

California Department of Education

Executive Office

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# California State Board of Education January 2021 Agenda Item #06

## Subject

Comprehensive Literacy State Development Grant: State Literacy Plan Draft Review

## Type of Action

Action, Information

## Summary of the Issue(s)

On September 27, 2019, the California Department of Education (CDE) received a federal award in the amount of approximately $37.5 million for the Comprehensive Literacy State Development (CLSD) grant program. This agenda item provides a draft of the State Literacy Plan (SLP), a key CLSD grant deliverable, and requests feedback from the State Board of Education (SBE). The CDE will revise the SLP based upon SBE input and present an updated draft to the SBE in March 2021 with a recommendation to approve the SLP.

## Recommendation

The CDE recommends that the SBE review the draft SLP and provide feedback. The draft SLP is available on the CDE CLSD web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ps/clsd.asp>.

## Brief History of Key Issues

### Background

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 authorizes the CLSD grant program. California’s grant award will be used to leverage and expand existing statewide infrastructure, guidance, and expertise to bring coherence to the system of literacy supports to improve student outcomes over a period of five years. Additional background information, including an overview of grant objectives, is available on the CDE CLSD web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ps/clsd.asp>.

The full grant proposal, as submitted to the U.S. Department of Education, is available as an attachment to the July 2019 SBE Agenda Item. An updated grant timeline, revised due to the COVID-19 response, is included in the August 2020 SBE Information Memorandum. Both documents are available on the CDE’s CLSD SBE Agenda Items and Memos web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ps/clsdsbeitems.asp>.

### State Literacy Plan Purpose and Overview

The SLP was developed with the help of the State Literacy Team (SLT) and extensive stakeholder feedback, including a public comment period conducted by the Instructional Quality Commission (IQC) in September 2020. An overview of the public comment and SLP development process is included in a December 2020 SBE Information Memorandum, available on the SBE December 2020 Information Memoranda web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/pn/im/infomemodec2020.asp>.

The purpose of the SLP is to align and integrate state literacy initiatives, content standards, and state guidance documents to support teachers of students, birth through grade twelve. The SLP is not intended to create new policies or guidance. Nor will it include tools, resources, and templates; rather, all of these resources will be housed in an online literacy resources repository as they are identified and/or developed.

The SLP contains the following sections:

1. Introduction
2. Comprehensive and Integrated Literacy Model
3. SLP Continuous Improvement Process
4. Works Cited
5. Appendices A, B, and C

### Introduction

The Introduction explains the SLP’s purpose; intended audience; the logic model that illustrates the inputs and resources that will be leveraged, the outputs that will be monitored, and the outcomes the SLP seeks to achieve; and an overview of California student demographics.

### Comprehensive and Integrated Literacy Model

The Comprehensive and Integrated Literacy Model illustrates the idea that high-quality literacy instruction occurs within the context of inclusive and equitable systems of schooling featuring high levels of engagement, a focus on continuous improvement, and an application of the California Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) Framework. The *California Infant/Toddler Learning & Development Foundations,* the *California Preschool Learning Foundations,* and the *California English Language Arts/English Language Development Curriculum Framework* (*ELA/ELD Framework*) serve as the foundational documents for the SLP, but many other state-adopted documents are included in this model to support literacy instruction as well.

The intent of the Comprehensive and Integrated Literacy Model is to align and integrate all of California’s existing policies, guidance documents, and structures so that audiences can understand how to connect and best use these documents in a coherent way. There are four elements to this model:

1. Celebration of diversity and asset-based approach
2. Whole child
3. Well-prepared and supported teachers and leaders
4. Family and community engagement

Each element brings together state guidance documents and Local Control Funding Formula priorities. At the center of the model is best first instruction, or Tier 1 of the MTSS Framework. The SLP encourages educational networks within California, including the Statewide System of Support, to use this model to make connections between state guidance documents to meet the specific needs of local educational agencies (LEAs).

### Continuous Improvement Process

The next section of the SLP, the Continuous Improvement Process, is organized into five steps:

1. Set Direction and Purpose
2. Assess Local Needs and Determine Causal Factors
3. Plan for Improvement
4. Implement and Monitor Work
5. Reflect and Adjust Course

The intent of this section is to explain the continuous improvement process at the state level to demonstrate how the CDE and its grant partners (the California Subject Matter Project, California County Superintendents Educational Services Association, First Five, and the Region 15 Comprehensive Center at WestEd) assessed statewide literacy needs and developed plans to leverage the CLSD grant funds to address those needs. The SLP models the process for assessing local literacy needs and developing plans to address them. As such, each step provides examples for how LEAs can use this process for their own purposes. Tools, templates, and resources will be available in the online literacy resources repository to further support this section of the SLP.

The Plan for Improvement step includes the priorities that the SLT identified for each age and grade band. These priorities were determined after reviewing the statewide literacy needs assessment results and state assessment results, including the Desired Results Development Profile and the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) for grades three, five, eight, and eleven. Identified priorities for each age and grade span are:

Birth to Age Five

* Support early childhood education (ECE) programs to create literacy-rich environments and experiences and support the quality of ECE programs and their capacity to support early language and literacy skills.
* Increase parenting support by increasing parental knowledge, skills, and confidence through parenting curriculum and literacy activities with special attention to access and equity for all.

