

Applications Due:

**Wednesday, December 6, 2023, by 11:59 pm**

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| **Empowering Ac****tion for School Improvement (EASI)**  **Grant Application**  Pursuant to: The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Title I, Section 1003,  and the School Transformation Grant through HB 18-1355 |

**General Questions:**

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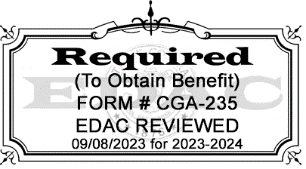
**Online Application Technical Assistance**:

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**Note:** The following paper version of the application is intended only as a reference document for instructions and grant application planning purposes. This is a comprehensive document; there is information in this document not available in the online application.

**To Access the Application:**

Each interested LEA must designate up to two application contacts and submit their names and contact information via the [online form](https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/69a3290bb98d4bfb8fbe2d4ee818b756).

Once contact information has been submitted, the LEA application contact(s) will receive system access instructions.

Applications for the Empowering Action for School Improvement (EASI) Grant will be submitted online at the link available on the [EASI website](http://www.cde.state.co.us/fedprograms/easiapplication).

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**Empowering Action for School Improvement (EASI) Application**

**Applications Due: Wednesday, December 6, 2023, by 11:59 pm**

## Introduction

With the passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and with revisions to the state’s Educational Accountability Act (HB 18-1355), Colorado has taken the opportunity to change the way school improvement funds (1003a through ESSA and the School Transformation Grant through HB 18-1355) are awarded to Local Education Agencies (LEAs). Rather than multiple applications on separate timelines, CDE now streamlines school improvement opportunities into a single application and uses a “needs-based approach” to award services and funding. This new approach has been designed to: maximize impact on student learning; incentivize innovative ideas; create a fair and transparent process; increase efficacy and efficiency; provide greater predictability to LEAs; and prioritize LEAs with high numbers or high percentages of low-performing schools. Ultimately, the intent is to develop a robust process of matching schools’ needs with rigorous, evidence-based strategies and adequate resources. Additionally, awarded funds are intended to enhance districts’ and schools’ ability to meet the ESSA and state requirements (e.g., stakeholder engagement, improvement plan, and implementation of evidence-based interventions) in a way that directly benefits students.

Colorado has committed to aligning federal and state accountability to the greatest degree possible. These grant funds are aimed at districts with schools that are designated as (1) Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CS), Targeted Support and Improvement (TS) and Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (A-TS) under ESSA and (2) Priority Improvement, Turnaround, or On Watch through the state accountability system. Specific eligibility and prioritization requirements are detailed in the information sheets for each service.

The application is to be completed by the LEA on behalf of any of its eligible schools. District activities in support of identified schools are also allowable. The application has been organized into four different routes: exploration supports, district designed and led, offered supports, and other programming. The routes have different criteria and funding amounts. A summary of the routes and the individual services can be found below. They are also summarized in the [Menu of Supports.](https://www.cde.state.co.us/fedprograms/easiapplicationroutes) Additional detail (e.g., eligibility criteria, prioritization guidelines, evaluation requirements, local commitments) for each program or opportunity are included in the links.

## EASI Application Routes

### Exploration Supports

The primary purpose of the Exploration Supports route is to help schools and LEAs gather information about their needs and plan for future action. Exploration support includes diagnostic reviews, stakeholder engagement, improvement planning, and early implementation. Schools may select a holistic or specialized review and districts may select strategic planning or specialized review and planning.

For each school and/or LEA, select the Diagnostic Review that will address current needs. On the next page, each school and/or LEA will select either a holistic review (schools) or district strategic planning (district) OR the type of specialized review (schools - AEC/Online or Language Learner Partnership; districts - Language Learner Partnership or Early Literacy) that is being requested. **Note:** A change from previous years, each option will now include funding and support for a diagnostic review, stakeholder engagement, improvement planning and early implementation funds. The selection of these components does not need to be made individually.

The exploration supports include:

* School Diagnostic Review and Planning
  + Holistic Review (facilitated by an external partner)
  + Language Learner Partnership (facilitated by CDE)
  + AEC and Online Review (facilitated by CDE)
  + Stakeholder and Community Engagement
  + Improvement Planning
  + Early Implementation
* District Specialized Review and Planning (facilitated by CDE)
  + Language Learner Partnership (for Districts and Schools)
  + Stakeholder and Community Engagement
  + Improvement Planning
  + Early Implementation
* District Strategic Planning (facilitated by an external partner)
  + Systems review and analysis
  + Stakeholder and Community Engagement
  + Improvement Planning
  + Early Implementation

More information is available on the [Exploration Supports webpage](http://www.cde.state.co.us/fedprograms/explorationsupports).

### District Designed and Led Improvement Strategies

LEAs have a plan or are already implementing a plan that meets the needs of identified schools and is interested in pursuing grant funds to support activities. More information is available on the [District Designed and Led Improvement Strategies webpage](http://www.cde.state.co.us/fedprograms/districtdesignedstrategies).

### Offered Services

LEAs interested in applying for an existing CDE support aimed at improving school systems. Services may include a comprehensive approach that includes planning and implementation phases.

* [Accountability Pathways](http://www.cde.state.co.us/fedprograms/exploration-accountabilitypathways)
* [Colorado Multi-Tiered System of Supports (COMTSS)](http://www.cde.state.co.us/fedprograms/districtwide-comtss)
* [Connect for Success](http://www.cde.state.co.us/fedprograms/cdeofferedservices-connectforsuccess)
* [School Turnaround Leadership Development Program](http://www.cde.state.co.us/accountability/turnaroundleadership)
  + [School Turnaround Leadership Development – Students with Disabilities](http://www.cde.state.co.us/accountability/turnaroundleadership)
* [School Transformation Network](https://www.cde.state.co.us/fedprograms/cdeofferedservices-turnaroundnetwork)
* [Rigorous Action through Redesign](https://www.cde.state.co.us/fedprograms/easirigorousactionthroughredesign)

### Other Services

LEAs and schools interested in applying for participation in a board-level support aimed at improving school systems. Additional Information:

* [Facilitated Board Training for School Improvement](http://www.cde.state.co.us/fedprograms/facilitatedboardtraining)

## Eligible Applicants

LEAs with schools identified (1) under ESSA as Comprehensive Support (CS), Targeted Support (TS) or Additional Targeted Support (A-TS) and/or (2) under state accountability as Priority Improvement, Turnaround, and On Watch are eligible to apply for funds and services. An LEA includes:

* A School District applying as a district and on behalf of eligible schools and charter schools;
* A Board of Cooperative Services (BOCES) applying on behalf of districts with eligible schools and charter schools; and
* The Charter School Institute (CSI) applying as the LEA and/or on behalf of eligible schools.

For more information regarding Colorado’s accountability system please visit [CDE's Accountability, Performance and Support webpage](http://www.cde.state.co.us/accountability). Applications must be authorized and submitted through the LEA and will not be accepted from individual schools. **Note:** A charter school’s authorizer will be the fiscal agent, if awarded funds.

LEAs should select the appropriate route for the school/district based upon current needs. LEAs are encouraged to work with their assigned District Support Lead or reach out to the CDE contacts listed on the cover page of this application for additional assistance to determine an appropriate fit.

The school’s type of identification - whether federal (i.e., CS, TS, A-TS), state (i.e. Priority Improvement, Turnaround, On Watch) or both - determines the opportunities for services and for funding. Below is a table that illustrates program options and eligibility. While CDE will work to ensure that all eligible LEAs have access to support services, some opportunities have limited space, capacity, or funding. In those cases, priorities for awards are listed on the specific program information page in the [Menu of Supports](https://www.cde.state.co.us/fedprograms/easiapplicationroutes).

### Program Options and Eligibility

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Services and Funding Opportunities** | **ESSA**  **Identified Only** | **ESSA and State Clock** | **State Clock Only** |
| **Exploration Supports Route** | | | |
| Exploration Activities (i.e., diagnostic review, community engagement, improvement planning) | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| **District Designed and Led Improvement Strategies Route** | | | |
| District Designed and Led | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| **Offered Services Route** | | | |
| **Accountability Pathways**   * School or District in Year 4 of 5 of Priority Improvement or Turnaround or a school that has action directed by State Board of Education | No | Yes | Yes |
| **Colorado Multi-Tiered System of Supports (COMTSS)** | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| **Connect for Success**   * No current Transformation Network | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| **School Turnaround Leadership Development (both general and SPED)** | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| **School Transformation Network**   * No current Connect for Success | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| **Rigorous Action through Redesign**   * School in Year 2 or 3 Priority Improvement or Turnaround or Year 3 or more of Comprehensive Supports (CS) Lowest 5% or Low Graduation rate | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| **Other Services** | | | |
| **Facilitated Board Training for School Improvement** | No | Yes | Yes |

The list of identified schools meeting the criteria for each opportunity can be found online on the [EASI website](https://www.cde.state.co.us/fedprograms/easiappresourcesandtechnicalassistance) or in **Attachment A**. Specific program eligibility can also be found by visiting the EASI website.

