**California Department of Education**

**California Collaborative for Educational Excellence**

# Geographic Lead Agency for the Counties of Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, and Solano REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS



**Application Due Date:**

**May 15, 2023**

California Department of Education

Student Achievement and Support Division

System of Support Office

1430 N Street, Suite 6208

Sacramento, CA 95814-5901

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## Overview

The California Department of Education (CDE) and California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE) invite county offices of education (COEs) to submit an application to be named the Geographic Lead Agency for the counties of Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, and Solano under California *Education Code* (*EC*) Section 52073. The term of the grant will be for two years (July 1, 2023–June 30, 2025), with an additional one-year extension to be awarded if assurances are met as determined by the CDE and CCEE.

### Background

In 2013, the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) fundamentally changed how the state provides resources to local educational agencies (LEAs) and holds them accountable for improving student performance and narrowing performance gaps among student groups. The Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP), an integral component of the LCFF, provides a way for LEAs to plan their continuous improvement by describing their goals, actions, and services for all students and across student groups. In 2017, the California School Dashboard (Dashboard) was launched to help districts identify strengths and weaknesses to inform their LCAPs.

Under the LCFF legislation, the California Statewide System of Support was created and rooted in building local capacity and assisting districts and schools to identify and eliminate inequities, as part of the continuous improvement process. The support includes three levels: (1) support for all; (2) targeted assistance, or differentiated; and (3) intensive intervention. The California System of Support has been designed as a Multi-tiered System of Support, with various lead initiatives providing specific and coordinated support. The goal of this broad system is to build local capacity to ensure that the LEAs are equipped to develop, implement, and evaluate strategies to ensure that each student has the resources they need to succeed.

In 2018, Assembly Bill 1808 appropriated $4 million annually to establish the Geographic Lead Agencies. The main purpose of the Geographic Lead Agencies is to build county office of education capacity to ensure that counties are equipped to build the capacity of their local educational agencies to support the continuous improvement of student performance within the state priorities as defined in California *EC* Sections 52060 and 52066 and address the gaps in achievement between student groups as defined in Section 52052. Seven COEs have been serving as Geographic Lead Agencies for the five-year grant term that comes to an end on June 30, 2023.

Pursuant to *EC* Section 52073(d), at the conclusion of the term for each selected geographic lead agency, CDE and CCEE can either renew the selection of the existing geographic lead agency or reopen the selection of a geographic lead agency. Before renewing the selection of an existing geographic lead agency, the CDE and CCEE shall evaluate the geographic lead agency’s success in doing both of the following:

1. Implementing the goals, it established for improving performance across multiple measures within the defined geographic area; and

2. Fulfilling its responsibilities under *EC* Section 52073(b), including, but not limited to, progress in building the capacity of COEs within the geographic lead agency’s defined geographic area as demonstrated by trends within the geographic lead agency’s defined geographic area in the number of school districts receiving technical assistance, also known as differentiated assistance (DA), and the number of school districts that stopped receiving DA due to improved performance on the state and local indicators on the Dashboard.

To aid the evaluation, existing Geographic Lead Agencies that wished to serve again were required to submit a Request for Renewal with the success components. Six of the seven geographic lead agencies submitted requests for renewal; Alameda COE decided not to renew its grant to continue to serve as a geographic lead and its grant will not be renewed. Therefore, CDE and CCEE have released this Request for Applications (RFAs) to find a COE to serve as the new Geographic Lead Agency for the counties of Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, and Solano.

### Who May Apply

This RFA is limited to the COEs of Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, and Solano.

### Application Requirements

While this is a new RFA for a new grant term, the responsibilities of the selected Geographic Lead Agency will be consistent with the six Geographic Leads that have renewed their grant. The terms and conditions of the original Geographic Lead Agencies RFA will continue to apply for the next grant term, with additional terms and conditions that were added as part of the Request to Renewal, all of which are described in Section II - Responsibilities, Assurances, and Terms and Conditions of this RFA. Additionally, see <http://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/fo/r16/documents/geoleadagencyrfa.docx> for the complete background and terms of the original RFA and responsibilities detailed in Attachment A—Geographic Lead Agency Responsibilities.

Applications are due no later than May 15, 2023, and must include the following components:

1. Form A— Application Information - Sections 1 and 2.

2. Form B— Application Responses.

### Important Dates

The following are important dates related to this RFA.

1. Application due date - May 15, 2023
2. Application Interviews - May 23, 2023
3. Interviews - May 23, 2023
4. Intent to award position and notification - June 15, 2023
5. Grant Term begins - July 1, 2023

## Responsibilities, Assurances, and Terms and Conditions

The Geographic Lead Agencies work together, as part of the statewide leadership team, to support the goals listed below and connect COEs to the other initiatives within the California Statewide System of Support to do the following.

