# Tobacco-Use Prevention Education Program Initiation Grant Tier 1, Cohort U

Fiscal Year 2025–28

Request for Applications

For Programs Serving Grades Six through Twelve

Governed by

California *Health and Safety Code* Section 104420

March 2025



Application Due Date: Friday, April 18, 2025, at 5 p.m.

Strategy, Policy, and Special Projects Branch

Tobacco-Use Prevention Education Office

California Department of Education

1430 N Street, Suite 6408

Sacramento, CA 95814-5901

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## Questions and Contact Information

All questions and correspondence regarding the Tobacco-Use Prevention Education (TUPE) Initiation Grant (Tier 1) Cohort U, Request for Applications (RFA) should be submitted by email to tupe@cde.ca.gov (please indicate “Tier 1, Cohort U RFA Question” in the subject line).

The information contained in this Tier 1, Cohort U Grant RFA, the Guidance PowerPoint, and Program and Project Budget Guidance document should be an applicant’s primary resources for developing their application.

**All completed applications must be submitted through the TUPE Grant Electronic Management System (GEMS) at** [https://tupegems.ucsd.edu**/**](https://tupegems.ucsd.edu/)**. Hard copy submissions to the California Department of Education (CDE) will not be accepted.**

**Note:** The RFA process is competitive and is reviewed and scored by readers using a scoring rubric. Applicants are strongly encouraged to read the entire TUPE Tier 1, Cohort U Grant RFA, view the guidance PowerPoint, and consider all elements for eligibility, program requirements, and disqualifications prior to submitting a complete application.

## Application Highlights for the TUPE Program Initiation Grant (Tier 1) Cohort U

* The Tier 1, Cohort U Grant is available for a three-year period from July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2028.
* The grant award period is for three years; however, if funded, one Grant Award Notification (GAN) will be issued.
* County offices of education (COEs), school districts, direct-funded charter schools, and consortia of qualifying local educational agencies (LEAs) serving grades six through twelve (6–12) in California are eligible to apply if they meet the eligibility requirements.
* Applications must be submitted through TUPE GEMS.
* Applicants may only submit one application per lead agency.
* The application includes a section for additional services. This section is especially beneficial for those LEAs that do not yet have the capacity to compete for TUPE Tier 2 Comprehensive Program Grant funds but want to do more than the minimum requirements for Tier 1 Grants. These additional services are **optional** and do not replace or supersede the requirements to develop a Tobacco-Free Policy and administer the California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS).
* An RFA Guidance PowerPoint will be posted on the TUPE GEMS website **the week of March 17, 2025.** The purpose of the PowerPoint is to provide guidance to assist applicants with program requirements for the Tier 1, Cohort U Grant Application. The PowerPoint may be viewed at any time after posting.
* Prospective applicants are required to indicate their Intent to Submit (ITS) an application in TUPE GEMS no later than **March 28, 2025, at 5 p.m.**
* All required application materials, guidance documents, and PowerPoint will be available on the CDE TUPE Tier 1, Cohort U Grant RFA web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/at/tupefunding.asp> and on the TUPE GEMS website at <https://tupegems.ucsd.edu/>. All questions should be submitted by email to tupe@cde.ca.gov (please indicate “Tier 1, Cohort U RFA Question” in the subject line).

**Tobacco-Use Prevention Education Program
Initiation Tier 1, Cohort U Grant
Request for Applications**

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### Critical Dates for the Application Process

The following chart identifies the anticipated critical dates for the application process. **These dates may be modified by the CDE at its discretion.** Any changes will be posted on the CDE TUPE Initiation Grant (Tier 1) Cohort U, web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/fo/r29/tupetier1cohu25rfa.asp>

| **Dates** | **Critical Events** |
| --- | --- |
| **March 12, 2025** | RFA is posted on the CDE TUPE Funding web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/at/tupefunding.asp>. |
| **Week of March 17, 2025** | RFA Guidance PowerPoint is posted on the TUPE GEMS website (Resources tab) at <https://tupegems.ucsd.edu/>. |
| **March 28, 2025, at 5 p.m.** | **Submission deadline for ITS. This form must be submitted through TUPE GEMS.** Failure to submit this form through TUPE GEMS will disqualify the application from moving forward to the reading and scoring process. |
| **April 18, 2025, at 5 p.m.** | **Submission deadline for complete applications.** Applications must be submitted through TUPE GEMS.  |
| **April 23, 2025** | Applicants are notified if they have been disqualified based on the CDE’s screening.  |
| **May 2025** | Intent to Award (ITA) is posted on the CDE TUPE Funding web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/at/tupefunding.asp>. **Note:** The ITA is **not** the final funding list. Appeals to funding decisions are due to the CDE 10 days after ITA notification. |
| **June 2025** | Final Funding List is posted on the CDE TUPE Funding web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/at/tupefunding.asp>.  |
| **June 2025** | GANs sent to grantees. |
| **July 1, 2025** | Grant period begins. |

