and benefits of the lead agency staff, equipment and supplies, travel, stipends, indirect costs, and a clear description of services to be contracted.Budget and budget narrative documents must be combined into a ZIP file and attached to the RFA survey. Budget documents should encompass the duration of the grant: on or before June 6, 2024–June 30, 2025.
       3. Provide the following information in the budget and budget narrative:
          - **Personnel**

The specific responsibilities of each lead agency position directly participating in the quality improvement activities of this project as described in their application

The title of each position

The role of each position to support quality improvement activities

The agency that funds each position

The time or full-time equivalent (FTE) of each position

The salary for each position

* + - * + **Benefits**

Fringe benefit percentages for all personnel in the project, by agency

The basis for cost estimates or computations

* + - * + **Materials and Supplies**

An estimate of materials and supplies needed for the quality improvement activities by nature of expense or general category (for example, instructional materials, office supplies)

The basis for cost estimates or computations, including unit number of each supply or material

* + - * + **Travel**

The purpose of the travel, how it relates to ASPIRE quality improvement goals, and how it will contribute to project success

Purpose of each trip

An estimate of the number of trips

An estimate of costs for each trip

Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations

* + - * + **Equipment**[[6]](#footnote-7)

Justification and need for any equipment to be purchased

Purpose of the equipment to be purchased

The type of equipment to be purchased

The estimated unit cost for each item to be purchased

Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations

* + - * + **Other**

Purpose of expenditure

Other item by major type or category (for example, communications, printing, postage, equipment rental)

Cost per item

Any additional basis for cost estimates or computation

* + - * + **Total Direct Costs**

The sum of expenditures, across all budget categories in Personnel and Operations

* + - * + **Indirect Costs**[[7]](#footnote-8)

Total indirect cost, including the grantee’s approved rate and which categories the indirect cost is being applied to

* + - * + **Contractual**

The purpose of any proposed contract and its relation to the project

The products to be acquired or the professional services to be provided

The agency that will be responsible for the contract

The estimated cost per expected procurement

For professional services contracts, the amounts of time to be devoted to the project, including the costs to be charged to the grant award

Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations

### Statewide Lead Application Process

All interested COEs meeting the eligibility requirements are required to develop and submit an initial application package through the portal at <https://surveys3.cde.ca.gov/go/csppstatewidelead2023-24.asp>. Applications are due Thursday, April 4, 2024.

* + 1. **Description of Experience and Capacity (Maximum Total Points: 10)**
       1. Describe the landscape of the state with regard to the number of CSPP sites, languages spoken, any current or anticipated barriers to providing quality improvement support across regions to achieve the ASPIRE program grant goals, and describe how the applying organization is uniquely qualified to meet the needs of the state to build capacity and support continuous quality improvement that is aligned with the goals and statewide responsibilities of the ASPIRE program grant.
       2. Provide a summary of experience and existing capacity within the applying COE and local CLASS implementation partners, as applicable, to meet the goals and statewide responsibilities of the ASPIRE program grant, including using data for continuous quality improvement.
       3. Include supporting documentation of any formal agreements, and/or letters of support that demonstrate high levels of cooperation, commitment, coordination, and formal relationships with proposed contractors, coaches, and observers.
    2. **Key Personnel and Management Structure (Maximum Total Points: 10)**
       1. Provide a description of the proposed lead agency structure and include an organizational chart.
       2. Provide a description of the overall management structure.
       3. Include resumes of all key personnel.
    3. **Description of Statewide Plan Design and Statewide Implementation Process (Maximum Total Points: 10)**
       1. Describe the proposed process for creating an integrated analysis of the state’s needs assessment(s), including how data from regional needs assessments (QRIS regional data and other data systems that support QRIS in the region, Teachstone data, CSPP data and/or other local data sources) will be used to inform the planning and implementation processes described below.
       2. Describe the proposed process to *develop* a statewide implementation plan to achieve the goals and statewide responsibilities of the ASPIRE program, meet the needs of the state, including how the applicant will work with the CDE and appropriate partners (regional leads, Teachstone, Head Start Region IX, IEEEP grantees, CSPP contractors and CSPP QRIS Block Grantees, as appropriate) and meet the planning expectations of the ASPIRE program grant statewide responsibilities.
       3. Describe the proposed process to *implement* the plan to achieve the goals and statewide responsibilities of the ASPIRE program, including how a contract with Teachstone will be implemented, how data will be used to inform the plan implementation, and how the applicant organization will work with the CDE and appropriate partners (regional leads, Teachstone, Office of Head Start Region IX, IEEEP grantees, CSPP contractors and CSPP QRIS Block Grantees, as appropriate) to achieve statewide goals
    4. **Budget and Budget Narrative (Maximum Total Points: 10)**
       1. A detailed budget and budget narrative must be submitted. The templates for the grant budget and the grant budget narrative are available at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/fo/r2/aspire24rfa.asp>.
       2. In the narrative section, provide justification for each expenditure category, and include information about roles, time allocation, and salary and benefits of the lead agency staff, equipment and supplies, travel, stipends, indirect costs, and a clear description of services to be contracted.Budget and budget narrative documents must be combined into a ZIP file and attached to the RFA survey. Budget documents should encompass the duration of the grant: on or before June 3, 2024-June 30, 2025.
       3. Provide the following in the budget and budget narrative:
          - **Personnel**

