



# ACSA REQUEST FOR INPUT ON NEW ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

## SUBMISSION DEADLINE

**CONTACT** MARTHA ALVAREZ | **EMAIL** [MALVAREZ@ACSA.ORG](mailto:MALVAREZ@ACSA.ORG)

## ADMINISTRATORS PERSPECTIVES ON LOCAL CAPACITY BUILDING AND TYPES OF SUPPORT NEEDED

### SUMMARY

The foundation of the new accountability system is supporting all local educational agencies (LEAs) and schools to improve outcomes and opportunities for all students, and to narrow disparities among student groups, across the LCFF priorities and any local priorities. As required by the LCFF statute, the State Board of Education (SBE) had to develop a process for using the performance standards on state and local indicators to identify LEAs in need of additional support, differentiated assistance, or intensive intervention. A primary goal for the first level of support is to provide all LEAs and schools with support early so that they do not require more intensive assistance in the second and third levels of support based on persistent low performance.

The following are a set of questions to learn about the type of future support districts would like to receive if they are not meeting the goals identified in the LCAP or the state performance standards:

### QUESTIONS

- 1) What support or resources should county offices of education (COE) or the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE) provide to the field?
- 2) Who do you envision to actually have decision-making power regarding the provider and type of support and technical assistant your district would receive?
- 3) What provider or providers would you prefer to offer you support and intervention should your district qualify for it? What are your thoughts on your COE providing the support and intervention? What would be the advantages of this approach in your district? What would be the areas of concern?
- 4) Based on districts' experience dealing with previous support programs (NCLB, SIG, High Priority Schools, IUUSP, etc.), what are some specific support or intervention models that do or do not work? What can we learn from those earlier programs to ensure support and intervention in the future is more effective in helping districts and schools improve?
- 5) What's is a reasonable time frame for expecting school districts to improve after receiving support?
- 6) How long should the state wait before deciding support is not effective? What do you think the state should do if support has not been effective? (Change support provider, bring in CCEE, increase level of intervention, etc.)

# POTENTIAL APPROACHES TO USING FEDERAL FUNDS TO SUPPORT PRIORITIES

## SUMMARY

The ESSA provides California and its local educational agencies (LEAs) with new opportunities to develop coherent plans that thoughtfully utilize funds to support state priorities while meeting state and federal requirements. In its consolidated state plan, California is required to describe how the State will use federal state-level activity funds, whether and how the State will utilize various set-asides made available in the law, and how it will support LEAs to effectively and efficiently use federal and state education resources to support continuous improvement. This work should be aligned to the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) eight State priority areas.

## AVAILABLE RESOURCES

California Department of Education (CDE) staff has identified several opportunities within the ESSA to leverage the priorities established by the SBE:

- **School Improvement:** States **are required** to reserve seven percent of the Title I LEA subgrant allocation for school improvement activities. Funds must be awarded to LEAs or consortia of LEAs, using either a formula or competitive process, to support schools implementing comprehensive support and improvement activities or targeted support and improvement activities. Approximately \$118.7 million is available for this purpose.
- **Direct Student Services:** The SEA **may also**, after meaningful consultation with LEAs, choose to reserve three percent of the Title I LEA subgrant allocation for direct student services. Allowable LEA direct student services expenditures include participation in academic courses not otherwise available at a student's school, including advanced courses and CTE coursework; credit recovery; activities that assist students in successfully completing postsecondary level instruction (e.g., Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses); personalized learning activities, which may include high-quality academic tutoring; and transportation to allow a student enrolled in a school identified for comprehensive support and improvement to transfer to another public school. Approximately \$53 million would be available for this purpose.
- **Supporting Principals and Other School Leaders:** The ESSA provides California with an opportunity to reserve three percent of the Title II LEA subgrant allocation for one or more activities to support principals or other school leaders consistent with allowable State activities. Approximately \$7.2 million would be available for this purpose.
- **State-level Activity Funds:** For Titles II–IV, there is also some discretionary funding for state-level activities. The costs associated with administration of these funds (distribution, monitoring, and providing technical assistance and support to LEAs) are included in the estimates below:
  - Title II, Part A: \$12.6 million
  - Title III, Part A: \$8.3 million
  - Title IV, Part A: \$2.9 million

## PROPOSED STRATEGIC DIRECTION: SUPPORT IMPLEMENTATION OF CALIFORNIA STANDARDS

To fully implement the new state standards (CCSS, ELD, NGSS), there is continuing need for many teachers to learn new pedagogical strategies and integrate formative assessments into their teaching to support the continuous improvement of their own instructional practices. This is equally true of principals, many of whom need intensive professional development to provide the new kind of leadership expected and required by the more ambitious goals for teaching and learning. Furthermore, educators are seeking more time to learn about the standards, especially effective

instructional practices; and school leaders need to develop new knowledge and capacity about curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