### Description and Purpose of the Program

#### Background

In 1988, California voters approved Proposition 99, the Tobacco Tax and Health Protection Act, which required the CDE to establish a TUPE Program that provides students in grades 6–12 with the knowledge and skills directed at the prevention of tobacco use and tobacco-related diseases. The Tobacco Education and Research Oversight Committee (TEROC) was also created to advise state agencies, including the CDE, with respect to policy development, integration, and evaluation of funded tobacco education programs, including the TUPE Program. In addition, the TEROC is instrumental with the development of a plan for future implementation of tobacco education programs. TEROC members represent the spectrum of areas of the tobacco prevention field, including public health, medicine, higher education, research, community advocates, voluntary health organizations, youth-serving organizations, and kindergarten through grade twelve education.

#### Purpose

The primary goal and purpose of the TUPE Office is to equip California youth with knowledge and skills to live tobacco-, vape-, and nicotine-free by providing leadership and guidance for the development and implementation of school-based education, intervention, counseling, and youth development activities. The TUPE Office was established by the CDE to provide technical assistance and funding to COEs, school districts, and schools in the development of instructional materials, curricula, and activities to encourage prevention and cessation of tobacco, vape, and nicotine among youth. The TUPE Office administers various funding opportunities, including competitive grants, to fund TUPE programs in COEs, school districts, direct-funded charter schools, and school district consortia.

The purpose of the TUPE Initiation Grant Program (Tier 1) Cohort U is for grantees to: (1) adopt tobacco-free campus policies that prohibit the use of products containing tobacco and nicotine, including, but not limited to, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew, clove cigarettes, and electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes), and (2) conduct the district-level CHKS Core Module with the subgroup population of students in grades five or six, and seven, nine, and eleven.

#### Addressing Youth Tobacco and Vaping Use

Early tobacco prevention and education is important because tobacco use generally starts in youth. Nicotine is highly addictive and can harm adolescent brain development. Implementing tobacco-free school policies are an important first step in addressing youth tobacco and vaping use. Evidence shows that comprehensive school-based programs that include tobacco free policies, combined with community and mass-media efforts, can effectively prevent or postpone the onset of smoking by 20 to 40 percent among U.S. teens. (Surgeon General’s Report “Reducing Tobacco Use,” 2001). Tobacco-free school policies: 1) protect the health of youth and staff by reducing exposure to secondhand smoke; 2) help to establish and support tobacco-free norms; and 3) prevent and postpone smoking by youth.

In 2023, according to the California Youth Tobacco Survey (CYTS), 21.6% of California high school respondents had ever used any tobacco product, and 7.3% currently used tobacco. Vapes were the most commonly used tobacco product among high school respondents (18.3% ever use, 5.9% current use), regardless of gender identity, race/ethnicity, and grade. This represents an unacceptably high number of approximately 112,925 students who reported either having ever used e-cigarettes or having used e-cigarettes in the past 30 days. Unfortunately, this also reflects a troubling upward trend in vaping use from the 2022 CYTS in which 17.6% ever used e-cigarettes versus 18.3% in 2023 and 5.6% that used e-cigarettes in the past 30 days in 2022 versus 5.9% in 2023.

More significantly, co-use of tobacco and marijuana among youth has become common with vaping devices. 4.9% of high school students currently use both tobacco and marijuana. The survey also found that youth who rated their mental health as poor or fair had a higher prevalence of current tobacco use (14.8% and 7.2%, respectively) than those who reported their mental health as good to excellent (5.9%).

Local prevalence rates may vary greatly from statewide prevalence rates. For example, rates in rural areas tend to be significantly higher than those in urban areas. Rates may also vary among different populations of students in the same district. For example, tobacco-use rates tend to be significantly higher among lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer or questioning (LGBTQ) students than they are among straight/cisgender students. This highlights the need for grantees to participate in regular surveys such as the CHKS to track local prevalence rates over time and to ensure that special needs among priority populations are identified and addressed in programming. For more information about how CHKS data can be used in TUPE program development, please see the California School Climate, Health, and Learning Survey (CalSCHLS) Annual Training 2024–25 web page at https://calschls.org/videos/1012474131/.

#### Funding

The TUPE Initiation Grant Program (Tier 1) Cohort U provides funding for three years, beginning July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2028. The maximum allowable funding for a single COE or LEA applicant is $6,000 for all three years of the grant. Consortium applicants may request up to $6,000 for each LEA represented in the application for all three years of the grant. The level of available funding appropriated, and the number of qualified applications will determine the number of grants awarded.

