

**Community Engagement Initiative
Request for Applications
Cohort III**

Community Engagement Initiative (CEI) - REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

Introduction

The California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE), the San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools (SBCSS), the California Association for Bilingual Education (CABE), and Families In Schools (FIS) invite any interested school district in California to submit an application to be a part of the Community Engagement Initiative's Cohort III **Peer Leading and Learning Network (PLLN)**.

This Network (Cohort III) will expand on the learning initiated by:

Cohort I Districts

- Anaheim Union High School District
- Azusa Unified School District
- Cajon Valley Union School District
- East Side Union High School District
- Ontario-Montclair School District
- Oxnard School District

Cohort II Districts

- Bakersfield City School District
- Chino Valley Unified School District
- Moreno Valley Unified School District
- Oakland Unified School District
- Pajaro Valley Unified School District
- Parlier Unified School District
- Riverside Unified School District
- Salinas Union High School District
- Santa Ana Unified School District
- Upper Lake Unified School District
- Val Verde Unified School District
- Victor Valley Union High School District

and, in partnership, engage with the Community Engagement Initiative's efforts to build statewide capacity for authentic community engagement, with a focus on improving outcomes for all students, particularly English Learners, low-income students, Foster Youth, and students from other underserved student groups.

Who Should Apply

The Community Engagement Initiative is looking for a full range of school districts (districts looking to develop quality engagement programs, and districts with established systems and processes) to:

- 1) Expand the resources around best practices for improving community engagement identified across various communities around the state.
- 2) Commit to self reflection and growth to support transforming current practices within/across their district.
- 3) Assist the continued development of building capacity within local educational agencies and local communities for conducting meaningful and sustainable engagement.

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Background

In 2013, the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) fundamentally changed how the State provides resources to school districts and holds them accountable for improving student performance. The Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP), an integral component of the LCFF, provides a way for districts to continuously improve by describing their goals, actions, and services for all students, particularly English Learners, low-income students, Foster Youth, and students from other underserved student groups. In 2017, the California School Dashboard was launched to help districts identify strengths and challenges to inform their LCAPs.

The California Statewide System of Support (SOS), which is rooted in identifying and eliminating inequities, has been established to build local capacity to ensure that districts are equipped to develop, implement, and evaluate strategies to ensure that each student has the resources needed to succeed. The SOS includes the CCEE, the California Department of Education (CDE), county offices of education, and many other entities that serve as “Leads” in particular areas. The Legislature created the Community Engagement Initiative in 2018, pursuant to Section 140 of Assembly Bill 1808, to take the lead with respect to Community Engagement.

The Community Engagement Initiative (CEI)

The CEI is a five-year (currently in year three) effort intended to strengthen the California State System of Support by building the capacity of school districts and communities to authentically engage each other in:

- Identifying effective models of Community Engagement
- Developing metrics to evaluate those models
- Having difficult conversations
- Building trusting relationships
- Participating in the LCAP development process

The California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE), the San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools (SBCSS), the California Association for Bilingual Education (CABE), and Families In Schools (FIS) jointly lead the Community Engagement Initiative (CEI). At the core of the CEI are Peer Leading and Learning Networks (PLLNs). The first phase included a single network, Cohort I, that brought together six geographically diverse District Teams that demonstrated success in Community Engagement. In the second phase, the CEI brought on twelve additional districts, forming

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the Cohort II networks, to expand on the Cohort I learnings and lessons for engagement practices in response to COVID-19. The Districts, along with the CCEE, SBCSS, CABE, and FIS compiled effective models of Community Engagement and have continued to work toward identifying metrics to evaluate models on their practices, lessons learned, and successes. These districts will support and facilitate the Cohort III Peer Leading and Learning Networks.

