

EXPLORATION SUPPORTS

Diagnostic Review and Planning for AECs and Online Schools



COLORADO
Department of Education

EASI Route: Exploration Supports

Introduction

The Diagnostic Review and Planning for Alternative Education Campuses (AECs) and online schools is ideal for schools that are working to prioritize improvement efforts or that need time to explore options. The design is built off of the unique needs of AECs and online schools. Participating schools work with CDE staff to conduct a school-based diagnostic review, discuss recommendations and major areas to build on, engage stakeholders in planning efforts, and visit other participating schools. The Diagnostic reviews result in a formal report, recommended improvement actions, and other partner sites for visits. The facilitated improvement planning process is designed to assist the school in refining the Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) to incorporate priorities from the review.

Who Can I Contact for More Information?

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1. Self- Assessment: Using a CDE tool designed specifically for AECs with sections for online schools, school leadership teams conduct a self-assessment to guide their work. The tool is adapted from the Four Domains for Rapid School Improvement:
 - Culture and Climate
 - Intentional Instructional Transformation
 - Talent Management
 - Leadership for Rapid Improvement
2. On-Site Diagnostic Review: CDE staff will partner with school and district leadership to conduct a diagnostic review examining the design, ongoing operations, and practices of the school through review of materials, interviews of staff, students, and families, and observations.
3. Formal Report and Improvement Planning: CDE staff will provide a formal report and assistance with improvement planning through the UIP process, which may include:
 - A formal report that summarizes the onsite review, identifies areas of strength and recommended areas of focus for growth.
 - Identifying appropriate strategies and action planning.
 - Involving relevant stakeholders (e.g., staff, school accountability committee) in data analysis and action planning.
4. Connection to other Alternative Education Campuses or online schools, which may include:
 - Webinars and phone calls to share practices
 - Structured site visits to observe and explore strategies

Eligible Applicant and Prioritization

Eligibility. Applicants must be:

- Designated Alternative Education Campuses (AECs) or online school for the 2019-20 school year. All types of AECs are eligible (e.g., online, blended, charter, district run).

- Identified for Comprehensive Support (CS), Targeted Support (TS), or Additional Targeted (Additional TS) through ESSA or received a rating of Priority Improvement or Turnaround. Schools on watch will also be eligible.

Prioritization. In the event that not all proposals can be funded, priority will be given to schools in the following order:

- Identified as Comprehensive Support – Low Graduation Rate
- School Performance Framework plan type of Priority Improvement, Turnaround or on watch
- Identified as Comprehensive Support or Targeted Support
- Geographic representation
- Readiness to re-examine current practices and engage in planning

Allowable Use of Funds

Each participating district will receive up to \$10,000 per school to be used towards their exploration efforts and an additional \$10,000 for implementation of findings. Funding for this opportunity may be used for:

- Costs associated with the review visit (e.g., substitutes, stipends) and all staff debrief of the findings (e.g., stipends, copying)
- Costs associated with improvement planning such as staff time for meetings or retreats (e.g., substitutes, stipends) and any other costs associated with the planning process (e.g., hosting a community meeting)
- Costs associated with travel to other sites
- Costs associated with implementation of strategies.

While this is a planning grant, a small amount of funds may be set aside for initial implementation after the review with approval from CDE. Funds from this opportunity must be used to **supplement and not supplant** any federal, state, and local funds currently being used to provide activities. There will be no carryover of funds. Unobligated funds at the end of the fiscal year will be returned to the CDE to be redistributed.

Important Program Dates

January	Award Notifications
January	Diagnostic kickoff and webinar
January – May	Diagnostic visit from CDE staff, completion of site visits
April	UIP due for LEAs/schools for public posting and CDE review of plan for documentation of grant requirements
December 30	Funds must be expended.
Ongoing	Submit any revisions to the original budget for approval.

Evaluation and Reporting

Districts receiving funds under this grant opportunity are required to:

- Incorporate findings into their Unified Improvement Planning Process
- Provide feedback to CDE on the tool and process that are used as part of this service
- Submit the Annual Financial Report (AFR) to CDE

Program Assurances

Districts receiving funds under this grant opportunity are required to the following in addition to assurances in the EASI application:

- Use the findings of the Diagnostic Review to inform the comprehensive needs assessment of the school's improvement plan and include selected strategy(s) in the Unified Improvement Plan