The CDE reserves the right to renew or extend selected grants in the best interest of the statewide tobacco-use prevention effort. Although it is anticipated that funding for the TUPE Tier 1 Grant Program will be available for future years, this may change as a result of the legislative process or oversight committee recommendations by TEROC. If applicable, all funding received pursuant to the Tier 1, Cohort U Grant must be accounted for independently and separately from all other TUPE grant funds.

The use of TUPE funds for any purpose other than the reduction or elimination of tobacco use for students is not authorized. TUPE funds may be used to address the co-use of tobacco and marijuana (cannabis, THC) and the use of electronic smoking devices to consume marijuana. Note, under California law, all electronic smoking devices that deliver nicotine or other vaporized (aerosolized) liquids (including marijuana) are considered tobacco products.

When staff positions are funded by multiple sources, grantees should maintain personnel activity reports documenting the duties performed and the proportion of time spent on TUPE-related activities. The percentage of TUPE funds used for salaries, benefits, and other personnel costs should correspond to the percentage of staff time allocated to tobacco prevention and education. Likewise, products or services may be purchased with TUPE funds according to the proportion or percentage that the product or service addresses tobacco-use.

Grant funds may not be used for costs that are already supported by other sources.

### Eligibility Requirements

Applicants must meet all the eligibility requirements set forth below. The programs offered by applicants must meet the requirements set forth in this Tier 1, Cohort U RFA. Thus, applicants must read and understand this entire RFA, as well as view the Guidance PowerPoint and consider all eligibility and program requirements prior to submitting a full application. Questions regarding this Tier 1, Cohort U RFA should be submitted by email through the TUPE RFA Help Desk at tupe@cde.ca.gov.

#### Who May Apply?

**Eligible.** COEs, public school districts, direct-funded charter schools, or consortia that serve students in grades 6–12 within the state of California are eligible to apply. The governing district must apply on behalf of a school or school sites within its jurisdiction. Any currently funded Tier 1 district or direct-funded charter school that is a member of a Tier 1 consortium with a grant expiring on June 30, 2025, is eligible to re-apply separately or as part of a consortium.

**Not Eligible.** Individual schools, community agencies, private schools, and locally-funded charter schools are not eligible to apply for these funds. In addition, projects targeting out-of-school students cannot be funded under this application. Currently-funded TUPE Tier 1 grantees with grants not expiring on June 30, 2025, and Tier 2 grantees are ineligible for Tier 1, Cohort U funds.

#### Absence of Tobacco, Vaping, or Marijuana Industry Funding or Support

Applicants are ineligible for any TUPE grant funding if they have received directly or indirectly, any funding, educational materials, or services from the tobacco, vaping, or marijuana industries—even if for the purpose of implementing tobacco-use prevention, youth development, intervention, or cessation programs. In addition, TUPE grantees are prohibited from accepting such materials and services for the duration of the grant. Acceptance of such items will result in termination of the grant, the return of all advanced grant funds, and may disqualify LEAs from future TUPE funding opportunities.

A signature by the Superintendent or Designee on the application materials constitutes an assurance that the COEs, school districts, or direct-funded charter schools identified in the Tier 1, Cohort U application will not accept materials, services, or funding from the tobacco, vaping, or marijuana industries.

#### Other Eligibility Requirements

The application submitted must: (1) show that the applicant’s program meets the Tier 1, Cohort U Grant Program Requirements, (2) comply with the TUPE GEMS online application submission, (3) meet all other conditions, requirements, and deadlines, and (4) provide signatures as set forth in this RFA.

### Program Requirements and Additional Services

The Legislature requires that the funds allocated for the Tier 1, Cohort U Grant be used for the enforcement of Tobacco-Free School Policies, administration of the CHKS, and support for activities that prevent the use of all tobacco products by youth. As such, the following section provides the specific program requirements for Tier 1, Cohort U applicants.

#### Tobacco-Free Policy Development (Required)

In accordance with California *Health and Safety Code (HSC)* Section 104420(n)(2), all COEs, school districts, and charter schools that receive TUPE funding are required to adopt and enforce a Tobacco-Free School Policy no later than July 1 of each fiscal year (FY). The policy shall prohibit the use of products containing tobacco and nicotine, including, but not limited to, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew, clove cigarettes, and e-cigarettes that can deliver nicotine and non-nicotine vaporized solutions, at any time, in COE, charter school, or school district-owned or leased buildings, on school or district property, and in school or district vehicles. However, this section does not prohibit the use or possession of prescription products, nicotine patches, or nicotine gum. In addition to the harmful effects of nicotine, flavorings, and other chemical additives, e-cigarettes have introduced another mechanism for students to consume marijuana. Consequently, Tobacco-Free School Policies have the additional benefit of addressing student use of marijuana through vaping and the co-use of marijuana and tobacco.