### Program Priority

Available grant funding will be distributed to LEAs that submit an application that meets the criteria within their chosen route(s). All applications will be reviewed and scored based on the rubrics included for each support. In the event the amount requested exceeds the amount available, applications that receive a fundable number of points will be prioritized. Each school will receive a point value based on a group of indicators (e.g., school improvement status, duration of status, currently receiving funds) that were ranked to ensure that schools most in need receive improvement funds. A list of schools, their prioritization score and the calculator used to arrive at the number is available in **Attachment A**.

In addition, priority will be given to LEAs or the Charter School Institute based on the concentration of schools within a district or the Institute implementing priority improvement or turnaround plans.

## Available Funds

Each year, approximately $15 million is available for awards through a combination of funds from ESSA and the state’s School Transformation Grant. The amount of funding an LEA may apply for or get awarded is dependent on the chosen route(s) and eligibility status of schools.

## Cross-Cutting Elements

To be awarded funds under this application, proposals must meet requirements under ESSA and state law, including requirements for stakeholder engagement, planning, use of evidence-based interventions (EBI), and evaluation and reporting. While overarching expectations for each of these elements are described here, specific programs may have more detailed requirements outlined in the program portion of the application. In looking at the evaluation rubrics, note that expectations vary based upon the level of implementation (e.g., planning/exploration, early implementation, advanced implementation).

### Stakeholder Engagement

State and federal expectations highlight the importance of stakeholder engagement (e.g., building leadership, teachers, parents, and other members of the community) throughout the school improvement process. Schools identified under ESSA (i.e., Comprehensive, Targeted, Additional Targeted) and under the state accountability system (i.e., Priority Improvement, Turnaround) have specific requirements that serve as a common foundation to build from. For example, the state-required school accountability committee could be one of the stakeholder groups consulted during the planning and the implementation phases required for ESSA. At a minimum in this application, all proposals will need to address how stakeholders are involved in a meaningful and relevant way in the development and implementation of proposed activities.

### Improvement Planning

Improvement plans are one of the tangible ways that districts and schools document their intentions for improving outcomes for students. As all opportunities within this application expect schools to have a solid plan in place or are supportive of the development of a solid plan, the Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) provides a convenient mechanism for capturing the specific ESSA and state requirements. There are different planning expectations for Priority Improvement, Turnaround, CS, TS, and A-TS schools within the planning process. For additional details, see the [Accountability Handbook](http://www.cde.state.co.us/accountability/stateaccountability) State and federal planning expectations are also summarized in these resources, including the [UIP Quality Criteria Rubric](http://www.cde.state.co.us/uip/uip_general_resources) (including ESSA requirements).

Each school’s specific requirements are also available in the pre-populated report in the Online UIP. Schools/districts with Priority Improvement or Turnaround plan types, schools/districts that are On Watch, and all CS schools (regardless of their state plan type) must complete the UIP and corresponding requirements by October 16 for review and public posting.

For guidance and suggestions on how to approach improvement planning in the absence of state and local data, refer to the [Unified Improvement Planning](http://www.cde.state.co.us/uip) webpage for special resources tailored to this time. LEAs may also apply for improvement planning support through the Exploration route of the EASI grant application.

### Evidence-Based Interventions

Evidence-Based Interventions (EBI) are practices or programs that have proven to be effective in leading to a particular outcome. The kind of evidence described in ESSA has generally been produced through formal studies and research.

Under ESSA, there are four levels of evidence:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Tier 1: Strong Evidence** | Supported by one or more well-designed and well-implemented randomized control experimental studies. |
| **Tier 2: Moderate Evidence** | Supported by one or more well-designed and well-implemented quasi-experimental studies. |
| **Tier 3: Promising Evidence** | Supported by one or more well-designed and well implemented correlational studies (with statistical controls for selection bias). |
| **Tier 4: Demonstrates a Rationale** | Practices that have a well-defined logic model or theory of action, are supported by research, and have some effort underway by an SEA, LEA, or outside research organization to determine their effectiveness. |

In making awards for this application, ESSA requires schools to have strong, moderate, or promising evidence (Tiers 1-3) to support them. To ensure the best fit, selected strategies must also demonstrate an alignment to the contextual fit framework proposed by Horner, Blitz and Ross[[1]](#footnote-2):

* Evidence base: Provides evidence that strategy meets Tier 1-3 strategy
* Need: Strategy is linked to needs assessment
* Precision: A clear definition of the proposed intervention
* Efficiency: There is a reasonable adoption period and a likelihood of sustainability after the grant cycle
* Skill: Staff have the skills or will be trained adequately to obtain skills for implementation
* Cultural relevance: Intervention and outcomes are valued by stakeholders
* Resources: Time, materials, staff
* Organizational support: District and school staff are supportive and involved

In determining the best fit, other state and federal requirements should be considered. For example, reading interventions in early elementary grades should meet the more rigorous standards of the READ Act which has already vetted many reading interventions. For more information, see the [READ Act website](http://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/readact/programming) for additional information.

For more information around selecting EBIs, resources can be found on CDE’s [ESSA Planning Requirements webpage](https://www.cde.state.co.us/fedprograms/essaplanningrequirements). CDE has created a number of strategy guides to help schools and districts better understand what research says about common EBI strategies. These guides can be found on CDE’s [UIP Major Improvement Strategy Guides webpage](https://www.cde.state.co.us/uip/strategyguides).

### Reporting

Each LEA that receives an EASI grant is required to report, at a minimum, the following information annually to CDE:

* Update online system to reflect any revision to activities and budget;
* A description of challenges, successes and lessons learned from implementation of grant-funded activities or strategies; and
* An Annual Financial Report (AFR).

All sites that are awarded EASI funds are expected to reference their activities within their improvement plan (e.g., UIP). CDE will monitor these plans in different ways depending upon the type of identification and the type of selected service. See individual program information sheets for more details. Additional information is also tailored to the school within their UIP pre-populated report.

CDE will also conduct evaluations of all school improvement-funded grants. As CDE evaluates its programs and offerings, districts may be contacted to participate in additional ways (e.g., brief surveys, site visits, including bright spot visits, and interviews). This will help the state to offer a broader array of effective supports. If any additional information becomes necessary, CDE will work with the Educational Data Advisory Committee (EDAC) and LEAs to ensure that information is collected with the permission of the grantee(s) and with as little burden on the schools and districts as possible.

**Additional reporting requirements are indicated in the following specific program support documents and can be accessed on the** [**EASI website**.](http://www.cde.state.co.us/fedprograms/easiapplication)

### Reasonable and Necessary

For any district applying for funds, the request must be grounded in the local needs. Given that there is a finite amount of funding, requests should be reasonable and necessary. The following guidance can be used in determining what is reasonable and necessary.

When determining what is reasonable, consider that the type and amount of cost should not exceed what a “prudent person” would pay under the same circumstances.

When determining what is necessary, consider that the cost should be for an activity or function that is generally recognized as ordinary and required for the institution to operate the program. The cost must be essential to fulfill regulatory requirements for proper and efficient administration of the program.

Generally allowable costs are:

* Customary (e.g., interventionist or coaching salaries and benefits, professional development opportunities based on need);
* Allowed by circulars, regulations, policy, and guidance;
* Disclosed in the budget submitted to the State agency; and
* Approved in advance through the budget.

## Application Timeline

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **September 22, 2023** | EASI Application Available |
| **October 19, 2023** | **EASI Support Fair (Virtual)** |
| **Wednesday, December 6, 2023** | **Applications due to CDE by 11:59 pm** |
| **December 7, 2023 - January 31, 2024** | Review of Applications |
| **Wednesday, January 31, 2024** | Applicants will be notified of application status. |
| **February 2024** | LEAs receiving grants will work with CDE to finalize grant activities, budget, and implementation timeline. |

## Duration of Grants

Duration of funds is dependent on the selected service, successful participation in program activities, and is contingent on CDE’s Title I award from the U.S. Department of Education and appropriations from the Colorado legislature.

Funds from this opportunity must be used to supplement and not supplant any federal, state, and local funds currently being used to provide activities. Each year, funds should be obligated by June 30 and schools are able to request reimbursement on federal funds through September 30. A district/school may carry funds forward within the grant duration years. However, this amount should be reasonable and based on the school’s grant and/or improvement plan and approval must be obtained. Note: At the end of participation in the grant period, any non-requested federal funds will be rescinded by CDE and any unspent state funds should be returned to CDE.