1. Support the continuous improvement of student performance within the state priorities across student groups as defined in California *EC* sections 52060 and 52066;

2. Address the gaps in achievement between student groups as defined in Section 52052; and

3. Improve outreach and collaboration with stakeholders to ensure that goals, actions, and services as described in a school district and COE LCAPs reflect the needs of the community, especially for historically under-represented or low-achieving populations.

California *EC* Section 52073 outlines the specific responsibilities of the Geographic Lead Agencies, which are found in Attachment A.

In addition, the CDE and the CCEE will be considering all the following factors throughout the grant period beginning in July 2023. The following will be utilized to evaluate the performance of the Geographic Lead Agencies:

* 1. Geographic Lead Agencies, in partnership with the state agencies, will create structures and processes that allow for sharing and collaboration amongst all the geographic leads.
  2. Geographic Lead Agencies, in partnership with the state agencies, will identify methods and processes for purposeful integration and collaboration with other statewide system of support leads.
  3. Geographic Lead Agencies will employ and/or contract support for at least .50 full-time equivalent lead exclusively dedicated to the Geographic Lead program.
  4. Geographic Lead Agencies, in partnership with the state agencies, will create a method for sharing and dissemination of Geographic Leads resources and best practices statewide.
  5. To continue to be responsive to the needs of local Geographic Lead regions, each Geographic Lead Agency will convene an Advisory Committee that will provide input into developing, implementing, and assessing work.
  6. Each Geographic Lead Agency will conduct an annual needs-based assessment of its region to determine its goals and intended outcomes as well as ensure that service is consistently responding and expanding in scope and depth beyond current offerings and practice in alignment with California’s evolving educational environment in response to the needs of state agencies.
  7. The Geographic Lead agencies will submit data through the following reporting activities:
     1. Geographic region needs assessment and annual plan
     2. Triannual progress summary reports (Note: The third-triennial progress summary report will serve as a Geographic Lead Agency’s annual report).
     3. Mid-year interviews.
     4. Budgets and Expenditure reports.

The Geographic Lead Agency Assurances are required to be signed and submitted annually as part of the Grant Award Notification process.

The term of the renewed grants will be for two years (July 1, 2023—June 30, 2025), with an additional one-year extension to be awarded if assurances are met as determined by the CDE and CCEE.

Assurances, certifications, terms, and conditions are requirements of applicants and Lead Agencies as a condition of receiving funds. The signed grant application submitted to the CDE is a commitment to comply with the assurances, certifications, terms, and conditions associated with the grant.

## Funding and Grant Term

### Funding and Grant Amounts

The total budget for all Geographic Lead Agency grants is $4 million per year. The grant allocations for each Geographic Lead Agency will be based on a formula of a $250,000 base amount, and the remaining funds allocated based on the number of LEAs eligible for DA in the most current available year (i.e. Year 1–2022 DA eligibility list).

### Grant Term

The awarded Geographic Lead Agency will be posted on or before June 15, 2023. The new term of the grant will be for two years (July 1, 2023–June 30, 2025), with an additional one-year extension to be awarded if assurances are met as determined by the CDE and CCEE.

## Application Procedures and Process

The process for selection will consist of the following:

1. Application with Applicant Responses (Forms A and B)

2. Interview

All interested applicants meeting the eligibility requirements are required to develop and submit an initial application package with the following.

1. Letter of Interest

2. Resumes of key personnel

3. Form A—Applicant Information

4. Form B—Applicant Responses

## Questions and Contact Information

All questions and correspondence should be submitted by email through the System of Support Helpdesk at [CASystemofSupport@cde.ca.gov](mailto:CASystemofSupport@cde.ca.gov) using “Request for Renewal – Geographic Lead Agency” in the subject line.

## Appeals Process

Applicants who wish to appeal a grant award decision must submit a Letter of Appeal to:

Geographic Lead Application Appeals

California Department of Education

Student Achievement and Support Division

System of Support Office

1430 N Street, Suite 6208

Sacramento, CA 95814-5901

The CDE must **receive** the Letter of Appeal, with an authorized signature, no later than 5 p.m. on July 15, 2023. Fax or letters submitted via email will not be accepted. Upon receipt of appeals, the CDE and the CCEE staff will reevaluate the application.

**Appeals are limited to the ground that the CDE’s action(s) violate(s) a state or federal statute or regulation.** The professional judgment of the application reviewers will not be considered on appeal absent a showing that the CDE violated a state or federal statute or regulation. An Applicant may be represented by counsel.