Transitional Kindergarten to Grade Five

* Build teacher capacity for Tier 1 foundational skills and reading comprehension, including best first reading and writing instruction.
* Build school capacity for effective literacy and English language instruction for English learners, including opportunities to develop biliteracy and primary language instruction whenever possible.
* Build school capacity to support students struggling with reading, including, but not limited to, students with disabilities and students with dyslexia.
* Increase sustainable high-quality professional learning systems, including literacy coaching models.

Grade Six to Grade Twelve

* Build teacher capacity across disciplines for literacy instruction.
* Increase asset-based teaching in schools, including culturally and linguistically responsive and sustaining pedagogies.
* Build school capacity for effective academic content and literacy instruction for English learners, including opportunities to develop biliteracy and primary language instruction whenever possible.
* Build school capacity for effective literacy instruction for students with disabilities.

Each age and grade span section includes citations from key state documents that may be leveraged to meet the identified priorities. Each section also includes sections that specifically address English learners and children with special needs, along with references to the documents that support these student populations. By making connections between state guidance and policy documents, the SLP intends to illustrate the importance of a comprehensive approach to literacy. For example:

* The birth through age five section emphasizes the importance of literacy-rich environments and experiences, and includes references to the *California Infant/Toddler Learning & Development Foundations,* the *California Infant/Toddler Curriculum Framework,* andthe *Infant/Toddler Learning and Development Program Guidelines*. It further makes a distinction between resources focused on preschoolers, making references to the *California Preschool Learning Foundations* and the *California Preschool Program Guidelines*. The SLP states that by understanding these documents for this priority, practitioners can “gain an understanding of what high-quality early literacy looks and sounds like,” which helps build a comprehensive approach to literacy instruction for California’s youngest children.
* The kindergarten through grade twelve sections make specific connections to the five themes of the *ELA/ELD Framework* (Meaning Making, Language Development, Effective Expression, Content Knowledge, and Foundational Skills), further illustrating the comprehensive approach to literacy within the SLP. For example, the kindergarten through grade five section stresses the importance of Tier 1 instruction by providing specific citations from the *ELA/ELD Framework*, covering phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, writing, and content knowledge. The grades six through twelve section emphasizes a comprehensive approach to literacy across disciplines.

The SLP also makes connections to California’s other content area frameworks and standards and provides specific references to chapters within the *History-Social Science Framework* and the *Science Framework* to show how literacy is reflected across disciplines, emphasizing a comprehensive approach to literacy school- and district-wide.

### Works Cited

Finally, the Works Cited section contains all references made throughout the document, and the appendices contain a glossary of frequently used terms and abbreviations, data tables, and CAASPP Trend and Cohort Results.

The draft SLP is available on the CDE CLSD web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ps/clsd.asp>.

### Stakeholder Input

The draft SLP has been critically informed by stakeholders and literacy experts throughout its development. The Comprehensive Statewide Literacy Needs Assessment results, as analyzed by literacy experts and educators, informed the first draft of the SLP. This first draft was presented to the State Literacy Team (SLT) in March 2020. The SLT reviewed the needs assessment and CAASPP results to identify literacy needs, helped to prioritize evidence-based strategies to meet those needs, and identified resources to be included in the SLP. A second draft of the SLP was presented to the SLT in August 2020. The SLT provided detailed feedback on the draft, which largely informed the current structure of the SLP.

The members of the SLT stressed the importance of comprehensive and integrated literacy programs, as promoted in the *ELA/ELD Framework* and the California Common Core State Standards for ELA/Literacy, where key themes of literacy instruction are interwoven purposefully across disciplines within high-functioning systems of curriculum, professional learning, and assessment. They elevated the importance of multilingualism and MTSS in the SLP and helped make the SLP more practical by calling for more guidance on data analysis and connections to the Local Control Funding Formula priorities and the California School Dashboard. Most importantly, they maintained a focus on California’s most vulnerable children and made sure the SLP includes provisions to support positive literacy outcomes for students of color, students with disabilities, and students who are English learners.

Based on the feedback and suggestions obtained during the development process outlined above, the CDE revised the SLP and presented it to the IQC in September 2020 with a request to post the draft for public comment. The online input survey was promoted through stakeholder updates, listserv communications, and social media. Additional feedback was solicited from CDE directors, stakeholder organizations, and CLSD grant partners. The CDE also provided presentations to the Bilingual Coordinators Network, State and Federal Program Directors, and the Advisory Commission on Special Education to share the draft SLP and request additional stakeholder input.

Through the public comment process, the CDE received 347 distinct comments, including comments from 62 individuals and 12 stakeholder organizations representing students with disabilities, English learners, multilingual learners, teachers, parents, and librarians. For a complete list of comments and proposed actions, see Agenda Item 3 on the IQC web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/cc/cd/sept2020iqcagenda.asp>.