## Data Privacy

CDE takes seriously its obligation to protect the privacy of student and educator Personally Identifiable Information (PII) that is collected, used, shared, and stored. PII will not be collected through the EASI Grant. All grant program evaluation data will be collected in the aggregate and will be used, shared, and stored in compliance with applicable laws and CDE’s privacy and security policies and procedures.

Documents submitted must not contain any personally identifiable student or educator information including names, identification numbers, or anything that could identify an individual. All data should be referenced/included in the aggregate and the aggregate counts should be redacted to remove small numbers under 16 for students or five (5) for educators.

## Application Technical Assistance

Technical Assistance will be offered throughout the application window in the following forms:

### Individual Technical Assistance

Individual Technical Assistance is available to applicants in the planning of proposals upon request. **Note:** there may be a high volume of requests closer to the application due date; please allow adequate time for response. Technical assistance will be provided by CDE staff upon release of the application. To request technical assistance or to facilitate the planning process for the application from a CDE staff member, applicants may contact the [CDE-assigned District Support Lead](http://www.cde.state.co.us/accountability/sqscontacts) or:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **General Application Questions** | Laura Meushaw | [Meushaw\_L@cde.state.co.us](mailto:Meushaw_L@cde.state.co.us)  Lindsay Cox | [Cox\_L@cde.state.co.us](mailto:Cox_L@cde.state.co.us) |
| **Online Application Technical Assistance** | Grants Program Administration | [CompetitiveGrants@cde.state.co.us](mailto:CompetitiveGrants@cde.state.co.us) |
| **Budget Questions** | Sondra Vela | [Vela\_S@cde.state.co.us](mailto:Vela_S@cde.state.co.us) |
| **For District-Specific Questions** | Contact the [CDE District Support Lead](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeawards/easi-contacts#coordinators) assigned to the district. |
| **Exploration Supports Route** | |
| Exploration Activities (Diagnostic Review, Community Engagement, Improvement Planning) | Lauren Hesse | [Hesse\_L@cde.state.co.us](mailto:Hesse_L@cde.state.co.us) |
| **District Designed and Led Improvement Strategies Route** | |
| District Designed and Led Improvement Strategies | Contact your assigned [District Support Lead](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeawards/easi-contacts#coordinators) for planning tailored to your local context.  For route-specific questions contact  Lindsay Cox | [Cox\_L@cde.state.co.us](mailto:Cox_L@cde.state.co.us) |
| **Offered Services Route** | |
| Accountability Pathways | Andy Swanson | [Swanson\_A@cde.state.co.us](mailto:Swanson_A@cde.state.co.us) |
| Colorado Multi-Tiered System of Supports (COMTSS) | Kristen Brown, PhD | [Brown\_Kristen@cde.state.co.us](mailto:Brown_Kristen@cde.state.co.us) |
| Connect for Success | Laura Meushaw | [Meushaw\_L@cde.state.co.us](mailto:Meushaw_L@cde.state.co.us) |
| School Turnaround Leadership Development | Lindsay Cox | [Cox\_L@cde.state.co.us](mailto:Cox_L@cde.state.co.us) |
| School Transformation Network | Nicole Monet | [Monet\_N@cde.state.co.us](mailto:Monet_N@cde.state.co.us) |
| Rigorous Action through Redesign | Andy Swanson | [Swanson\_A@cde.state.co.us](mailto:Swanson_A@cde.state.co.us) |
| **Other Services** | |
| Facilitated Board Training for School Improvement | Dan Jorgensen | [Jorgensen\_D@cde.state.co.us](mailto:Jorgensen_D@cde.state.co.us) |

### EASI Support Fair

LEA and school staff are invited to participate in exploration and planning event designed to provide key information about the EASI grant process, routes and services, highlight available supports, and available funding. Attendees will connect virtually with CDE staff, learn more about the CDE-offered services, and have time to ask questions about the application process and/or routes and services.

Representatives from districts and schools identified for improvement and support under state and federal accountability requirements are encouraged to attend. Suggested team members include:

* Superintendent;
* LEA leadership (e.g., principal, supervisor, Chief Academic Officer, Accountability Coordinator, Directors of Title I, Special Education, and English Language Development);
* Federal programs staff; and
* Principals of eligible schools.

**EASI Virtual Support Fair Event Details**

**Date:** October 19, 2023

**Location:** Virtual

Registration Link will be available on [EASI website](http://www.cde.state.co.us/fedprograms/easiappresourcesandtechnicalassistance).

### EASI Online Resources

The [EASI website](http://www.cde.state.co.us/fedprograms/easiapplication) is a “one-stop” location for all things EASI including:

* The EASI Application Planning Document that can be used as a guide for planning responses.
* The EASI Menu of Supports and Information Sheets that provide requirements, eligibility, timeline, and reporting for each support.
* Recorded Videos that give brief overviews of each support available within EASI.
* Details on the Advisory List of Providers

### CDE’s Advisory List of Providers

CDE released a Request for Information in June of 2023 with the purpose of updating the [Advisory List of Providers](https://www.cde.state.co.us/accountability/cde-advisory-list-of-providers). The Advisory List is a way for CDE to vet and maintain an inventory of high-quality, proven school and district improvement partners. Three EASI routes - School Holistic Diagnostic Review, District Strategic Planning, and School Turnaround Leadership Development - require that schools and districts select a provider from this list. Providers may be used to support other routes such as District Designed and Led and Accountability Pathways. The Advisory List includes providers in the following categories:

**District-level support providers**

* District-level Strategic Planning (holistic or targeted at one or more key district systems)
* District Improvement Implementation Support
* District Turnaround Leadership Development
* District Managers

**School-level support providers**

* School Holistic Reviews and Improvement Planning
* School Improvement Implementation Support
* School Turnaround Leadership Development
* School Managers

## Review Process and Timeline

Applications will be reviewed based on the applicable rubric associated with the support to ensure they contain all required components. To be considered for participation in each route selected, LEAs and schools must meet all the requirements listed in each applicable scoring section. In cases where LEAs are applying for multiple schools, a single school with a weak application will not necessarily prevent awards or release of funds for other schools or the LEA. Applications that do not meet all requirements may be asked to submit revisions that would bring the application to an approvable level. There is no guarantee that submitting an application will result in funding or funding at the requested level. If CDE receives more grant requests than available funding, CDE may take into consideration the status of current and previous EASI grant awards. Applicants will receive notification of application status by **Wednesday, January 31, 2024. All award decisions are final.**

## Submission Process and Deadline

Completed applications for the EASI Grant must be submitted online by **Wednesday December 6, at 11:59 pm.**

**Note:** To access the application system, **each interested LEA must designate up to two application contacts** and submit their names and contact information via the [online form](https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/69a3290bb98d4bfb8fbe2d4ee818b756)[.](https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/20b95aa0a8d74733bbd4e299647442d4) Once contact information has been submitted, the LEA application contact(s) will receive system access instructions.

Incomplete or late applications will not be considered. If you do not receive an email confirmation of receipt of your application within 24 hours after the deadline, please email [EASI@cde.state.co.us.](mailto:EASI@cde.state.co.us) Application materials and resources are available for download on the [EASI website.](http://www.cde.state.co.us/fedprograms/easiapplication)

## Application Format

* Applications will be submitted online. See below for the required elements of the application.
* Assurances for program participation must be signed and uploaded within the online system. These assurances must include original signatures of the Authorized Representative for the LEA.
* If the LEA is requesting to participate in the COMTSS Program, the COMTSS Membership Form (**Attachment B**) must be completed and uploaded within the online system.

## Required Application Elements

The online application is organized in the order below. See evaluation rubrics for specific selection criteria.

**Part I: LEA Information and Assurances**

**Part II: LEA Application Summary**

This section will be completed for any LEA applying for services and/or funds.

**Part III: Application Narrative** [answered as applicable to routes selected]

Exploration Supports

District Designed and Led Improvement Strategies

Offered Services

Other Services

**Attachments** [to be uploaded in the online system]

Scope of Work (External Provider - Exploration Only)

Assurances

COMTSS Membership Form (if applying for COMTSS)

Additional Supporting Documentation (up to 5 PDF pages to support LEA’s application)

The following application questions and scoring rubrics are intended only as a reference document for instructions and application planning purposes.

Applications for the Empowering Action for School Improvement (EASI) **must be submitted through the online system,**

**by 11:59 pm on Wednesday, December 6, 2023.**

**To Access the Application:**

Each interested LEAmust designate up to two application contacts and submit their names and contact information via the [online form](https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/69a3290bb98d4bfb8fbe2d4ee818b756).