Information about the policy and enforcement procedures shall be communicated clearly to school personnel, parents, pupils, and the larger community. Signs stating “Tobacco use is prohibited” shall be prominently displayed at all entrances to school property as provided in HSC Section 104559. Signs may also state “the use of tobacco, e-cigarettes, and marijuana is prohibited,” as long as the word “tobacco” is included in the sign. Information about smoking cessation support programs shall be made available and encouraged for pupils and staff. Any COE, school district, or charter school that does not submit their tobacco-free certification documents to the CDE by July 1, shall not be eligible for reimbursements until they satisfy this requirement and no later than the end of the grant term.

#### California Healthy Kids Survey (Required)

All districts participating in a TUPE Tier 1 grant are required to participate in CHKS. Grantees must monitor school survey administration periodically to ensure the availability of CHKS data to evaluate their program effectiveness across time in relation to themselves, other districts, other counties, and the state. Grantees are required to maintain a consolidated grantee-level record and provide monitoring results upon CDE request. The CDE provides all grantees access to the TUPE Private Data Dashboard at <https://calschls.org/my-surveys/> as a tool for this purpose.

All grantees are required to conduct the district-level CHKS Core Module with the subgroup population of students in grades five or six and grades seven, nine, and eleven. Survey results, to the extent possible, should be reported by school site and race/ethnicity. The survey is to be administered within the first year of funding and at least every other year thereafter as long as funding is received. For any participating school, if there are fewer than 25 students in a grade, the grantee may use either CHKS or a local alternative to fulfill the student tobacco use survey requirement.

If grade five or grade six students participate in CHKS, grantees may use either the core elementary module together with the TUPE elementary module, or the secondary module, to ensure that sufficient data are captured regarding tobacco and vaping use.

If an LEA has conducted CHKS in the school year prior to the first year of the new grant period, it may continue conducting the survey every other year and does not need to conduct it within the first year of the grant. If funding is sufficient and the grantee identifies a need to conduct the survey more frequently or in more grades, or to also administer the California School Staff Survey and/or California School Parent Survey, that is allowable pending consultation with the TUPE Office.

Applicants should refer to their LEA’s adopted policies and administrative regulations regarding conducting student surveys and receiving parental permission. For additional information regarding the administration of CHKS, visit the WestEd California School Climate, Health, and Learning Surveys web page at <https://calschls.org/reports-data/query-calschls/>.

Any COE or consortium school district, single school district, or charter school that does not administer CHKS pursuant to the grant requirements outlined above shall not be eligible for reimbursements until they satisfy this requirement and no later than the end of the grant term.

#### California Youth Tobacco Survey Requirement

Additionally, each Tier 1, Cohort U grantee is required to participate, if selected, in the California Youth Tobacco Survey (CYTS) administered by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and the Evaluation of TUPE Programs in California conducted by the CDPH Tobacco Prevention Program. The results of the evaluation of TUPE programs will be made available to the CDE for the purposes of improving its ability to implement and oversee school-based tobacco-use prevention programs and to determine to what extent schools have reduced the smoking and e-cigarette prevalence rate for high school youth. Students in grades eight, ten, and twelve, as well as school and district TUPE program administrators, will be among the participants of the CYTS. All schools within the district with students in grades eight, ten, and twelve must participate, including those not listed in the grant application. As with the CHKS, the CYTS is conducted in accordance with board policy on parental consent and requires a beginning-of-the-year notice to parents.

#### Additional Services (Optional)

Tier 1, Cohort U applicants may also propose additional services in the areas of direct student services, family and community engagement, and staff professional development. Applicants are **not required** to include any of these additional services as part of the Tier 1, Cohort U Grant Application; however, in the event that funding remains unspent during any of the three years of the grant, applicants may provide additional services. These services should be dedicated to the prevention of tobacco, vaping, or marijuana co-use by youth.

The following is a list of additional services applicants may wish to consider:

1. Anti-tobacco, vaping, or marijuana posters;
2. Educational pamphlets and/or videos regarding the dangers of tobacco, vaping, and marijuana co-use;
3. Public service announcement contests
4. Assemblies for students, staff, family, or community members that provide an anti-tobacco, anti-vaping, or anti-marijuana message; and
5. In-house professional development activities for staff.

**Note: Additional services should only be considered if all the following criteria apply:**

1. **Tobacco-free policies have been developed and implemented;**
2. **CHKS has been administered at all schools listed in the grant; and**
3. **Unspent funds remain.**

**If the applicant is awarded Tier 1, Cohort U funding, but does not include additional services at the time of application, additional services, such as those listed above may be added at a later date. However, any services and resulting expenditures that are not listed in the application will require pre-approval from the CDE Regional Consultant and Analyst. Expenses for additional services that are not approved will not be reimbursed.**

### Overview of Application Process

Applicants may submit only one application on behalf of their participating sites and must submit all application materials through TUPE GEMS.