The specific responsibilities of each lead agency position directly participating in the quality improvement activities of this project as described in their application

The title of each position

The role of each position to support quality improvement activities

The agency that funds each position

The time or FTE of each position

The salary for each position

* + - * + **Benefits**

Fringe benefit percentages for all personnel in the project, by agency

The basis for cost estimates or computations

* + - * + **Materials and Supplies**

An estimate of materials and supplies needed for the quality improvement activities by nature of expense or general category (for example, instructional materials, office supplies)

The basis for cost estimates or computations, including unit number of each supply or material

* + - * + **Travel**

The purpose of the travel, how it relates to ASPIRE program grant quality improvement goals, and how it will contribute to project success

Purpose of each trip

An estimate of the number of trips

An estimate of costs for each trip

Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations

* + - * + **Equipment**[[8]](#footnote-9)

Justification and need for any equipment to be purchased

Purpose of the equipment to be purchased

The type of equipment to be purchased

The estimated unit cost for each item to be purchased

Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations

* + - * + **Other**

Purpose of expenditure

Other item by major type or category (for example, communications, printing, postage, equipment rental)

Cost per item

Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations

* + - * + **Total Direct Costs**

The sum of expenditures, across all budget categories in personnel and operations

* + - * + **Indirect Costs**[[9]](#footnote-10)

Total indirect costs, including the grantee’s approved rate and to which categories the indirect is being applied

* + - * + **Contractual**

The purpose of any proposed contract and its relation to the project

The products to be acquired or the professional services to be provided

The agency that will be responsible for the contract

The estimated cost per expected procurement

For professional services contracts, the amounts of time to be devoted to the project, including the costs to be charged to the grant award

Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations

### RFA Timeline\*

**\*Please note all deadlines subject to change. To keep abreast of current deadlines, you must visit** <http://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/fo/r2/aspire24rfa.asp> **with any updates and errata.**

| **Activity** | **Due Date** |
| --- | --- |
| Request for Applications Released | February 22, 2024 |
| Applications Due | On or before April 4, 2024 |
| Awards Announced | On or before May 9, 2024 |
| ASPIRE Program Grant Duties Begin | On or before June 6, 2024 |

Please note: We do not have an appeals process for this RFA.

## Preliminary Screening Process

Applications received timely will be preliminarily screened to determine whether the applicant is eligible for funding, as described in the Eligibility section of the RFA Overview and Instructions. All applicants that are found eligible for funding will have their applications screened for completeness in accordance with RFA instructions.

Applications that are not complete or that are not completed in accordance with the instructions and timelines may be disqualified. Although the CDE has the right to exercise reasonable discretion and waive minor discrepancies in application and submission requirements that do not impact the integrity of the submission, it is not required to do so. It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to carefully review the RFA information and requirements before submitting an application for funding. Disqualified applicants will be informed in writing of the reasons for the disqualification.