Once contact information has been submitted, the LEA application contact(s) will receive system access instructions.

Applications will be submitted online at the link available on the [EASI website](http://www.cde.state.co.us/fedprograms/easiapplication).

**Empowering Action for School Improvement (EASI)  
Applications Due: Wednesday, December 6, 2023, by 11:59 pm**

## Part I: Applicant Information

Applicants are requested to complete the following applicant information:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Lead Local Education Agency (LEA)/BOCES Information** | | | | | | | |
| **LEA/BOCES Name:** | |  | | | **LEA/BOCES Code:** | |  |
| **Mailing Address:** | |  | | | **UEI** #: |  | |
| **Type of Education Provider**  [Check one box below that best describes your organization or authorizer.] | | | | | | | |
| School District  BOCES  Facility School  AEC  Charter School Institute | | | | | | | |
| **Application Coordinator Contact Information** | | | | | | | |
| **Name:** |  | | **Title:** |  | | | |
| **Telephone:** |  | | **E-mail:** |  | | | |
| **Authorized Representative Information** [Superintendent or Designee] | | | | | | | |
| **Name:** |  | | **Title:** |  | | | |
| **Telephone:** |  | | **E-mail:** |  | | | |
| **Fiscal Manager Information** | | | | | | | |
| **Name:** |  | | | | | | |
| **Telephone:** |  | | **E-mail:** |  | | | |

## Part II: LEA Application Summary

All applicants should complete the LEA Application Summary to provide context for participation in EASI.

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| **LEA Application Summary** | **Not Included/ More Information Needed** | **Included** |
| 1. Provide context for the LEA’s motivation for participating in the EASI program. Include the following:    * A description of the LEA’s current system of supports, in particular for schools identified under the state and federal systems.    * An overview of the top priority challenges the LEA and the identified school(s) face. The description should be organized by the [Four Domains for Rapid School Improvement](https://www.cde.state.co.us/fourdomains/) (i.e., culture shift, instructional transformation, leadership, and talent development). |  |  |
| 1. Explain how, if awarded, the LEA will support its identified schools (i.e., CS/TS/ATS, Priority Improvement, and/or Turnaround) to ensure that school improvement services, activities, and/or grants are on track and in alignment with their improvement plans and ultimately exit the federal and/or state designations and sustain improvements. |  |  |
| 1. Provide evidence that stakeholders (e.g., building leaders, teachers, parents) input was gathered to inform have been this proposal and the feedback provided by stakeholders. Include:  * General summary of opportunities where multiple stakeholders were involved in influencing the proposed activities. improvement planning activities consulted in a meaningful manner for the proposed activities. * General summary of outcomes of the stakeholder interactions and opportunities. |  |  |

## Exploration Application Questions and Evaluation Rubric

**Instructions:** Each LEA and/or school requesting Exploration services are asked to address the following items.

|  |  |  |
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| **Current Context** | **Not Included/ More Information Needed** | **Included** |
| 1. Describe why the LEA has selected Exploration as the best route for the identified school(s) and/or LEA. Describe the need for Exploration funds and address any connections to identification for improvement through the state and/or federal identification system.   Note: CDE may also consult publicly available documents (e.g., UIP, SPF) to better understand the current LEA/school environment. |  |  |

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| **Workplan and Budget Request** | **Not Included/ More Information Needed** | **Included/**  **Not Applicable** |
| 1. Describe the process used and why the school/LEA selected the provider(s) and/or exploration service(s) (Note: CDE is the provider AEC and Language Learner Partnership). |  |  |
| 1. Populate the work plan and Budget Table by using the “Add Grant Activities” button below, create a work plan and budget request. See below for an example of the Work Plan and Budget Request Table.  For each grant activity (specifically including diagnostic review, stakeholder engagement, and improvement planning) in the work plan:  * Provide a school-level location contact, a description of each activity, start/end dates, and person(s) responsible for the activity. * Input the amount requested, the associated program and object codes, and fiscal year. Input the salary position and FTE amount, if applicable. * Ensure that activities are aligned with the allowable use of funds listed in the Information Sheet (PDF). * Ensure that costs are clearly tied to the grant activities and are calculated with detail in the “grant activity” field.   **Note:** Diagnostic Review, Improvement Planning and Early Implementation funds must be spent by June 30, 2025. Before accessing Early Implementation funds, schools must:   1. Update their Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) based on an improvement plan that draws on the results of a diagnostic review and incorporates stakeholder input, AND 2. Submit a revised budget detailing the proposed use of implementation funds on evidence-based strategies incorporated into the updated UIP. A single line may be added to the proposed budget as a placeholder for Early Implementation dollars. |  |  |
| 1. If you selected a provider external to CDE for Exploration Supports, upload a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) (e.g., duration, expectations, deliverables, timeline) and/or and scope of work with the selected provider and/or facilitator that aligns with the budget request on the “Supporting Documentation Uploads” page. If a finalized MOU is not available prior to award, a draft MOU or SOW is acceptable. |  |  |

## District Designed and Led Application Questions and Evaluation Rubric

**Note:** The proposal can cover a single school, multiple schools, and/or the district. The scoring rubric is designed in a standards-based format.

This opportunity is a competitive process - to be considered for funding, applicants must score at least the required points noted in the table below out of the possible points available. Applications that score below the required points may be asked to submit revisions that would bring the application up to an approvable level.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Path** | **Possible Points** | **Required Points** |
| District Designed and Led - Initial | 50 | 30 |
| District Designed and Led - Continuation | 60 | 36 |

**Instructions:** Complete each of the questions below for all schools participating in the District Designed and Led Improvement Strategies. The proposal can cover a single school, multiple schools, and/or the district. If multiple schools have similar findings in the needs assessment(s), then the proposal should note this and provide an overall description. If the needs assessment findings are vastly different, then the LEA will need to clearly describe each school.

### District Designed and Led - Initial

Complete this section if the LEA has not previously received funding or services under this route for the proposed strategy(ies). For LEAs previously awarded a District Designed and Led Initial grant, see the Continuation section below to add new schools and/or activities to expand existing initiatives.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Major Improvement Strategy**  These questions need to be completed for each strategy included in the DDL Initial application. | **Not Included/ More Information Needed** | | | **Included/**  **Not Applicable** | | |
| 1. Evidence of External Review(s) and Need for this Proposal  * Provide a brief summary of your most recent diagnostic review including the date, focus, and provider that conducted the review. Provide a short description of the findings including the top 1-3 areas that your district prioritized from the review, why they were prioritized, and how the proposed DDL will impact them. |  | | |  | | |
| 1. Major Improvement Strategy Name |  | | |  | | |
| 1. Summary of the Major Improvement Strategy.  * Provide a brief description (1-2 paragraphs at most) of your chosen major improvement strategy and describe if this is a district-level strategy designed to impact the identified schools or a school-based strategy. * Briefly describe the key actions that will occur in Year 1, Year 2, and Year 3 of the grant to implement the strategy(ies). |  | | |  | | |
| 1. Participating Schools  * List all schools that will be participating in this DDL Major Improvement Strategy and briefly describe how the selected strategy(ies)will support sustainable improvement in these schools. |  | | |  | | |
| 1. Evidence Base of the Major Improvement Strategy  * Provide a brief summary of the evidence base for this strategy that meets Tier 1, 2, or 3 [ESSA evidence definitions](https://www.cde.state.co.us/fedprograms/essaplanningrequirements). Please include a full citation for the sources in your research base. Include a web address for any sources that were accessed online. CDE has created a number of [strategy guides](https://www.cde.state.co.us/uip/strategyguides) to help schools and districts better understand common evidence-based strategies. If you are using a CDE Strategy Guide, specify which guide you are using. This can serve as the evidence base for your strategy. |  | | |  | | |
| **Implementation of the Major Improvement Strategy**  These questions need to be completed for each strategy included in the DDL Initial application. | | **Not Addressed or Met No Criteria** | **Met One Criterion** | | | **Met All Criteria** |
| 1. Provide a brief summary of your most recent diagnostic review including the date, focus, and provider that conducted the review. Provide a short description of the findings including the top 1-3 areas that your district prioritized from the review, why they were prioritized, and how the proposed DDL will impact them. | | 0 | 5 | | | 10 |
| 1. Contextual Fit: Provide a summary of how and why this strategy(s) is a good fit and is likely to be implemented successfully. Describe how the evidence base for your strategy will inform implementation of this strategy in your context. | | 0 | 5 | | | 10 |
| 1. **Optional for Districts Partnering with External Partners:** LEAs are strongly encouraged to use external partners from CDE’s EASI Advisory list of vetted district and school improvement partners. If the LEA is proposing to use an external partner for the DDL grant implementation, please provide the name of the partner and briefly describe their role and scope of work. | | 0 | 5 | | | 10 |
| **Total:** | | | | | **/30** | |
| **Major Improvement Strategy Implementation Benchmarks**  These questions need to be completed for each strategy included in the DDL Initial application. | | **Not Addressed or Met No Criteria** | **Met One Criterion** | | | **Met All Criteria** |
| 1. Generally, describe the changes you would hope to see in practices, behaviors, or systems as a result of this grant. Note: If awarded, the LEA will be required to set specific and measurable annual implementation and student impact performance targets using the CDE progress monitoring template by June of 2024. In addition, CDE will meet with the LEA’s team twice a year to support progress monitoring and implementation. | | 0 | 5 | | | 10 |
| **Total:** | | | | | **/10** | |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Workplan and Budget Request** | **Not Addressed or Met No Criteria** | **Met One Criterion** | | **Met All Criteria** |
| Using the “Add Grant Activities” button below, create a work plan and budget request. For each grant activity in the work plan:   * Provide the strategy name this line links to, a school-level location contact, a description of each activity, start/end dates, and person(s) responsible for the activity. * Input the amount requested, the associated program and object codes, and fiscal year. Input the salary position and FTE amount, if applicable. * Ensure that activities are aligned with the allowable use of funds listed in the Information Sheet (PDF). * Ensure that costs are clearly tied to the grant activities and are calculated with detail in the “description of activity” field.   **Note:** District Designed and Led Funding is available for up to 2-1/2 years of total funding. Provide a budget for the following years, depending on the length of the request: 2023-24 (remaining), 2024-25, and 2025-26. Funds provided each year will be contingent on project implementation, adequate use of funds from previous years, and continued funding from the U.S. Department of Education. | 0 | 5 | | 10 |
| **Total:** | | | **/10** | |