#### Intent to Submit an Application

Prospective applicants are required to indicate their Intent to Submit (ITS) an application in TUPE GEMS no later than **March 28, 2025, at 5 p.m.** Late, mailed, or emailed ITS forms will not be accepted. The ITS indicates an agency’s intent to submit a complete application by the final due date; however, submission of the ITS form does not obligate the agency to submit a complete application.

Failure to complete the ITS in TUPE GEMS by the due date and time will result in disqualification and a complete application will not be accepted. An email confirmation of submission of the ITS will be sent to the contact person identified through TUPE GEMS.

#### Application Types

There are two types of allowable applications under this RFA:

* + - 1. Single Agency Applications

A single agency application is one in which an individual LEA applies for TUPE funding on behalf of all schools in its jurisdiction. TUPE services that the applicant proposes to implement in certain grade levels must be implemented in all schools in the district that have those grade levels.

2. Consortium Applications

Alternatively, public school districts, direct-funded charter schools, and COEs may collaborate to form a consortium to apply jointly for TUPE funding. A single district, direct-funded charter school, or COE must be designated on the Tier 1 Grant Application as the lead agency. The lead agency assumes fiscal and reporting responsibility for the consortium. The roles and responsibilities of the lead agency and consortium members must be clearly described in the Application Narrative and delineated in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the lead agency and other consortium member agencies.

#### Geographic Categories

Under California law, the CDE must consider the need to balance urban and rural applicants when allocating grant awards (HSC Section 104420(k)(2)(D)(4)). Applicants must therefore identify the geographic category in which their applications will compete (identified on the Grant Application in TUPE GEMS):

* Northern-Urban
* Northern-Rural
* Central-Urban
* Central-Rural
* Southern-Urban
* Southern-Rural

Northern California consists of California County Superintendents Educational Services Association (CCSESA) regions 1 through 4, Central California consists of CCSESA regions 5 through 8, and Southern California consists of CCSESA regions 9 through 11. Applicants can determine their service region on the CCSESSA Regions web page at <https://cacountysupts.org/regions/>.

Applicants can determine their Rural and Urban Classifications by visiting the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Search for Public Schools online tool at<https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/> and entering the search criteria as directed. Sites in the NCES database are identified in one of the following classifications:

| **Urban Classification** | **Rural Classification** |
| --- | --- |
| 11—City, Large | 31—Town, Fringe |
| 12—City, Midsize | 32—Town, Distant |
| 13—City, Small | 33—Town, Remote |
| 21—Suburb, Large | 41—Rural, Fringe |
| 22—Suburb, Midsize | 42—Rural, Distant |
| 23—Suburb, Small | 43—Rural, Remote |

#### Complete Application

A full and complete TUPE Tier 1, Cohort U Grant application and required forms must be submitted in TUPE GEMS no later than **April 18, 2025, at 5 p.m.** Late, mailed, or emailed applications will not be accepted.

An authorized signature from the Superintendent or Designee is required. A Designee may provide the authorized signature provided that a copy of a recent governing board resolution or minutes, specifically authorizing the Designee to accept and sign as a proxy for financial statements and legally-binding documents, is uploaded with the application materials. In the absence of an authorized signature or board resolution, the applicant will be disqualified. An electronic signature is acceptable for the Superintendent or Designee.

Note: Submitting an application constitutes consent to a release of information and waiver of the applicant’s right to privacy with regard to information provided in response to this RFA. Ideas and format contained in the application become the property of the CDE.

### Application Forms and Narrative Components in the Tobacco-Use Prevention Education Grant Electronic Management System

An application submitted in TUPE GEMS requires applicants to either: (1) populate information into a section in TUPE GEMS, or (2) download, complete the template provided, and upload the completed document to TUPE GEMS. Any additional documents, other than those required by the RFA, will not be considered.

#### Required Sections

There are six required sections in TUPE GEMS:

1. Section 1: General Information

This section requires inputting the applicant agency name, county-district-school codes, county name, and address(es) of those participating in the application, as well as the grade levels to be served, student count funding information, and the grant type.

1. Section 2: Participating Member Directory

This section requires applicants to provide a list of all participating districts in the application beyond the lead applicant. This includes the names, addresses, and contact information for the TUPE Coordinators at each district identified in the application.

In general, the CDE expects that all schools with grades six through twelve in a participating district will be served by the TUPE program. If this will not be the case, a special exception must be included in TUPE GEMS and approved by the TUPE Office.

1. Section 8: Tobacco-Free Policy Development and Implementation

This section requires applicants to provide their actual or proposed certification dates and describe the actions they will take to ensure effective communication to students, staff, parents, and the community at large. Applicants are also asked to describe the actions they will take to address tobacco-related violations on school sites and at school-sponsored events. Information regarding the Tobacco-Free School Policy Certification is available on the CDE Tobacco-Free School District Certification web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/at/tobaccofreecert.asp>. In addition, sample policies can be found on the TUPE website at <https://tupeca.org/Pages/Tobacco-Free-Policy-New.aspx>

The applicant and all participating districts for consortium applications must be certified by the CDE as having met the Tobacco-Free School District Certification criteria. This certification must be valid by July 1, 2025.