Applicants deemed disqualified will be notified in writing. All applications not disqualified will be scored as set forth in this RFA by CDE staff. Applications will be randomly assigned to readers for scoring to avoid any conflicts of interest. Readers will base their scores on the degree to which the applications meet the scoring rubric. Readers will independently score the applications using the scoring rubric and the two scores will be averaged to determine a final score. The COE applicant with the highest score will be awarded the applicable grant, either regional or state grant.

## Scoring Rubric

### Regional Lead Application

* + 1. **Description of Experience and Capacity (10 points)**

| **OUTSTANDING/EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS  (8–10 points)** | **STRONG/MEETS EXPECTATIONS (6–7 points)** | **GOOD/APPROACHES EXPECTATIONS (4–5 points)** | **MINIMAL/DOES NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS  (0–3 points)** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| The description **thoroughly and convincingly** demonstrates the applicant’s experience and capacity to act as a regional lead according to the criteria described in Section IV (A) (1) of this RFA. | The description **clearly** demonstrates the applicant’s experience and capacity to act as a regional lead according to the criteria described in Section IV (A) (1) of this RFA. | The description **adequately** demonstrates the applicant’s experience and capacity to act as a regional lead according to the criteria described in Section IV (A) (1) of this RFA. | The description **does not or minimally** demonstrate the applicant’s experience and capacity to act as a regional lead according to the criteria described in Section IV (A) (1) of this RFA. |

#### Key Personnel and Management Structure (10 points)

| **OUTSTANDING/EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS**  **(8–10 points)** | **STRONG/MEETS EXPECTATIONS**  **(6–7 points)** | **GOOD/APPROACHES EXPECTATIONS**  **(4–5 points)** | **MINIMAL/DOES NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS**  **(0–3 points)** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| The description **thoroughly** **and convincingly** demonstrates that the key personnel and proposed management structure, according to the criteria described in Section IV (A) (2) above, can fully meet the expectations of being a successful ASPIRE regional lead. | The description **clearly** demonstrates that the key personnel and proposed management structure, according to the criteria described in Section IV (A) (2) above, can fully meet the expectations to be a successful ASPIRE regional lead. | The description **adequately** demonstrates that the key personnel and proposed management structure, according to the criteria described in Section IV (A) (2) above, can fully meet the expectations to be a successful ASPIRE regional lead. | The description **does not or** **minimally** demonstrate(s) that the key personnel and proposed management structure, according to the criteria described in Section IV (A) (2) above, can fully meet the expectations to be a successful ASPIRE regional lead. |

#### Description of Regional Plan Design and Regional Implementation Process (10 points)

| **OUTSTANDING/EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS**  **(8–10 points)** | **STRONG/MEETS EXPECTATIONS**  **(6–7 points)** | **GOOD/APPROACHES EXPECTATIONS**  **(4–5 points)** | **MINIMAL/DOES NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS**  **(0–3 points)** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| The description **thoroughly** **and convincingly** demonstrates that the applicant can successfully create a needs assessment(s) as well as create and implement a plan according to the criteria described in Section IV (A) (3) above. | The description **clearly** demonstrates that the applicant can successfully create a needs assessment(s) as well as create and implement a plan according to the criteria described in Section IV (A) (3) above. | The description **adequately** demonstratesthat the applicant can successfully create a needs assessment(s) as well as create and implement a plan according to the criteria described in Section IV (A) (3) above. | The description **does not or minimally** demonstrate(s) that the applicant can successfully create a needs assessment(s) as well as create and implement a plan according to the criteria described in Section IV (A) (3) above. |