Benefits of Participating in the CEI PLLN

- Be a part of systemic change for Community Engagement in the California State System of Support.
- Learn of effective practices for Community Engagement from districts across the state.
- Engage in an open dialogue on issues related to improving local pupil outcomes,
- Partner with other communities and school districts in support of improving your Community Engagement practices, policies, systems, structures, and procedures.
- Receive an annual district stipend to be used in support of District Team members' participation in the Community Engagement Initiative (in addition to any travel cost incurred and reimbursed).

Commitments of District Teams

If selected, each District Team will commit to contribute to the statewide effort to build capacity for authentic Community Engagement through the Community Engagement Initiative (CEI) and will agree to the following:

- Participate in the Network for at least two years, with eight professional leading and learning convenings per year (consisting of a combination of virtual and in-person sessions).
 - Travel and overnight stay may be required (to be covered by the CEI).
 - Additional time for collaboration and coaching may be required between convenings.
- Replace any team member who leaves, within one month of that team member's departure, keeping within the requirements for participants set forth below, and to notify the CEI designee.
- Ability to provide space that is video-conference equipped at specified school/district site for Network convenings.

Each District Team in Cohort III should be comprised of the following members:

- **District:** a cabinet-level district administrator (e.g., Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent) who oversees Family & Community engagement for the district and (if different) a district staff member who leads Community Engagement implementation for the district
- **Specified school site:** the principal, assistant/vice principal, or dean who oversees Community Engagement at the school and (if different) another administrator or staff member who leads Family & Community Engagement implementation at the school, and instructional/support staff

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- **Student/Family:** high school students and family members of elementary, middle, and high school students enrolled in the participating school
- **County Office of Education:** an administrator or staff person who oversees or provides support for Community Engagement to school districts in the county
- **Community:** a representative of a community-based organization that works with the district or specified school

Consideration may be made for rural/remote/small districts that may face challenges in meeting the above delineated membership suggestions. In this instance we encourage teams to apply as consortium teams (where the various suggested roles are represented across member districts). Please contact Steven Sterling Mitchell to propose alternative participant structures.

Application Process

Any interested district will need to submit a Letter of Interest (as both a word document and a PDF) up to three pages in length, signed by the District Superintendent. The deadline to submit is 9:00 a.m. PST, **Tuesday, May 17, 2022** via email to Steven Sterling Mitchell, CCEE Assistant Director, Community Engagement and System of Support (smitchell@ccee-ca.org).

The Letter of Interest must include the following:

District Information:

- A description of the district, its community, and its student body
- Why the district is interested in participating in the Community Engagement Initiative
- How the district has previously engaged and/or hopes to improve engagement with:
 - community members in district-level decision making and/or families at the school level. (e.g., through the LCAP process)
- Examples of efforts that have been made and/or barriers to
 - build capacity to have difficult conversations with their school community and build trust, with a focus on improving outcomes for all students.
 - engage communities that have not historically been engaged.

School Information:

The Letter of Interest must identify a specified school site that would be represented on the District Team. (In the case of consortium teams, the district which will be the primary contact/focus of the initiative efforts)

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Point of contact:

The letter must include the name and contact information (phone and email) for the district employee to be contacted regarding the application.

Information Session and Frequently Asked Questions

Anyone interested is encouraged to contact Nicole LoBese, CCEE Program Specialist (nlobese@ccee-ca.org) with questions. If a significant number of questions are received on the same topic, one or more FAQs will be posted on this webpage (<https://ccee-ca.org/CommunityEngagement>). Thus, interested applicants are encouraged to check the website frequently to see if any such FAQs have been created and posted.

There will be a voluntary information session during the week of March 14, 2022. Details including time, date, and registration will be shared at <https://ccee-ca.org/CommunityEngagement>.

Request for Applications Timeline Summary

Activity	Action Date
Request for Applications Posted	On or before January 20, 2022
Information Session	Week of March 14, 2022
Applications Due	May 17, 2022 by 9:00 a.m. PST
Applicants Will Be Notified of Next Steps	May 29, 2022
Orientation	July 2022
First Meeting of the CEI:PLLN Cohort III	August 2022, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.