### District Designed and Led - Continuation

**The District Designed and Led Improvement - Continuation** route is designed for previously approved in the initial DDL strategies that the district now wants to implement at new schools and/or need to continue the initial DDL strategies in the already funded schools. **If the district wants to implement a new strategy, please use the District Designed and Led Improvement - Initial route to make this request.** Complete each of the questions below for all schools participating in the District Designed and Led Improvement Strategies. If multiple schools have a similar implementation approach, then the proposal should note this and provide an overall description. If the proposed implementation activities are vastly different, then the LEA will need to clearly delineate school by school activities, and the work plan and budget request must reflect implementation activities for each participating school.

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| **DDL Continuation**  Scaling-up of Initial DDL strategies to new schools or continuing to implement DDL Strategies in the same schools. | | | **Not Addressed or Met No Criteria** | **Met One Criterion** | | **Met All Criteria** |
| * + - 1. What schools are part of this proposal? | **Not Included/More Information Needed** | **Included** | | | | |
| * + - 1. Summarize the work that has been implemented as a result of the previous DDL Initial award. If different by school, please explicitly outline that in the narrative. Briefly describe the key actions in the LEA and/or school will take in Year 1, Year 2, and Year 3 of the continuation DDL grant to implement the strategy(ies). | | | 0 | 5 | | 10 |
| * + - 1. Provide evidence of success for the previously awarded strategies in your DDL Initial application and progress related to your implementation benchmarks. Address the impact that this work has had on participating schools. If different by school, please explicitly outline that in the narrative.  Evidence may include: * Student data analysis (e.g., academic, behavior, attendance that has improved). * Systems/implementation analysis (e.g., findings from a Diagnostic Review, perception surveys, classroom observations, etc. and how they have changed). * Revisiting the annual performance targets and success indicators included in the previously awarded Initial DDL application. | | | 0 | 5 | | 10 |
| * + - 1. If scaling-up the DDL Initial Strategies to new schools, include evidence of their needs through an external review and how this initiative will meet their needs. | | | 0 | 5 | | 10 |
| * + - 1. Describe the plan for how the district will support sustainability of the knowledge and work after grant funding ends. | | | 0 | 5 | | 10 |
| **Total:** | | | | | **/40** | |

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| **Targets and Progress Monitoring - Continuation** | **Not Addressed or Met No Criteria** | **Met One Criterion** | | **Met All Criteria** |
| * + - 1. Provide annual performance targets and implementation benchmarks (by school, if applicable) that are expected as a result of the Major Improvement Strategy. This should extend over the course of the grant. * Include how the LEA and/or school will measure progress of implementation as it is intended, and know progress is being made. Measures should include specific changes in practice, behaviors, or systems (climate and culture) that will give indications of success in advance of student performance data. | 0 | 5 | | 10 |
| **Total:** | | | **/10** | |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Workplan and Budget Request** | **Not Addressed or Met No Criteria** | **Met One Criterion** | | **Met All Criteria** |
| Using the “Add Grant Activities” button below, create a work plan and budget request. For each grant activity in the work plan:   * Provide a school-level location contact, a description of each activity, start/end dates, and person(s) responsible for the activity. * Input the amount requested, the associated program and object codes, and fiscal year. Input the salary position and FTE amount, if applicable. * Ensure that activities are aligned with the allowable use of funds listed in the Information Sheet (PDF). * Ensure that costs are clearly tied to the grant activities and are calculated with detail in the “description of activity” field.   **Note:** District Designed and Led Funding is available for up to 2-1/2 years of total funding. Provide a budget for the following years, depending on the length of the request: 2023-24 (remaining), 2024-25, and 2025-26. Funds provided each year will be contingent on project implementation, adequate use of funds from previous years, and continued funding from the US Department of Education. | 0 | 5 | | 10 |
| **Total:** | | | **/10** | |

## Offered Services Selection Criteria and Evaluation Rubric

### Accountability Pathways

**Instructions:** Accountability Pathways is intended to support LEAs and schools with planning for and implementing the statutory options, or pathways, for persistently low-performing schools and LEAs. For those nearing the end of the Accountability Clock, the grant can support exploring the pathways, taking thoughtful action, and increasing readiness for discussions with the State Board of Education. For those who receive a directed action from the state board, the grant can support implementation of the approved pathway plan.

Complete each of the questions below for all eligible schools and/or LEA participating in Accountability Pathways activities. If multiple schools are applying and eligible, ensure responses clearly delineate the schools participating within each response.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Workplan and Budget Request** | **Not Included/ More Information Needed** | **Included** |
| 1. What are the key strategies this grant will support for developing and implementing a pathways plan? Describe how these key strategies will prepare the school or LEA for either a potential accountability hearing or implementation of directed action. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1. Who will, or does, comprise the working leadership team focused on developing and/or implementing the Accountability Pathways? What position does each person hold, and how is each role situated in the organization to provide influence over key changes. Who is the facilitator or point person for the team?   **Note:** At a minimum, the leadership team should include one district leader from the Superintendent’s leadership team with the authority to work with the local charter, include the charter school leader contact and contact for the authorizer who oversees the school’s accountability. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1. What structures and resources are in place, or may need to be created, for a pathways plan to be developed and implemented in the school or LEA? | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1. What key turnaround strategies associated with the pathways planning or plan will be supported through this EASI grant? | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1. Does the school or LEA intend to work with or currently work with an external partner to develop and implement an Accountability Pathways plan?  * If so, who is the external partner and how did the school select this partner? In the response, describe the partner’s track record of success and demonstrated experience in turnaround school improvement strategies. * If not, what is the rationale and approach to internally developing and implementing a pathways plan? In the response, describe the capacity of the school or LEA team to facilitate pathway plan development, key strategies this grant will support, and how these strategies prepare the school or LEA for a potential accountability hearing. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1. How does the school or LEA plan to collaborate with the CDE team to ensure requirements of the accountability systems are fulfilled? | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1. Using the “Add Grant Activities” button below, create a work plan and budget request. For each grant activity in the work plan:  * Provide a school-level location contact, a description of each activity, start/end dates, and person(s) responsible for the activity. * Input the amount requested, the associated program and object codes, and fiscal year. Input the salary position and FTE amount, if applicable. * Ensure that activities are aligned with the allowable use of funds listed in the Information Sheet. * Ensure that costs are clearly tied to the grant activities and are calculated with detail in the “description of activity” field.   **Note:** Provide a budget for 2023-24 (remaining), 2024-25, and 2025-26 (2-1/2 years of total funding). Funds provided each year will be contingent on project implementation and adequate use of funds from previous years. LEAs or schools that are in Year 4 and move to On Watch following the initial application and then fully exit the clock (e.g. do not advance to an SBE hearing in Year 5) will not receive a second year of funding. | ☐ | ☐ |

### Colorado Multi-Tiered System of Supports (COMTSS)

**Instructions:** Complete each of the questions below to indicate the LEA’s plan to participate in the Colorado Multi-Tiered System of Supports (COMTSS) Grant. Applicants must score at least 24 points out of the 40 possible points to be approved for funding. Applications that score below 24 points may be asked to submit revisions that would bring the application up to an approvable level.