#### Budget and Budget Narrative (10 points)

| **OUTSTANDING/EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS**  **(8–10 points)** | **STRONG/MEETS EXPECTATIONS**  **(6–7 points)** | **GOOD/APPROACHES EXPECTATIONS**  **(4–5 points)** | **MINIMAL/DOES NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS**  **(0–3 points)** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| The budget and narrative **thoroughly** **and convincingly** demonstrate the applicant’s ability to successfully conduct the activities of the ASPIRE program and reflect efficient use of funds to support all CSPPs in the region as described in Section IV (A)(4) above. | The budget and narrative **clearly** demonstrate the applicant’s ability to successfully conduct the activities of the ASPIRE program and reflect efficient use of funds to support all CSPPs in the region as described in Section IV (A) (4) above. | The budget and narrative **adequately** demonstrate the applicant’s ability to successfully conduct the activities of the ASPIRE program and reflect efficient use of funds to support all CSPPs in the region as described in Section IV (A)(4) above. | The budget and narrative **do not or minimally** demonstrate(s)  the applicant’s ability to successfully conduct the activities of the ASPIRE program and reflect efficient use of funds to support all CSPPs in the region as described in Section IV (A) (4) above. |

### Statewide Lead Application Process

#### Description of Experience and Capacity (10 points)

| **OUTSTANDING/EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS  (8–10 points)** | **STRONG/MEETS EXPECTATIONS (6–7 points)** | **GOOD/APPROACHES EXPECTATIONS (4–5 points)** | **MINIMAL/DOES NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS  (0–3 points)** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| The description **thoroughly and convincingly** demonstrates the applicant has the experience and capacity to act as the statewide lead according to the criteria described in Section IV (B) (1) of this RFA. | The description **clearly** demonstrates the applicant has the experience and capacity to act as the statewide lead according to the criteria described in Section IV (B)(1) of this RFA. | The description **adequately** demonstrates the applicant has the experience and capacity to act as the statewide lead according to the criteria described in Section IV (B)(1) of this RFA. | The description **does not or minimally** demonstrate the applicant has the experience and capacity to act as the statewide lead according to the criteria described in Section IV (B)(1) of this RFA. |

#### Key Personnel and Management Structure (10 points)

| **OUTSTANDING/EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS**  **(8–10 points)** | **STRONG/MEETS EXPECTATIONS**  **(6–7 points)** | **GOOD/APPROACHES EXPECTATIONS**  **(4–5 points)** | **MINIMAL/DOES NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS**  **(0–3 points)** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| The description **thoroughly** **and convincingly** demonstrates that the key personnel and proposed management structure, according to the criteria described in Section IV (B)(2) above can fully meet the expectations to be a successful statewide lead. | The description **clearly** demonstrates that the key personnel and proposed management structure, according to the criteria described in Section IV (B)(2) above can fully meet the expectations to be a successful statewide lead. | The description **adequately** demonstrates that the key personnel and proposed management structure, according to the criteria described in Section IV (B)(2) above can fully meet the expectations to be a successful statewide lead. | The description **does not or minimally** demonstrate(s) that the key personnel and proposed management structure, according to the criteria described in Section IV (B)(2) above can fully meet the expectations to be a successful statewide lead. |

#### Description of Statewide Plan Design and Statewide Implementation Process (10 points)

| **OUTSTANDING/EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS**  **(8–10 points)** | **STRONG/MEETS EXPECTATIONS**  **(6–7 points)** | **GOOD/APPROACHES EXPECTATIONS**  **(4–5 points)** | **MINIMAL/DOES NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS**  **(0–3 points)** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| The description **thoroughly** **and convincingly demonstrates** how the applicant can successfully create a needs assessment(s), as well as create and implement a plan according to the criteria described in Section IV (B)(3) above. | The description **clearly demonstrates** how the applicant can successfully create a needs assessment(s), as well as create and implement a plan according to the criteria described in Section IV (B)(3) above. | The description **adequately demonstrates** how the applicant can successfully create a needs assessment(s), as well as create and implement a plan according to the criteria described in Section IV (B)(3) above. | The description **does not or minimally demonstrate(s)** how the applicant can successfully create a needs assessment(s), as well as create and implement a plan according to the criteria described in Section IV (B)(3) above. |