As approved by the IQC, the CDE made multiple revisions to the SLP based on public comment, including but not limited to: incorporating the California Model School Library Standards and guidance, adding additional existing guidance on biliteracy and primary language development, designating the *Dyslexia Guidelines* and the *Practitioner’s Guide for Educating English Learners with Disabilities* as primary resources, adding a Glossary of Terms, and including the *Common Core en Español* and the *Spanish Language Development Standards* to the description of primary resources. The CDE also added language to emphasize the importance of collaboration between early childhood education and kindergarten through grade twelve programs and added the newly released CDE publication Improving Education for Multilingual and English Learner Students: Research to Practice to the draft. For a complete list of revisions made to the SLP based on public comment, please see Attachment A: Public Comment Responses for the Draft Comprehensive State Literacy Plan available at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/cc/cd/documents/elaelditem3atta.docx>.

Many stakeholders expressed concern that the SLP does not include new literacy guidance or policies. However, as described in California’s CLSD grant application, the SLP is designed to align and integrate the state’s literacy initiatives, standards, and guidance documents. It is not intended to develop new guidance. California adopts and implements guidance and policies related to literacy through other robust processes, often prescribed in statute. These high-quality guidance documents and policies set the foundation for the SLP and the SLP provides an opportunity to implement them in a coherent way.

Another concern of stakeholders was that a focus on statewide literacy priorities would conflict with the comprehensive literacy approach, because taken alone a given priority might elevate an aspect of literacy or a particular student group when all aspects and students are covered in the SLP. To address this concern, the Comprehensive and Integrated Literacy Model sets the direction for literacy programs statewide. The SLP makes it clear that activities to address statewide literacy priorities are carried out within the model, acknowledging various factors that contribute to positive literacy outcomes. This makes the SLP responsive to specific needs identified by stakeholders while also supporting the implementation of comprehensive and integrated literacy programs.

Stakeholder input has been invaluable to the development of the SLP and will continue to inform the implementation of SLP activities.

## Summary of Previous State Board of Education Discussion and Action

The CDE has presented several agenda items and information memoranda to the SBE to keep members apprised of CLSD grant activities conducted thus far.

In July 2019, the CDE presented an agenda item that provides information on the CLSD proposal as it was submitted to the U.S. Department of Education. The item includes California’s CLSD grant proposal and details the CDE internal collaborations that ensured expertise from across the Department was represented in the grant proposal. It also describes how the CDE plans to leverage external partnerships within the Statewide System of Support to achieve the grant objectives. At its July 2019 meeting, the SBE took action to ratify the submission of the CLSD grant proposal.

The CDE provided the SBE with an August 2020 information memorandum with detailed information regarding grant activities performed and changes to the timeline for each grant objective due to the COVID-19 pandemic response. This update also includes an explanation of the delay in submitting the draft SLP to the SBE as originally intended in May 2020 due to the COVID-19 response, which allowed for additional stakeholder feedback through a formal public comment period. This extended timeline has also allowed the CDE to continue its work with the SLT to develop a series of knowledge building videos focused on critical topics in literacy identified by the SLT. The memorandum also includes an extended timeline that includes plans to release the Request for Applications in May 2021.

The CDE provided a December 2020 information memorandum with information regarding the development of the SLP, including stakeholder engagement activities, to prepare the draft for SBE review and input. The memorandum explains the development process in detail, including the convening of the SLT in March and August 2020, stakeholder group presentations, and information regarding the IQC September 2020 agenda item. The memorandum further describes the revisions made to the SLP, based on the 347 distinct comments and the recommendations approved by the IQC at its November 2020 meeting.

All previous CLSD SBE agenda items and memoranda are available for review on the CDE CLSD SBE Agenda Items and Memos web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ps/clsdsbeitems.asp>.

**Fiscal Analysis**

The CDE received the federal CLSD grant award in the amount of approximately $37.5 million. No more than five percent of the funds will be directed to the CDE for grant administration.

The remaining 95 percent of the funds will be awarded as subgrants to Local Literacy Lead Agencies to implement the statewide literacy priorities described above. To establish these agencies, the CDE will make available a Request for Applications in 2021 to award seven county offices of education (COEs), or consortia of COEs, through a competitive process. Subgrantees will be required to build expertise in a strategy identified in the SLP and implement that strategy as a three-year, small scale pilot with one or more local districts. These strategies must align with state guidance and policies, be evidence-based, and support the literacy needs of economically disadvantaged and high-needs students. Consistent with grant requirements, funds will be awarded as follows:

* Birth to age five programs: 15 percent of funding
* Kindergarten to grade five programs: 40 percent of funding
* Grade six to grade twelve programs: 40 percent of funding

Each COE subgrantee will support teachers in its region to improve comprehensive literacy instruction with a focus on statewide literacy priorities for each age and grade span. The expertise and resources that the COEs generate with their model sites will be disseminated to educators across the state through the Statewide System of Support.

## Attachment(s)

None.