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| **Strategic Goals** | **Not Addressed or Met No Criteria** | **Met One Criterion** | | **Met All Criteria** | |
| 1. Identify the goals the LEA hopes to accomplish through involvement in Colorado Multi-tiered System of Support (COMTSS). | 0 | 5 | | 10 | |
| **Total:** | | | **/10** | |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Team-Driven Shared Leadership** | **Not Addressed or Met No Criteria** | **Met One Criterion** | | **Met All Criteria** |
| 1. Describe the current efforts of the district's COMTSS District Implementation Team (C-DIT) to align initiatives and provide high-quality professional development and technical assistance to local schools. If there is no C-DIT, address whether the district has the capacity to establish one focused on aligning initiatives and providing high-quality professional development and technical assistance to local schools. Also describe the executive level members (including the Superintendent) who will be included on the team, as well as the C-DIT lead and their qualifications to facilitate team meetings. | 0 | 5 | | 10 |
| **Total:** | | | **/10** | |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Commitment** | | **Not Addressed or Met No Criteria** | **Met One Criterion** | | **Met All Criteria** |
| 1. Describe the current priorities of the LEA, and how COMTSS will fit within those priorities. Be sure to include the other initiatives (e.g., School Transformation Network, Connect for Success Grant Program, Early Literacy Grant Program) your LEA is currently involved in, the number of schools involved, and the timeline of their participation. | | 0 | 5 | | 10 |
| 1. The COMTSS Membership Form (**Attachment B**) was submitted with all requested information. | **Not Included/More Information Needed** | | **Included** | | |
| ☐ | | ☐ | | |
| **Total:** | | | | **/10** | |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Workplan and Budget Request** | **Not Addressed or Met No Criteria** | **Met One Criterion** | | **Met All Criteria** |
| 1. Using the “Add Grant Activities” button below, create a work plan and budget request. For each grant activity in the work plan:  * Provide a school-level location contact, a description of each activity, start/end dates, and person(s) responsible for the activity. * Input the amount requested, the associated program and object codes, and fiscal year. Input the salary position and FTE amount, if applicable. Note: At least .25 FTE is required for the COMTSS Coordinator position. * Ensure that activities are aligned with the allowable use of funds listed in the Information Sheet. * Ensure that costs are clearly tied to the grant activities and are calculated with detail in the “description of activity” field.   **Note:** Provide a budget for 2023-24 (remaining), 2024-25, and 2025-26 (2-1/2 years of total funding). Funds provided each year will be contingent on project implementation and adequate use of funds from previous years. | 0 | 5 | | 10 |
| **Total:** | | | **/10** | |

### Connect for Success

Applicants must score at least 30 points out of the 50 possible points to be approved for funding. Applications that score below 30 points may be asked to submit revisions that would bring the application up to an approvable level.

**Instructions:** Complete each of the questions below for all schools participating in the Connect for Success Grant.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Readiness** | **Not Addressed or Met No Criteria** | **Met One Criterion** | | **Met All Criteria** |
| 1. Clearly articulate how this grant opportunity will strengthen the school’s ability to meet the needs of all students. | 0 | 5 | | 10 |
| **Total:** | | | **/10** | |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Capacity, Grant Activities, and Budget** | **Not Addressed or Met No Criteria** | **Met One Criterion** | | **Met All Criteria** |
| 1. Describe how the district will support the school’s participation in opportunities to connect with, learn from, and work with High Achieving Schools, other Connect for Success grantees, and CDE representatives (Implementation Manager assigned to the school). | 0 | 5 | | 10 |
| 1. Describe any school or district structures, teams, or other mechanisms (e.g., networks, coaches) that will help monitor and implement plans for this grant. | 0 | 5 | | 10 |
| 1. Describe any other grant programs in which you are currently participating. Outline how this program(s) will align with current funding and support existing initiatives. | 0 | 5 | | 10 |
| 1. Using the “Add Grant Activities” button below, create a work plan and budget request. For each grant activity in the work plan:  * Provide a school-level location contact, a description of each activity, start/end dates, and person(s) responsible for the activity. * Input the amount requested, the associated program and object codes, and fiscal year. Input the salary position and FTE amount, if applicable. * Ensure that activities are aligned with the allowable use of funds listed in the Information Sheet. * Ensure that costs are clearly tied to the grant activities and are calculated with detail in the “description of activity” field.   **Note:** Provide a budget for 2023-24 (remaining), 2024-25, and 2025-26. (2-1/2 years of total funding). Funds provided each year will be contingent on project implementation and adequate use of funds from previous years. | 0 | 5 | | 10 |
| **Total:** | | | **/40** | |

### School Turnaround Leadership Development (STLD) Program

LEAs selecting **School Turnaround Leadership Development Program** are asked to respond to the sections below. Note: this year there are two School Turnaround Leadership Development (STLD) programs: General STLD and STLD for leaders working with students with disabilities. Please see EASI website and fact sheets for more information. Applicants must score at least 30 points out of the 50 possible points to be approved for funding. Applications that score below 30 points may be asked to submit revisions to bring the application up to an approvable level.

**Instructions:** Complete the table below to identify leaders who will participate in the School Turnaround Leadership Development Program. Each leader may be assigned one or multiple sites (schools) in the district. Select one leadership provider per leader. Ensure all schools chosen for the School Turnaround Leadership Development Program are included in the table. Use the "Add Leaders" button below the question to build the table.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Participants** | | **Not Included/ More Information Needed** | **Included** |
| 1. List each individual leader proposed to participate in a leadership development program. For each individual, provide:  * First and last name * Current role * Email and phone number * Assigned site(s) (or districtwide) * Which leadership provider seems to be the best fit for their needs   More information on each leadership provider is available on the [Turnaround Leadership webpage.](http://www.cde.state.co.us/accountability/turnaroundleadership) | |  |  |
| * Accelerate Institute * BES (build. excel. sustain.) * Generation Schools Network * LiberatED Way * McREL International * National Institute for Excellence in Teaching * Relay Graduate School of Education: Instructional Leadership Professional Development * Relay Graduate School of Education: National Principals Academy Fellowship * Relay Graduate School of Education: National Principals Supervisor’s Academy * Relay Graduate School of Education: Instructional Leadership Professional Development * Relay Graduate School of Education: Inclusive Schools Leadership Institute\* | * The Center for Model Schools * TNTP, Inc. * University of Denver: Design Improvement Program * University of Denver: Ritchie Program for School Leaders * University of Virginia Partnership for Leaders in Education * WestEd: Principal Leadership Coaching   \*Indicates Provider that offers STLD for leaders working with students with disabilities. |

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| **Provider and LEA/School Plan, Grant Activities, and Budget** | **Not Addressed or Met No Criteria** | **Met One Criterion** | **Met All Criteria** |
| 1. For each identified provider(s) for which you are requesting funding, address the following:  * Explain why each provider was selected; * Identify the goals the leader/LEA/CSI/school hope to accomplish through involvement in STLD; and * Explain how the chosen program directly addresses the needs of the leader/LEA/CSI. | 0 | 5 | 10 |
| 1. Describe:  * What support will the LEA provide to ensure that selected candidates are able to implement strategies from the chosen program? * How does this provider's services and training align with other efforts in the district? | 0 | 5 | 10 |

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| 1. For each provider program identified, describe the steps you will take to ensure participants understand the program requirements and ensure timely completion of the programs’ application. **(**[See School Turnaround Leaders Development program description](http://www.cde.state.co.us/fedprograms/districtwide-turnaroundleaders)**)**. | 0 | 5 | | 10 |
| 1. For each provider program identified, describe how you will monitor the progress of each participant on an ongoing basis. **(**[See School Turnaround Leaders Development program description](http://www.cde.state.co.us/fedprograms/districtwide-turnaroundleaders)**)** | 0 | 5 | | 10 |
| 1. Using the “Add Grant Activities” button below, create a work plan and budget request. For each grant activity in the work plan:  * Provide a school-level location contact, a description of each activity, start/end dates, and person(s) responsible for the activity. * Input the amount requested, the associated program and object codes, and fiscal year. * Please note that we are typically not able to fund extra duty pay for participants during the time they are spending in the selected leadership development program. * Ensure that activities are aligned with the allowable use of funds listed in the Information Sheet. * Ensure that costs are clearly tied to the grant activities and are calculated with detail in the “description of activity” field.   **Note:** Turnaround Leaders Development Programs all have various timelines. Grant funds will be awarded in February 2024 and expenditures may occur beyond June 2024 in accordance with the selected provider programs' duration. Funds provided each year will be contingent on project implementation and adequate use of funds from previous years. | 0 | 5 | | 10 |
| **Total** | | | **/50** | |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Program Evaluation** | **Not Included/ More Information Needed** | **Included** |
| 1. **Identify the individual(s) and their contact information in the district and school(s) who will be responsible for submitting required evaluation data found in the**[Information Sheet (PDF)](http://www.cde.state.co.us/fedprograms/districtwide-turnaroundleaders)**. Please provide their name, title, and contact information.** |  |  |

### School Transformation Network

Schools selecting **School Transformation Network** are asked to respond to the sections below. This opportunity is a competitive process - applicants must score at least 30 points out of the 50 possible points on the School Needs Assessment to be approved for funding. Applications that score below 30 points may be asked to submit revisions that would bring the application up to an approvable level.