#### Budget and Budget Narrative (10 points)

| **OUTSTANDING/EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS**  **(8–10 points)** | **STRONG/MEETS EXPECTATIONS**  **(6–7 points)** | **GOOD/APPROACHES EXPECTATIONS**  **(4–5 points)** | **MINIMAL/DOES NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS**  **(0–3 points)** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| The budget and narrative **thoroughly** **and convincingly** demonstrate the applicant’s ability to successfully conduct the activities of the ASPIRE program and reflect efficient use of funds to support all CSPPs statewide as described in Section IV (B)(4) above. | The budget and narrative **clearly** demonstrate the applicant’s ability to successfully conduct the activities of the ASPIRE program and reflect efficient use of funds to support all CSPPs statewide as described in Section IV (B)(4) above. | The budget and narrative **adequately** demonstrate the applicant’s ability to successfully conduct the activities of the ASPIRE program and reflect efficient use of funds to support all CSPPs statewide as described in Section IV (B)(4) above. | The budget and narrative **do not or minimally** demonstrate(s)  the applicant’s ability to successfully conduct the activities of the ASPIRE program and reflect efficient use of funds to support all CSPPs statewide as described in Section IV (B)(4) above. |

1. MLL may also be referred to as dual-language learners (DLL) in Teachstone and other documents. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Observations must be completed by a Certified CLASS Observer who has completed the training to become a CLASS observer, passed the certification test, and has an active certification from Teachstone and, to ensure California is supporting diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging, has completed CLASS Observer Support Series including Settings with Dual Language Learners, Settings with Children with Disabilities, and Reducing Bias. Note: The certified CLASS observer can be an employee of the CSPP; however, staff who are assigned to teach in classrooms on a daily basis cannot conduct a CLASS observation at the site to which they are assigned to teach. Program Quality Implementation (PQI) consultants will complete an additional outside observation as part of their scheduled monitoring visits. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Observations must be completed by a Certified CLASS Observer who has completed the training to become a CLASS observer, passed the certification test, and has an active certification from Teachstone and, to ensure California is supporting diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging, has completed CLASS Observer Support Series including Settings with Dual Language Learners, Settings with Children with Disabilities, and Reducing Bias. Note: The certified CLASS observer can be an employee of the CSPP; however, staff who are assigned to teach in classrooms on a daily basis cannot conduct a CLASS observation at the site to which they are assigned to teach. PQI consultants will complete an additional outside observation as part of their scheduled monitoring visits. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. MLL may also be referred to as DLL in Teachstone and other documents. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. Observations must be completed by a Certified CLASS Observer who has completed the training to become a CLASS observer, passed the certification test, and has an active certification from Teachstone and, to ensure California is supporting diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging, has completed CLASS Observer Support Series including Settings with Dual Language Learners, Settings with Children with Disabilities, and Reducing Bias. Note: The certified CLASS observer can be an employee of the CSPP; however, staff who are assigned to teach in classrooms on a daily basis cannot conduct a CLASS observation at the site to which they are assigned to teach. PQI consultants will complete an additional outside observation as part of their scheduled monitoring visits. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. The ASPIRE Grant funds can be used to purchase equipment with a unit cost up to $5,000. Equipment being purchased for a participating program must be identified in a program implementation plan. Unit cost includes all costs required to make the item serviceable, such as taxes, freight, installation costs, site preparation costs, and so on. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. Indirect costs may only be charged on the first $25,000 of any subcontract. For example, if the grantee has a subcontract for $100,000, the grantee may only charge indirect on the first $25,000 of that contract. See Chapter 3.06 B of the California State Contracting Manual for more information (found at<https://www.dgs.ca.gov/OLS/Resources/Page-Content/Office-of-Legal-Services-Resources-List-Folder/State-Contracting>). [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. The ASPIRE Grant funds can be used to purchase equipment with a unit cost up to $5,000. Equipment being purchased for a participating program must be identified in a program implementation plan. Unit cost includes all costs required to make the item serviceable, such as taxes, freight, installation costs, site preparation costs, and so on. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. Indirect may only be charged on the first $25,000 of any subcontract. For example, if the grantee has a subcontract for $100,000, the grantee may only charge indirect on the first $25,000 of that contract. See Chapter 3.06 B of the California State Contracting Manual for more information (found at<https://www.dgs.ca.gov/OLS/Resources/Page-Content/Office-of-Legal-Services-Resources-List-Folder/State-Contracting>). [↑](#footnote-ref-10)