The applicant agency and all participating districts identified in the application must continue to meet the Tobacco-Free School District Certification criteria, including enforcement of the Tobacco-Free School Policy, during the term of the grant. This requirement extends to all schools in the LEA, including those not listed in the grant application (*HSC* Section 104559).

1. Section 9: Project Monitoring and Evaluation

This section requires applicants to describe a local tracking mechanism to monitor the CHKS administration of participating school districts. This will enable a local TUPE Program to evaluate its program’s effectiveness across time in comparison to itself, other districts, counties, and the state. Grantees will be required to maintain a consolidated grantee-level record and provide monitoring results to the CDE upon request. Applicants must identify the list of participating COEs and districts, estimated CHKS administration dates, lead staff for data collection, and the monitoring process that will ensure school compliance.

In addition, applicants must describe how they plan to utilize CHKS data to inform their local program (s).

1. Section 11: Assurances

This section requires applicants to download and complete certain forms, retain some for reference, and upload others. Instructions for the various documents are provided in TUPE GEMS. These documents include:

1. Certified Assurances

The applicant’s Superintendent or Designee must certify that they have read and agree to the terms as stated in this RFA and all terms in accordance with the California *HSC* and California *Education Code*. The Superintendent or Designee’s signature signifies acceptance of all conditions as stated in the Grant Application, the Project Budget, all general and certified program assurances, and forms contained in TUPE GEMS not requiring a signature. It also affirms that the work proposed in the application will be carried out.

A Designee may provide the authorized signature provided that a copy of a recent governing board resolution or minutes, specifically authorizing the Designee to accept and sign as a proxy on financial statements and legally binding documents, is uploaded to TUPE GEMS. In the absence of an authorized signature by the Superintendent, or by the Designee with governing board resolution or minutes, the application will be disqualified.

Grantees must provide General Assurances and Certifications as a condition of receiving CDE funds. See the CDE General Assurances and Certifications in the Funding Forms web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/fo/fm/ff.asp> for more information.

1. Program Assurances

The applicant agency, on behalf of the school districts and any schools identified in the application, must also certify that they will adhere to the following TUPE Program assurances:

1. Enforce the Tobacco-Free School Policy as described in *HSC* Section 104420(n)(2).
2. Neither receive, nor apply for funds, educational materials, or services from the tobacco, vaping, or marijuana industry or any agency which has received funding from the tobacco, vaping, or marijuana industry to implement tobacco-use prevention or intervention programs.
3. Administer the district-level CHKS Core Module as described in this RFA under Program Requirements and Additional Services.
4. If selected, participate in the CYTS administered by the CDPH and the Evaluation of TUPE Programs in California conducted by the CDPH Tobacco Prevention Program.
5. Implement the program as described in the approved application unless written permission is received from the CDE prior to implementing any changes to the approved application.
6. Expend funds as detailed in the approved grant application unless specifically approved by the CDE.
7. Submit all the required deliverables by the designated due dates to ensure the program remains in good standing with the TUPE Office.
8. Submit the required TUPE Tobacco-Free School District Certification form prior to July 1 and maintain that status throughout the duration of the grant.

1. Letter of Support

Single LEA applicants must include a letter of support (LOS) written and signed by the COE TUPE Coordinator endorsing the application. The letter should be written on the COE TUPE Coordinator’s letterhead and may contain an e-signature. Only one LOS is required for upload into TUPE GEMS. **Consortium applicants, for which the COE is part of the consortium, do not need to submit a LOS from the COE TUPE Coordinator. All other consortium applicants must obtain an LOS from their COE TUPE Coordinator.**

The COE TUPE Coordinator’s letter must certify the following:

1. The COE TUPE Coordinator has established an agreement with the applicant LEA to monitor the applicant’s Tobacco-Free School Policy enforcement.
2. The LEA will meet all of the requirements of *HSC* Section 104420(n)(2) regarding Tobacco-Free Schools throughout the full term of the grant.
3. The LEA will coordinate the administration of the CHKS with the applicant LEA and any other LEAs.
4. The LEA will make the CHKS data available to the public.
5. The COE TUPE Coordinator will support the LEA if selected to participate in the CYTS administered by the CDPH, and the Evaluation of TUPE Programs in California conducted through the UCOP and TRDRP.
6. Memorandum of Understanding

Consortium applicants must submit a current MOU between the lead agency and all participating districts, dated after release of this RFA. The MOU should clearly describe the roles and responsibilities of the lead agency and consortium members, especially with respect to service provision and data collection. The MOU should affirm that all participating districts agree to the terms of the RFA and agree to implement the services outlined in the application.