**The CDE must receive the Letter of Appeal within 30 calendar days of the email notification of disqualification or the Intent to Award announcement posted on the CDE web page. Postmarks will be honored. Emailed letters of appeal will not be accepted.**

The letter of appeal shall include the following:

1. A clear and concise statement of the action being appealed;

2. The legal authority (statute and/or regulation) relied upon for the appeal position;

3. The specific evidence being submitted to support the appeal; and

4. The specific remedy sought.

## FORM A—Applicant Information

**Geographic Lead Agency Grant**

**Section 1**

Name of County Office of Education: [Insert Organization Name]

Geographic Lead Contact Name: [Insert Contract Designee Name]

Contact Title: [Insert Contract Designee Professional Title]

Address: [Insert Contract Designee Address]

City, State, Zip Code: [Insert Contract Designee City, State, Zip Code]

Telephone Number: [Insert Contract Designee Telephone Number]

Email Address: [Insert Contract Designee Email Address]

Designee Signature and Date (Digital Signature Accepted): [Insert Signature and Date]

[Insert County Office Name] submits this Application for the Request for Applications for Geographic Lead Agency for the Counties of Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, and Solano for a term of two years (July 1, 2023—June 30, 2025), with an additional one-year extension to be awarded if assurances are met as determined by the CDE and CCEE. Included in this application is Form B—Applicant Responses also being submitted**. Email application no later than May 15, 2023, to** [CASystemofSupport@cde.ca.gov](mailto:CASystemofSupport@cde.ca.gov) with Form B—Applicant Responses.

**Section 2 - Application Checklist**

All applicants meeting the eligibility requirements are required to submit an application package with the following.

1. Letter of Interest
2. Resumes of key personnel
3. Form A—Applicant Information
   1. Section 1 – Name and Contact Information
   2. Section 2 – Application checklist
4. Form B—Applicant Reponses

## FORM B—Applicant Responses

Part 1: Provide a description of proposed activities, including metrics for evaluation when appropriate to fulfill the following statutory responsibilities.

A. Assist in building the capacity of COEs within the geographic lead agency's defined geographic area to provide effective assistance and support to school districts under the state priorities identified in subdivision (d) of *EC* Section 52060 [1] and federal programs.

[Provide Response Here - 800 Word Limit]

B. Coordinate and calibrate assistance and support provided directly to LEAs within its defined geographic area and with other geographic lead agencies, expert lead agencies identified pursuant to *EC* Section 52073.1, special education resource leads identified pursuant to *EC* Section 52073.2, the CCEE, and CDE.

[Provide Response Here - 800 Word Limit]

C. Provide assistance and support if another COE within the geographic lead agency's defined geographic area was unable to provide appropriate assistance and support to one or more school districts in that COE’s boundaries, or at the request of a school district or county superintendent of schools pursuant to subdivision (d) of *EC* Section 52071.

[Provide Response Here - 800 Word Limit]

D. Identify and disseminate existing resources and professional development activities currently available within its designated geographic area as well as a process to identify and provide future resources to assist school districts and COEs to improve outcomes under the state priorities identified in subdivision (d) of *EC* Section 52060 and subdivision (d) of *EC* Section 52066.

[Provide Response Here - 800 Word Limit]

E. Process in fulfilling a request by the CDE and the CCEE, to develop new resources and activities, designed to build capacity within school districts and COEs across the state under the state priorities identified in subdivision (d) of *EC* Section 52060 and subdivision (d) of *EC* Section 52066 or other areas of identified need.

[Provide Response Here - 800 Word Limit]

Part 2: Provide a response, including metrics when appropriate, in addressing the following prompts.

A. How will you create a structure and process that fosters sharing and collaboration amongst all the Geographic Leads?

[Provide Response Here - 800 Word Limit]

B. As a new Geographic Leads in an existing structure, how will you integrate and build upon the cohesive work of the Geographic Leads?

[Provide Response Here - 800 Word Limit]

C. Describe how you will collaborate with existing and new leads in the Statewide System of Support.

[Provide Response Here - 800 Word Limit]

## Attachment A—Geographic Lead Agency Responsibilities

*EC* Section 52073 (b)

(b) (1) A geographic lead agency shall have all of the following responsibilities:

(A) Assist in building the capacity of COEs within the geographic lead agency’s defined geographic area to provide effective assistance and support to school districts under the state priorities identified in subdivision (d) of *EC* Section 52060 and federal programs.

(B) Coordinate and calibrate assistance and support provided to LEAs within its defined geographic area and with other geographic lead agencies, expert lead agencies identified pursuant to *EC* Section 52073.1, special education resource leads identified pursuant to *EC* Section 52073.2, the CCEE, and the department.

(C) Provide assistance and support if another COE within the geographic lead agency’s defined geographic area is unable to provide appropriate assistance and support to one or more school districts in that COE’s boundaries, or at the request of a school district or county superintendent of schools pursuant to subdivision (d) of *EC* Section 52071.