**Instructions:** Complete each of the questions below for all schools participating in the School Transformation Network. If the LEA is requesting that multiple schools participate in the Network, include a separate response for each school within the textboxes for the questions below.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **School Needs Assessment** | **Not Addressed or Met No Criteria** | **Met One Criterion** | | **Met All Criteria** |
| 1. Provide a detailed explanation of why you are interested in joining the School Transformation Network. Address why you believe the School Transformation Network will be a good match for your school and your students. Describe your vision for the school in the next three years and the outcomes you would like to achieve. **This information must be provided by the school leader for the 2024-25 school year.** | 0 | 5 | | 10 |
| 1. Describe your schools’ current strengths in relation to each of the [Four Domains for Rapid](https://www.cde.state.co.us/accountability/fourdomainsdiagnosticrubric) [School Improvement:](https://www.cde.state.co.us/accountability/fourdomainsdiagnosticrubric) school culture; instruction; leadership; and talent development. **This information must be provided by the school leader for the 2024-25 school year.** | 0 | 5 | | 10 |
| 1. Describe the most urgent needs at your school. Explain why you selected these areas as crucial to school success. **This information must be provided by the school leader for the 2024-25 school year.** | 0 | 5 | | 10 |
| 1. Describe how the district currently supports the school. Indicate who will be your district “partner” (e.g., principal supervisor) and why and how the person was selected. **This information must be provided by the district partner.** | 0 | 5 | | 10 |
| 1. Successful participation in the Network includes the school leader and the district partner (principal supervisor) attending and implementing professional learning; tracking, monitoring, and reflecting on major improvement strategies and goals through monthly performance management sessions with CDE; and regular coaching of teachers. In what ways will these activities support your current leadership strengths and what challenges do you anticipate? **This information must be provided by the school leader and the district partner.** | 0 | 5 | | 10 |
| **Total:** | | | **/50** | |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Workplan and Budget Request** | **Not Addressed or Met No Criteria** | **Met One Criterion** | | **Met All Criteria** |
| 1. Using the “Add Grant Activities” button below, create a work plan and budget request. For each grant activity in the work plan:  * Provide a school-level location contact, a description of each activity, start/end dates, and person(s) responsible for the activity. * Input the amount requested, the associated program and object codes, and fiscal year. Input the salary position and FTE amount, if applicable. * Ensure that activities are aligned with the allowable use of funds listed in the Information Sheet (PDF). * Ensure that costs are clearly tied to the grant activities and are calculated with detail in the “description of activity” field.   **Note:** Provide a budget for 2023-24 (remaining), 2024-25, and 2025-26 (2 ½ years of total funding). Funds provided each year will be contingent on project implementation and adequate use of funds from previous years. | 0 | 5 | | 10 |
| **Total:** | | | **/10** | |

***Rigorous Action through Redesign***

Schools selecting Rigorous Action through Designare asked to respond to the sections below. This opportunity is a competitive process. Applicants must score at least 30 points out of the 50 possible points on School Needs Assessment to be approved for funding. Applications that score below 30 points may be asked to submit revisions to bring the application up to an approvable level.

**Instructions:** Complete each of the questions below for all schools participating in the Rigorous Action through Redesign. If the LEA is requesting that multiple schools participate, include a separate response for each school within the textboxes for the questions below.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **School Needs Assessment** | **Not Addressed or Met No Criteria** | **Met One Criterion** | | **Met All Criteria** |
| 1. Why is this moment right for the school, system, and community to engage in this redesign opportunity? | 0 | - | | 5 |
| 1. What does redesign mean to the school and how is it described? How will the fundamental mission, vision, and/or values of the school either change or be reinforced through this redesign work? | 0 | 5 | | 10 |
| 1. What will success look like in school as a result of the redesign work? 2. What systems and structures would be reformed and how? 3. What specific student outcomes would improve? | 0 | 5 | | 10 |
| 1. Who will comprise the working redesign team? What position does each person hold, how are their roles situated within the broader organization, and what is their influence over key changes? Note: At a minimum, a redesign team must include a district point of contact/partner and school leader(s). | 0 | - | | 5 |
| 1. What structures are in place, or may need to be created, for the working redesign team members to regularly collaborate, lead change efforts, and include other partners/stakeholders? Include a description of the following:    1. Describe the approach to managing ongoing school operations and efforts while providing space for longer term redesign efforts.    2. Describe how the LEA will support flexibility and innovation needed to implement redesign.    3. Identify key stakeholder groups who will be involved in redesign efforts and their respective role in the process. | 0 | 5 | | 10 |
| 1. Who is the proposed external partner for the redesign process? How did the school select this external partner? Describe the selection based on the following criteria:    1. Successful track record of engaging in school design across multiple settings with demonstrated outcomes in similar schools    2. Proven process and protocols for facilitating multi-year school design    3. Demonstrated experience/expertise in elements school design for schools serving similar student populations and grade levels    4. Demonstrated experience facilitating stakeholder engagement and design teams in driving and informing school design | 0 | 5 | | 10 |
| **Total:** | | | **/50** | |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Workplan and Budget Request** | **Not Addressed or Met No Criteria** | **Met One Criterion** | | **Met All Criteria** |
| Using the "Add Grant Activities" button below, create a work plan and budget request. For each grant activity in the work plan:   * Provide a school-level location contact, a description of each activity, start/end dates, and person(s) responsible for the activity. * Input the amount requested, the associated program and object codes, and fiscal year. Input the salary position and FTE amount, if applicable. * Ensure that activities are aligned with the allowable use of funds listed in the Information Sheet. * Ensure that costs are clearly tied to the grant activities and are calculated with detail in the "description of activity" field.   Note: Provide a budget for 2023-24 (remaining), 2024-25, and 2025-26. Funds provided each year will be contingent on project implementation and adequate use of funds from previous years. | 0 | 5 | | 10 |
| **Total:** | | | **/10** | |

## Other Services Selection Criteria and Evaluation Rubric

### Facilitated Board Training for School Improvement Program

**Instructions:** Complete each of the questions below for the LEA participating in the Facilitated Board Training for School Improvement. Applicants must score at least 30 points out of the 50 possible points to be approved for funding. Applications that score below 30 points may be asked to submit revisions that would bring the application up to an approvable level.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Readiness** | **Not Addressed or Met No Criteria** | **Met One Criterion** | | **Met All Criteria** |
| 1. Provide context for the district's motivation for participating in the board support. Include, at a minimum:  * Describe why the district and local board has elected to participate in the program. * Describe current local board strengths. * Briefly describe the governance experience of the current board members including number of terms (including end dates) and years served on the school board. * Describe what the superintendent and local board are hoping to obtain from participating and how it will help the district meet their performance goals. * Describe the process used (or will be used) to select the facilitator external to the district. If the facilitator has been identified, provide details on the expertise and background knowledge of the facilitator(s) to effectively complete the expected work (e.g., experience in Colorado education context, expertise in working with local boards, etc.). | 0 | 5 | | 10 |
| 1. Describe the most urgent needs of your local board regarding the facilitation of improved student outcomes. Explain why you selected these areas as being crucial to the district’s success. | 0 | 5 | | 10 |
| **Total:** | | | **/20** | |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Commitment** | **Not Addressed or Met No Criteria** | **Met One Criterion** | | **Met All Criteria** |
| 1. Describe any anticipated challenges or barriers that might prohibit full participation and commitment in the support. Describe the plan for overcoming any such challenges or barriers, including any steps CDE can take to support or accommodate the plan. | 0 | 5 | | 10 |
| 1. As a requirement of participation, all board members and the superintendent must express agreement to participate in all phases of the training. Please describe how confirmation was obtained and verify that agreement to participate was reached. | 0 | 5 | | 10 |
| **Total:** | | | **/20** | |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Workplan and Budget Request** | **Not Addressed or Met No Criteria** | **Met One Criterion** | | **Met All Criteria** |
| 1. Using the “Add Grant Activities” button below, create a work plan and budget request. For each grant activity in the work plan:  * Provide a school-level location contact, a description of each activity, start/end dates, and person(s) responsible for the activity. * Input the amount requested, the associated program and object codes, and fiscal year. Input the salary position and FTE amount, if applicable. * Ensure that activities are aligned with the allowable use of funds listed in the Information Sheet. * Ensure that costs are clearly tied to the grant activities and are calculated with detail in the “description of activity” field.   **Note: Provide a budget for 2023-24 (remaining) and 2024-25 school year. Funds provided each year will be contingent on project implementation and adequate use of funds from previous years.** | 0 | 5 | | 10 |
| **Total:** | | | **/10** | |