The MOU can be signed in one document by all participating members of the consortium and submitted as a PDF through TUPE GEMS. Electronic signatures are acceptable. Alternatively, the lead agency may collect separate signed MOUs from each participating member of the consortium. If separate MOUs are obtained, only one should be uploaded to TUPE GEMS. The remaining MOUs should be filed locally for auditing purposes. **Single LEA applicants do not need to submit an MOU.**

1. Inventory Report

All inventory items costing more than $500 and purchased with any TUPE funds, including current and expired TUPE grants, must be noted on the Inventory Report. If you are purchasing or have purchased inventory, including but not limited to, laptops, copiers, desktop computers, etc., complete and upload an Inventory Report using the inventory template provided. Alternatively, you may certify that you do not meet the criteria for completing the Inventory Report.

#### Optional Section (Additional Services)

In Section 3 of the application, applicants should provide information regarding additional services. This section is **optional** and should only be completed if the applicant anticipates having any remaining funding once the required elements identified earlier in this RFA have been met.If the applicant expends all funding implementing the required sections in this RFA ($6,000 per LEA), the applicant will not be held responsible or reimbursed for completing or implementing any optional, additional activities.

In this section, applicants must indicate whether they plan to provide any additional service(s) in the areas of direct students services, family and community engagement, and staff professional development, and if so, a description of the service(s) that will be provided.

**Note:** Sections 4, 5, 6, 7, and 10 are not part of the Tier 1 application and therefore have been removed from the Tier 1 application in TUPE GEMS.

#### Signature and Submission

The signature and submission process can be initiated only after all other sections have been completed and the Application Lead has verified them in TUPE GEMS. **The signature and submission process is accessible only to the Application Lead.**

Authorized signatures are required from the Application Lead and the Superintendent or Designee. Note that both signatures are due before the application is submitted in TUPE GEMS, or the application may be disqualified.

Additional signers are not supported in TUPE GEMS. If your organization’s practices require additional signatures, such as from a fiscal representative or department head, please complete these separately. You may use the download functionality in TUPE GEMS to export a zip/PDF copy of the application for internal circulation and signature.

Once all sections have been successfully verified by the Application Lead in TUPE GEM, a link for the “Sign and Submit” screen will be enabled. Please note, this “Sign and Submit” link only appears for the Application Lead. After the form requiring input of the name and email addresses for each signee is submitted, TUPE GEMS will generate a packet of the application for signature via DocuSign. The Application Lead and the Superintendent/Designee will receive email notifications from DocuSign that their signature is requested. Signatures may be completed simultaneously; they do not need to be completed in sequence.

Manual submission of signed applications is not accepted. TUPE GEMS will automatically check for submitted applications with completed signatures and will accept them on an hourly basis. Upon acceptance, TUPE GEMS will send an automated email confirmation to the Application Lead and any Co-Applicants. Applications whose signatures are incomplete as of the deadline will be disqualified.

Signature and submission represent certification that all of the information in the application has been reviewed and approved by the Superintendent or Designee, and that all grant requirements will be met as stated pursuant to *HSC* Section 104420(n)(2).

Grantees must retain copies of signed documents for their records and for audit purposes. Please visit the CDE General Assurances and Certifications on the Funding Forms web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/fo/fm/ff.asp> for more information.

### Project Budget

The applicant should provide a general Project Budget for the entire three-year grant period. The budget must align with the proposed program deliverables as described in the application. The CDE will review all proposed budget items for clarity, reasonableness, and purpose. **Prior to funding, the CDE will screen for allowable and non-allowable costs and may reduce the total amount allocated through this grant.**

More detailed budget guidance may be found on the TUPE GEMS Resources web page at <https://sites.google.com/view/tupegemsresources/>.

### Reporting Requirements

Ongoing communication with the CDE is an important part of reporting requirements. Applicants and grantees must respond to inquiries from the CDE promptly and thoroughly.

Additionally, grantees must complete and submit the following regular reports according to the TUPE Deadlines posted in the Resources tab of TUPE GEMS <https://tupegems.ucsd.edu/>:

* One expenditure report per year, including the inventory report and the accounting records for reconciliation purposes (e.g., General Ledger or Budget Report).
* One annual progress report including data on implementation of the Program Plan.

If communication is insufficient, or if required reports are not provided in a timely manner, the CDE may suspend funding to the grantee and, unless the situation is remedied, may terminate funding altogether. In addition, opportunities for technical assistance and capacity building will be made available by the CDE and/or the Capacity Building Project throughout the grant period, and grantees are strongly encouraged to take advantage of them.