California must continue to build the instructional capacity of its teachers and leaders to improve educational outcomes for its students. Given this imperative, and in keeping with the equity-focused nature of the federal law, the CDE proposes to leverage ESSA resources to implement strategies and activities that:

- Build the capacity of California educators to successfully implement state content standards;
- Emphasize meeting the specific, and often multiple, learning needs of diverse students, including, but not limited to, English learners, students with disabilities, foster youth, and low-income students;
- Focus on equity and cultural responsiveness; and
- Promote a professional learning culture, including effective professional learning community models.

---

## STARTING POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

In keeping with the emerging strategic direction of supporting high quality implementation of California standards with a focus on program integration and coherence, several options that California might consider as it makes decisions regarding use of ESSA funds are provided below.

---

### EXAMPLE I: CALIFORNIA SUPPORTS NETWORK

California could use a portion of the required **Title I seven percent mandatory set-aside** and **Title III state-level activity funds** to establish the California Support Network (CSN). The CSN would consist of integrated support teams calibrated around common methodologies and metrics located in 11 existing regional hubs. The integrated teams would include, but not be limited to, members of CDE Title I field teams, county coordinators funded out of Title III or other federal programs, and other CDE field teams and networks currently located at the county level (e.g., early education and expanded learning). The primary goals of the CSN would include building the capacity of county offices of education (COEs) to support LEAs working to improve student performance and progress outcomes in their Title I comprehensive and targeted support schools and effective allocation of federal resources to support county-led Title I school improvement efforts in ways that are complementary and aligned to the work of the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence.

---

### EXAMPLE II: BRAIDING FUNDS TO ENHANCE STATEWIDE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING INFRASTRUCTURE

California could use a competitive grant process to leverage the **three percent allowable set-aside of the Title II LEA subgrant** to establish the California Leadership Initiative (CLI). This would support school leaders and principals to:

- Support the implementation of state content standards;
- Emphasize meeting the specific, and often multiple, learning needs of diverse students, including, but not limited to, English learners, students with disabilities, foster youth, and low-income students;
- Focus on equity and cultural responsiveness; and
- Promote a professional learning culture, including effective professional learning community models.

The SEA could also use **Title II state-level activity funds** to contract with an entity/entities to develop the capacity of teachers in alignment with the activities of the CLI.

This model could then integrally align with school improvement activities. California could run two distinct grant competitions to award the **Title I seven percent mandatory set-aside** to LEAs, or consortia of LEAs, to support schools implementing comprehensive or targeted support and improvement activities. The first competition would build upon and deepen the CLI objectives outlined above to develop principals and school leaders who are well prepared with

school turnaround leader competencies, ensuring that leaders in our struggling schools have the training and support they need in order to address the varied and complex challenges these schools face. The second would build upon the work with teachers to support standards implementation, going deeper with strategies needed to support diverse students in high-needs schools.

---

### EXAMPLE III: CALIFORNIA STANDARDS IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

California could **utilize Title II, Part A; Title III, Part A; and/or Title IV, Part A state-level activity funds** to support teachers and principals to implement the state-adopted standards by providing professional learning opportunities based on California's curriculum frameworks and conducting research to identify resources and promising evidence-based practices used in schools successfully implementing the state-adopted standards. This research would cover educator professional development, curriculum and instruction, assessment practices, collaboration with partner agencies, or any other practices that have contributed to the successful implementation of state-adopted standards. Identified resources and practices would be shared with other state and local agencies and disseminated through Collaboration in Common, CDE Web pages, virtual or in-person conferences, and an online database tied to the Local Control and Accountability Plan evaluation rubrics statements of model practices.

Specifically, ACSA members are asked to review the starting points for discussion outlined above and respond to the following questions:

---

#### QUESTIONS

- 1) Please share your thoughts regarding the emerging strategic direction for the use of ESSA resources. What additional elements might the State consider?
  - a. When you think of our state's vision for our children's success, what role do you see ESSA playing to further that vision?
  - b. California is working on eight state priorities. Given the central role of the California Standards, should this become the central focus of ESSA work?
- 2) Which, if any, of the described starting points most resonates with you? What specific adjustments or details might we consider in refining this proposal?
- 3) Please share your ideas regarding additional starting points the State might consider.