(D) Identify existing resources, professional development activities, and other efforts currently available within its designated geographic area to assist school districts and COEs to improve outcomes under the state priorities identified in subdivision (d) of *EC* Section 52060 and subdivision (d) of *EC* Section 52066, and upon request, share information about these existing resources.

(E) Upon request by the department and the CCEE, develop new resources and activities, designed to build capacity within school districts and COEs across the state under the state priorities identified in subdivision (d) of *EC* Section 52060 and subdivision (d) of *EC* Section 52066 or other areas of identified need.

(F) Other duties as specified by the department and the CCEE as part of the process to select geographic lead agencies.

(2) A geographic lead agency may enter into subcontracts with one or more LEAs, institutions of higher education, or nonprofit educational services providers to assist in fulfilling the responsibilities described in this subdivision.

## APPENDIX A: Scoring Rubric

### Completeness (5 points)

| **Complete  (5 points)** | **Incomplete  (0 points)** |
| --- | --- |
| Application package included all required elements: Letter of interest, resumes, Form A, Form B, and signatures. | Application package did not require one or more of the required elements. |

### Part 1: Description of Proposed Activities (20 points)

| **OUTSTANDING/EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS  (8–10 points)** | **STRONG/MEETS EXPECTATIONS  (6–7 points)** | **GOOD/APPROACHES EXPECTATIONS  (4–5 points)** | **MINIMAL/DOES NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS  (0–3 points)** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| The description **thoroughly** and convincingly demonstrates proposed activities, including metrics for evaluation when appropriate to fulfill statutory responsibilities to   * Assist in building capacity of COEs with the geographic Lead area * Coordinate and calibrate assistant and support directly to LEAs * Provide assistance and support to districts outside Geographic Lead area, if needed * Identify and disseminate existing and future resources and professional development activities currently available * Process in fulfilling a request by the CDE and the CCEE, to develop new resources and activities, designed to build capacity within school districts and COEs across the state under the state priorities | The description **clearly** demonstrates proposed activities, including metrics for evaluation when appropriate to fulfill statutory responsibilities to   * Assist in building capacity of COEs with the geographic Lead area * Coordinate and calibrate assistant and support directly to LEAs * Provide assistance and support to districts outside Geographic Lead area, if needed * Identify and disseminate existing and future resources and professional development activities currently available * Process in fulfilling a request by the CDE and the CCEE, to develop new resources and activities, designed to build capacity within school districts and COEs across the state under the state priorities | The description **adequately** demonstrates proposed activities, including metrics for evaluation when appropriate to fulfill statutory responsibilities to   * Assist in building capacity of COEs with the geographic Lead area * Coordinate and calibrate assistant and support directly to LEAs * Provide assistance and support to districts outside Geographic Lead area, if needed * Identify and disseminate existing and future resources and professional development activities currently available * Process in fulfilling a request by the CDE and the CCEE, to develop new resources and activities, designed to build capacity within school districts and COEs across the state under the state priorities | The description **does not** demonstrate proposed activities, including metrics for evaluation when appropriate to fulfill statutory responsibilities to   * Assist in building capacity of COEs with the geographic Lead area * Coordinate and calibrate assistant and support directly to LEAs * Provide assistance and support to districts outside Geographic Lead area, if needed * Identify and disseminate existing and future resources and professional development activities currently available * Process in fulfilling a request by the CDE and the CCEE, to develop new resources and activities, designed to build capacity within school districts and COEs across the state under the state priorities |

### Part 2: Structure and Collaboration (20 points)

| **OUTSTANDING/EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS  (8–10 points)** | **STRONG/MEETS EXPECTATIONS  (6–7 points)** | **GOOD/APPROACHES EXPECTATIONS  (4–5 points)** | **MINIMAL/DOES NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS  (0–3 points)** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| The description **thoroughly** demonstrates that the proposed overall structure and collaboration will:   * Foster sharing and collaboration amongst all the Geographic Leads, * Integrate and build upon the cohesive work of the Geographic Leads, and * Collaborate with existing and new leads in the Statewide System of Support. | The description **clearly** demonstrates that the proposed overall structure and collaboration will:   * Foster sharing and collaboration amongst all the Geographic Leads, * Integrate and build upon the cohesive work of the Geographic Leads, and * Collaborate with existing and new leads in the Statewide System of Support. | The description **adequately** demonstrates that the proposed overall structure and collaboration will:   * Foster sharing and collaboration amongst all the Geographic Leads, * Integrate and build upon the cohesive work of the Geographic Leads, and * Collaborate with existing and new leads in the Statewide System of Support. | The description does not or minimally demonstrate that the proposed overall structure and collaboration will:   * Foster sharing and collaboration amongst all the Geographic Leads, * Integrate and build upon the cohesive work of the Geographic Leads, and * Collaborate with existing and new leads in the Statewide System of Support. |