### Reading and Scoring the Applications

#### Scoring Form and Rubric

The Scoring Form and Rubric (see Appendix 1) provides the rubric categories that will be evaluated by readers based on the quality of the response and the justification provided for each question in the category. Applications will generally score well if they provide: (1) accurate information on each of the data forms, and (2) thorough and concise details in the narrative sections. Applicants are encouraged to review the Scoring Form and Rubric as they develop their applications.

The optional Additional Services section (Section 3) will not be scored since not all applicants will be proposing additional services.

#### Review and Scoring Process

The review and scoring process will be conducted through TUPE GEMS. The review process will consist of: (1) the initial CDE screening, (2) reader review and online scoring of the narratives, and (3) ranking within the six Geographic Categories.

* + - 1. **CDE Screening.** Each application will first be screened by the CDE to ensure that all technical requirements are met as required in this RFA. Each application successfully passing the initial CDE screening process will be reviewed and scored by readers.
			2. **Reader Review and Online Scoring.** Applications passing the initial screening will be read and scored by two independent readers who will determine the extent to which the applications meet the requirements identified in the Scoring Form and Rubric (Appendix 1). Each element in the rubric will be scored as Outstanding (3 points), Good (2 points), Developing (1 point), or Weak (0 points).

The readers’ scores will be averaged to obtain the application’s final score. If the scores are widely divergent, the readers will have the opportunity to discuss the application and re-score. If the readers are still unable to reach consensus, the application will be assigned to a third reader. The score from the third reader will be paired with the closest score from the original readers and then averaged to obtain the application’s final score.

Comments from individual readers will not be provided to applicants, and the professional judgment of readers will not be considered on appeal.

* + - 1. **Geographic Categories.** Applications will be ranked from highest to lowest score in each of the six geographic categories (as identified by the applicant in Section 1: General Information) and funded accordingly until all funds are exhausted.

Upon successful completion of the review and scoring process, the CDE will post an ITA Funding List on the CDE TUPE Funding Results web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/at/tupefunding.asp>.

### Appeals Process

Applicants who wish to appeal the CDE’s Intent to Award list must submit a letter of appeal. The letter must be written on the applicant agency’s letterhead and signed by the Superintendent or Designee. An electronic signature is acceptable. A copy of the signed letter must be uploaded to TUPE GEMS no later than 10 business days after ITA posting.

Letters of appeal that are late, emailed, unsigned, or not submitted via TUPE GEMS will not be considered.

Only appeals based on claims that the CDE’s actions violated a state statute or regulation will be considered. Appeals based on the professional judgment of application readers will not be considered.

The letter of appeal must include:

* A clear, concise statement of the action being appealed;
* The state statute and/or regulation which the CDE is alleged to have violated;
* The specific evidence being submitted to support the appeal; and
* The specific remedy sought.

The CDE will make a decision on the appeal within 20 business days of the filing deadline for appeals. The decision will be the final administrative action afforded to the appellant.

### Appendix 1: Scoring Form and Rubric

| **Rubric Category** | **Maximum Points**  |
| --- | --- |
| Tobacco-Free Policy Development and Implementation | 6 |
| Project Monitoring and Evaluation (California Healthy Kids Survey [CHKS]) | 6 |
| **Total** | **12** |

Each of the rubric categories that are required for this Request for Applications will be evaluated by the readers based on the quality of the responses and the justification provided for each question. Section 3: Additional Services (optional) is not scored, therefore it is not included as part of the Scoring Form and Rubric. Scores may range from Outstanding (3 points), Good (2 points), Developing (1 point), to Weak (0 points), and are based on the following defining criteria:

* **Outstanding:** The applicant’s response is exceptionally clear, specific, and relevant, and presents a compelling argument supporting the proposal.
* **Good:** The response is sufficiently clear, specific, and relevant, and presents a reasonable argument supporting the proposal.
* **Developing:** The response is in some respects clear, specific, and relevant, but does not fully support the proposal.
* **Weak:** The response is insufficient. The information provided is not clear, specific, or relevant, and does support the proposal.

| **Tobacco-Free Policy Development and Implementation**  | **Outstanding** | **Good** | **Developing** | **Weak** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| How well does the applicant describe actions that will be taken to ensure effective communication of their tobacco-free policy to students, family and community, and staff? | **3** | **2** | **1** | **0** |
| How well does the applicant describe steps to address policy violations and to ensure that equitable practices, such as the Alternatives to Suspension and Expulsion, are adopted locally? | **3** | **2** | **1** | **0** |
| **Total** |  |  |  |  |

| **Project Monitoring and Evaluation (California Healthy Kids Survey Section Only)** | **Outstanding** | **Complete** | **Developing** | **Weak** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| How well does the applicant describe their compliance monitoring process for ensuring that all participating districts administer CHKS? | **3** | **2** | **1** | **0** |
| How well does the applicant describe their plan to ensure that CHKS data is utilized to inform the local program(s)?  | **3** | **2** | **1** | **0** |
| **Total** |  |  |  |  |