

OFFERED SERVICES

Facilitated Board Training for School Improvement



COLORADO
Department of Education

EASI Route: Offered Services

Introduction

School boards play an integral role in ensuring student achievement within a school district. However, local board members may not always feel they have a well-defined role in how to successfully engage and support low performing schools. Similarly, board members are expected to drive academic change but often do not receive formal training on how to best accomplish this work. Per HB 18-1355, the Colorado Department of Education is expected to offer local board training to support the academic outcomes of local education agencies.

For More Information, Contact:

Dan Jorgensen, PhD
Accountability Support Manager
School Improvement and Planning
(720) 245-4532
Jorgensen_D@cde.state.co.us

The facilitated board training for school improvement offered service was created through a partnership between the Colorado Association of School Boards (CASB), the Colorado Association of School Executives (CASE), and the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). The offered service combines effective governance practices along with best practices associated with school turnaround work. The core of the training is based on the Center on School Turnaround's modules for School Boards Driving Turnaround, with customizations made for Colorado's context. For more information, visit: <https://csti.wested.org/resource/school-boards-driving-turnaround/>.

The primary objectives of the program include: 1) increased understanding of effective governance practices and board member roles and responsibilities, 2) increased board member understanding and support of district improvement efforts, and 3) a developed action plan for improving academic outcomes. The theory of action is that participation in the training will lead to improved student academic performance over time as measured by Colorado's educational accountability system.

The offered service is designed to take place over the course of a year. This time frame may be adjusted depending on the specific needs of the participating board and superintendent. The service is built upon a variety of professional development opportunities, including a self-assessment, the exploration of case studies, independent readings, group activities, and development of an action plan to lead change across the district and/or differentiated for specific schools. Training related to effective governance and board member responsibilities is also offered.

Overall, the program relies on individual work outside of board meetings including reading and reflection. Facilitated discussion will occur once a month for approximately thirty minutes during the program, this may be done during board meetings. The total estimated time to participate would be about twelve hours throughout the year. For those boards that receive additional governance training, it is anticipated that an additional two to six hours of focused training will occur during the early phase of participation. These additional trainings can take place during scheduled board work sessions and/or be scheduled during other times.

Eligible Applicants and Prioritization

Eligibility. Local boards of LEAs that have (a) at least one school identified through state accountability measures as Priority Improvement, Turnaround, or On Watch and (b) are interested in strengthening governing practices for stronger school improvement. Eligible applicants must agree to the following:

- 1) All board members and the superintendent agree to actively participate in the training and technical assistance to program completion, and
- 2) All board members and the superintendent agree to participate in all related evaluative activities including surveys, focus groups and/or interviews to contribute to program improvement.

Prioritization. In the event that not all EASI proposals can be funded, proposals that meet grant expectations will be funded in the order of the EASI school-level prioritization list. Schools with the highest number of prioritization points will be funded first.

Available Funds

Boards of Education may apply for up to \$10,000 for participation to use during the duration of the program

Allowable Use of Funds

Awarded funds may be used for resources and activities related to participation in the training, including: training facilitator fees, curricula (e.g., materials, books, resources related to strengthening board practices), implementation tools, outcome measurement, time for collaboration, and other approved planned activities. It is anticipated that the largest expense will be related to the payment of the facilitator's time and support. Prior to acceptance into the service, LEAs must provide an annual budget.

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.

Important Program Dates

September- December	Meet with CDE Staff to discuss application and next steps
December	Application due
January	Award notifications
February 2024 - May 2025 (anticipated)	Kick-off event (CDE Staff, CASB, and Facilitator introduction to Local Board)
	Self-assessment of Board Performance
	Multi-phase program participation (multiple meetings)
	Follow-up self-assessment with supplemental technical assistance as needed.

Evaluation and Reporting

Because successful outcomes of the offered training depend on the use of data to inform practices, participating boards will be expected to use data during program participation. Additionally, data collection and submission to CDE will be expected to support future program improvement.

Each education provider that participated in the local board facilitated board training program is required to report, at a minimum, the following information to CDE:

- Local Board Facilitated Training Assessment Tool results (at beginning and end of participation of program phase one),

- Other evaluative survey results, and
- An Annual Financial Report (AFR).

In addition, all board members will participate in a CDE facilitated focus group that will last for approximately sixty minutes. The focus group will involve discussion of the perceived benefits and limitations of the program along with how state supports might be improved within future board of education training opportunities. The district Superintendent will participate in a semi-structured individual interview following program completion to obtain their perspective concerning the impact of the training program. All collected data will be aggregated and personally identifiable information (PII) will be protected.

Program Assurances

LEA Commitments:

LEAs will agree to the following assurances by signature of the Superintendent and each participating board director. The assurances include:

- 1) The grantee will work with the Colorado Department of Education to provide the requested data within the specified time frames. This will include board participation in the pre and post Local Board Facilitated Training Assessment Tool along with exit surveys for each phase of training. In addition, all board members agree to participate in a sixty-minute focus group following program completion. The superintendent agrees to participate (following program completion) in a one-hour interview concerning the perceived impact of the program on their board members.
- 2) The grantee will not discriminate against anyone regarding race, gender, national origin, color, disability, or age.
- 3) Funds will be used to supplement and not supplant any funds currently being used to provide Board of Education training services related to improvement work and grant dollars will be administered by the appropriate fiscal agent.
- 4) Funded projects will maintain appropriate fiscal and program records and that fiscal audits of this program will be conducted by the grantees as a part of their regular audits.
- 5) If any findings of misuse of these funds are discovered, project funds will be returned to CDE.
- 6) The grantee will maintain sole responsibility for the project even though subcontractors may be used to perform certain services.
- 7) Agreement that any external facilitator selected by the grantee will participate in the program as designed, this includes monthly participation in facilitator meetings with program staff (during each phase of the program) to improve program outcomes by ensuring fidelity of program implementation. All facilitators must be approved by CDE prior to the award of any agreement for services between the grantee and prospective facilitator.

The Colorado Department of Education may terminate a grant award upon thirty days' notice if it is deemed by CDE that the applicant is not fulfilling the requirements of the funded program as specified in the approved project application, or if the program is generating less than satisfactory results.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Colorado Department of Education's EASI Website
www.cde.state.co.us/fedprograms/easiapplication