## Attachment A: EASI Eligibility

### EASI 2023 Prioritization

Available grant funding will be distributed to LEAs that meet the criteria within their chosen route(s). All applications will be reviewed and scored based on the rubrics included for each support. In the event the amount requested exceeds the amount available, applications that receive a fundable number of points will be prioritized. Each school will receive a point value based on a group of indicators (e.g., school improvement status, duration of status, currently receiving funds) that were ranked to ensure that schools most in need receive improvement funds.

Schools eligible for Accountability Pathways funding will be considered first in the allocation of state funds. Other than Accountability Pathways, school-level requests that are fundable will be awarded through state or federal funds according to the school’s priority and identification type(s). Also note, if CDE is unable to fund a complete priority point level, schools within that level will be prioritized by those furthest along in the improvement cycle and/or have never received funding. The following table outlines the priority criteria and point values that were utilized for the 2023-2024 EASI grant competition:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **If the school has a Federal AND a State identification, the school receives the point value for whichever identification has higher points (State or Federal), then receives 1 bonus point as per the information below.** | |
| **Criteria** | **Prioritization Points** |
| **Federal (ESSA) School Identifications** | |
| Comprehensive Support (CS) Lowest 5% or Low Graduation Year 4+ | 8 |
| Comprehensive Support (CS) Lowest 5% | 6 |
| Comprehensive Support (CS) Low Graduation | 6 |
| Comprehensive Support (CS) - Persistently ATS (more than 3 years ATS for same student group) | 6 |
| Additional Targeted Support & Improvement (ATS) | 5 |
| Comprehensive Support (CS) Lowest 5% - on Watch | 4 |
| Comprehensive Support (CS) Low Graduation - on Watch | 4 |
| Targeted Support & Improvement (TS) | 3 |
| Targeted Support & Improvement or Additional Targeted Support & Improvement - Not Exited by District | 2 |
| Any Federal identification – identified for Participation Only | 1 |
| **State (Accountability Clock/Performance Watch) School Identifications** | |
| Year 4+ of Priority Improvement or Turnaround | 8 |
| Year 4+ on Watch (Performance/Improvement Year 4+) | 6 |
| Year 3 of Priority Improvement or Turnaround | 6 |
| Year 2 of Priority Improvement or Turnaround | 5 |
| Year 1 of Priority Improvement or Turnaround | 4 |
| Year 2 -3 On Watch (Performance/Improvement Year 2 or 3) | 3 |
| Insufficient state data on HOLD (Prior to ISD was Years 1+ on Performance Watch) | 3 |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Bonus Points** | |
| School has not been awarded an EASI grant | 1 |
| School has both a Federal identification AND a State identification of Turnaround or Priority Improvement (exception: LEAs that did not exit ATS or TS schools) | 1 |
| High schools and other schools that serve a grade 12 | 1 |

Notes:

* In the event that CDE receives more grant requests than available funding, CDE may take into consideration: a) The status of current and previous EASI grant awards, unspent funds, and fulfillment of prior EASI/program requirements; and b) State school identifications of Priority Improvement or Turnaround as a result of decreased due to participation.
* The list of eligible schools and awarded prioritization points may change following updates to state and federal identifications that occur through December. Updates that may change prioritization points for a school may include ESSA identification of K-2 schools and successful Request to Reconsider applications that change the state school identifications.

***District Prioritization***

There are several EASI routes that are awarded at the district, rather than the school level for example District Designed and Led and Exploration Services-District Strategic Planning. Similar to the school level, districts eligible for Accountability Pathways funding will be considered first in the allocation of state funds. Other than Accountability Pathways, when evaluating district-level requests that are fundable, CDE will consider the prioritization scores of the schools that will be served by the supports, and/or the concentration of identified schools in the district. Any LEA that has more than three (3) or 10% of their schools identified under ESSA will be prioritized for district level grants.

**Eligible Schools and Prioritization Points**

A sortable Excel version of all Eligible Schools and Prioritization Points can be found on the [EASI website under Resources and Technical Assistance](https://www.cde.state.co.us/fedprograms/easiappresourcesandtechnicalassistance). Please note that the list of schools and prioritization points may change following updates related to state and federal identifications (i.e. ESSA identification of K-2 schools and CDE’s Request to Reconsider process for state school and district identifications). Updates the eligibility and prioritization points for schools are updated as information becomes available on the website.

## Attachment B: COMTSS Team Membership Form

Participation requires the commitment of the district’s COMTSS District Implementation Team (C-DIT). Requirements for representation on the C-DIT include: (1) A point of contact (must be a member of cabinet-level administration), (2) general education representation, (3) special education representation, (4) early childhood representation, (5) family/community representation, and (6) representation from the other initiatives overseen by the BOCES/district. Suggested representation includes: Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent, Curriculum Director, Assessment/Accountability Director, Special Education Director, Culture and Equity Director, Professional Development Director, Title I Director, Student Services Director, Parent Representative Co-Chair of District Accountability Committee, BOCES Director, school-level leadership, and district-level coaches. The purpose of the C-DIT is to support local Building Leadership Teams (BLTs) through professional development, technical assistance, alignment, curriculum, funding, visibility, and political support.

Responsibilities/Functions of this C-DIT include:

* Meet at least monthly with an Implementation Consultant (IC) and other COMTSS Staff, and complete tasks throughout the month;
* Complete assessments and action planning that best support local schools;
* Facilitate professional development and technical assistance for local schools related to COMTSS implementation; and
* Attend trainings provided by COMTSS Staff.

**Provide the names, titles, and signatures of those who will serve on your C-DIT:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Point of Contact  [Cabinet Level Administration] |  | Title/Role |  | Signature |  | Date |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| General Education Representative |  | Title/Role |  | Signature |  | Date |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Special Education Representative |  | Title/Role |  | Signature |  | Date |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Early Childhood Representative |  | Title/Role |  | Signature |  | Date |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Family/Community Representative |  | Title/Role |  | Signature |  | Date |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Title/Role |  | Signature |  | Date |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Title/Role |  | Signature |  | Date |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Title/Role |  | Signature |  | Date |

## Attachment C: Approval and Transmittal Form

**Approval and Transmittal Form for FY 2023-2024 Empowering Action for School Improvement Program Funds**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| On | [date] | , 2023, the board of | [applicant] | , |

reviewed the contents of the FY 2023-2024 Empowering Action for School Improvement (EASI) application and has indicated their approval for submission to the Colorado Department of Education through their signatures below.

In consideration of the receipt of these grant funds, the local education agency (LEA) agrees to comply with all assurances and provisions included in the EASI General Assurances and Program Assurances section of the application and Grant Award Letter (GAL).

The Board also certifies that the LEA will meet all program and pertinent administrative requirements, including the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR), 2 CFR Part 200 (Uniform Grants Guidance) Accounting Circulars, and the U.S. Department of Education’s General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) requirements. In addition, the Board certifies that:

* The LEA is in compliance with the requirements of the federal Children's Internet Protection Act, and
* No policy of the LEA prevents, or otherwise denies, participation in constitutionally protected prayer in public elementary and secondary schools.

Further, the Board certifies that it understands all the rules and regulations associated with the receipt of EASI program funds, including those not specifically enumerated above, and will take action to ensure the complies with all such requirements.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Board President |  | Signature |  | Date |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| LEA Authorized Representative |  | Signature |  | Date |

1. Horner, R., Blitz, C., Ross, S. (June 2014) *Investing in what works issue brief: The role of contextual fit when implementing evidence- based interventions*. Washington, D.C.: American Institutes of Research. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)