

# OFFERED SERVICES

## Colorado Multi-Tiered System of Supports



**COLORADO**  
Department of Education

### EASI Route: Offered Services

#### Introduction

Colorado **M**ulti-**T**iered **S**ystem of **S**upports (COMTSS) is a prevention-based framework using team-driven leadership and data-based problem solving to improve the outcomes of every student through family, school, and community partnerships, comprehensive assessment, and a layered continuum of supports. Implementation science and universal design for learning are employed to create one integrated system that focuses on increasing academic and behavioral outcomes to equitably support the varying needs of all students.

Our mission is to use systems level thinking to equip staff, teachers, and families to ensure that all students are afforded the opportunity to obtain an equitable education to succeed academically, socially, emotionally, and behaviorally over their lifespan.

COMTSS sees our partnerships with districts as an integral collaboration to achieve five major goals: 1) increase state leadership capacity for COMTSS infrastructure; 2) increase regional and district COMTSS capacity and sustainability; 3) increase preschool-12, school level capacity for COMTSS through the implementation of evidence-based practices, data-based problem solving, and short-cycle action planning; 4) support improved teacher effectiveness in the classroom; and 5) increase partnering with families, schools, and the community.

COMTSS includes five Essential Components that create a more efficient and effective system of supports that benefit the outcomes of all students including those in low performing schools:

1. **Team-Driven Shared Leadership:** Teaming processes and structures that focus on distributing responsibility and shared decision-making across and within regions, districts, and schools to effectively design and use systems of training, coaching, resources, implementation, and evaluation.
2. **Data-Based Problem Solving and Decision-Making:** A continuous improvement process used by teams to collect, analyze, and evaluate information to inform decision making at the system and student levels.
3. **Family, School, and Community Partnerships:** Families, early-childhood programs, schools, and communities actively partnering to develop, implement, and evaluate effective and equitable practices to improve educational outcomes for children and youth.
4. **Comprehensive Screening and Assessment System:** A Comprehensive Screening and Assessment System is the coordinated effort of gathering information across multiple measures to support decision making at the system and student level for the whole child.
5. **Layered Continuum of Supports (LCS) (Evidence Based Practices, Instruction, and Interventions):** Ensuring that every student receives equitable whole child supports that are evidenced based, culturally responsive, matched to need, and developmentally appropriate through layered supports.

#### Eligible Applicants and Prioritization

**Eligibility.** Eligible applicants are school districts that meet the following criteria:

1. Identified for support and improvement under Every Student Succeeds Act (i.e., Comprehensive, Targeted, Additional Targeted); OR
2. Have a Priority Improvement or Turnaround plan type on the most recent School Performance Framework

#### For More Information, Contact:

**Kristen Brown, PhD**  
Director, Office of Learning Supports  
(303) 910-5573  
[Brown\\_Kristen@cde.state.co.us](mailto:Brown_Kristen@cde.state.co.us)



**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.

## District Support

Technical Assistance from COMTSS staff will include the following:

- COMTSS district and school trainings
- Monthly meetings to support action planning and implementation of COMTSS;
- Identification of clear goals and outcomes focused on student outcomes;
- Development of action plans that align with other initiatives and result in high quality, sustained implementation; and
- Creation of evidence-based personnel development and technical assistance activities for local schools.

## District Support

Technical Assistance from Office of Learning Supports COMTSS Specialists will include the following:

- COMTSS district and school trainings
- Monthly meetings to support action planning and implementation of COMTSS;
- Identification of clear goals focused on student outcomes;
- Development of action plans that align with other initiatives and result in high quality, sustained implementation; and
- Creation of evidence-based personnel development and technical assistance activities for local schools.

## Available Funds

Funds are available to districts for supporting COMTSS implementation for 2 ½ years. The award for Year 1 is up to \$20,000 and Years 2 and 3 up to \$80,000 per year. For new districts in the project, during Year 1 funds may be used for initiating exploration activities or meeting with COMTSS staff.

## Allowable Use of Funds

Funding from this opportunity is limited to FTE for a COMTSS implementation coach and costs associated with COMTSS implementation. A C-DIT may use funds for activities related to professional development, including training fees, curricula, implementation tools, outcome measurement, time for collaboration, staff stipends, substitute pay to create time for job embedded learning opportunities, or other planned activities.

Prior to acceptance into the project, districts must provide a budget for 2 ½ years of total funding delineating allocations by year. Funds provided each year will be contingent on project implementation and adequate use of funds from previous years.

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

<b>September– December</b>	Meet with COMTSS Staff to discuss application and next steps
<b>January</b>	Award notifications
<b>February</b>	COMTSS district kick-off event and ongoing district and school trainings and coaching to build effective COMTSS systems in district and schools

## Evaluation and Reporting

Because successful implementation of COMTSS depends on the use of data to inform decisions, participating C-DITs will be expected to use data throughout their implementation efforts. Additionally, data collection and submission to CDE will be expected. The data from participating C-DITs and schools includes facilitated submission of relevant aggregated academic, behavioral, and implementation fidelity data will be a function of program participation. The C-DIT and COMTSS staff will mutually decide upon, record, and monitor data throughout the project. This may be collected in the form of student outcome data, fidelity data, questionnaires, self-assessments, and participant reflections.

Each C-DIT will complete and submit the following to CDE each year of the project:

- Capacity building tools:
  - District Capacity Assessment;
  - School Fidelity Assessment;
  - Professional Development Plan;
- End of Grant Year Report; and
- Annual Financial Report.

## Program Assurances

### School Leadership Commitments:

Participating schools will implement a COMTSS School Implementation Team (C-SIT). Each C-SIT will:

- Provide CDE with evaluation information;
- Attend online and face-to-face state-sponsored professional development opportunities;
- Budget sufficient funds and time to participate in required activities; and
- Exercise leveraging of Title I, IDEA, and other funding sources.

### District Leadership Commitments:

Districts will designate a C-DIT to work with and coordinate with COMTSS staff regarding technical assistance for implementation efforts. The C-DIT will:

- Include at least one designated executive district leader, who will attend at least 75% of monthly meetings;
- Include a C-DIT lead and point of contact for communications with CDE and meeting facilitation;
- Attend CDE sponsored district COMTSS trainings;
- Attend regional meetings with the COMTSS staff to complete various activities, including infrastructure evaluation, implementation plan development, initiative inventory completion, professional development planning, and ongoing monitoring of school-level implementation;
- Ensure that district and building leadership possess the qualifications and have committed the time necessary to accomplish activities to lead to student achievement gains;
- Conduct action planning-related professional development and technical assistance with participating COMTSS School Implementation Team (C-SIT) with the support of COMTSS staff;
- Foster principal leadership in schools and support leadership growth opportunities;
- Ensure that funds are being leveraged with other local, state, and federal funds (e.g., Titles I, II, III, V and IDEA) and that accountability for cost-effective management is provided; and
- Provide student, school, and district related data to CDE within the time frames specified.