

# MARIN COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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## **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) California Curriculum Guidance Study**

Funded through the 2025-2026 California Budget Act

**ISSUED BY:**  
The Marin County Office of Education (MCOE)  
MCOE 2026-RFP-002

**ISSUED ON:**  
October 8, 2025

**DEADLINE TO SUBMIT PROPOSALS:**  
October 31, 2025



**MARIN COUNTY**  
OFFICE OF EDUCATION  
Supporting Learning for ALL Students

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## **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)**

### **California Curriculum Guidance Study**

The Marin County Office of Education (“MCOE”) invites qualified research and nonprofit organizations (“Respondent”) to submit proposals (“Proposals”) in response to this Request for Proposals (“RFP”). Proposals shall comply with the requirements set forth herein.

#### **I. Timeline**

Activity	Date
Release of Request for Proposals	October 8, 2025
Deadline for Submission of Questions	October 20, 2025 at 4:00 P.M. (PDT)
Responses to Questions Posted Online	October 27, 2025
Deadline to Submit Proposals	October 31, 2025 at 4:00 P.M. (PDT)
Announcement of Awardee	By November 19, 2025 at 4:00 P.M. (PST)
Duration of Services	December 1, 2025 through March 1, 2027
<b><i>Note: All dates in this table are preliminary and subject to change.</i></b>	

#### **II. Purpose**

The MCOE is seeking qualified research or nonprofit organizations with expertise in education research, education policy, and data collection to satisfy the duties outlined in the authorizing legislation, as described in Section III., *State Statute and Authority*.

The selected entity will conduct a study of the processes by which other states develop curriculum guidance and will report recommendations to improve and streamline California’s approach.

#### **III. State Statute and Authority**

Assembly Bill (AB) 121, Statutes of 2025, Chapter 8, Section 87 appropriates the sum of one million dollars (\$1,000,000) from the General Fund to the Superintendent of Public Instruction for allocation to a county office of education (Grantee) to contract, with approval of the executive director of the State Board of Education (SBE), with one or more research or nonprofit organizations (Subcontractor) to study the processes by which other states develop curriculum guidance and to make recommendations about how to improve and streamline California’s processes.

Relevant statutory requirements set forth in Section 87 of AB 121, Chapter 8 of the Statutes of 2025:

- (a) For the 2025–26 fiscal year, the sum of one million dollars (\$1,000,000) is hereby appropriated from the General Fund to the Superintendent of Public Instruction for allocation to a county office of education to contract, with approval of the executive director of the State Board of Education, with one or more research or nonprofit organizations to study the processes by which other states develop curriculum guidance and to make recommendations

about how to improve and streamline California’s processes.

(b) The selected entity or entities shall explore all of the following topics related to the development of curriculum guidance in other states and possible options for improving California’s processes:

(1) Current statutes, regulations, and policies governing the processes and practices in California, including the roles and responsibilities of the State Department of Education, the Instructional Quality Commission, the State Board of Education, the Legislature, local educational agencies, educators, parents and guardians, and the public.

(2) The processes and cycles for developing, revising, and adopting content standards, curriculum frameworks, and other instructional guidance, and, if applicable, how available instructional time in elementary and secondary schools is considered. The processes examined shall also include the process for selecting aligned instructional resources in other states.

(3) How the curriculum guidance and instructional resources are evaluated for the extent to which they support the teaching and learning of state content standards in other states.

(4) What additional guidance, tools, professional development or other resources, including digital resources and platforms, are provided to educators to support the teaching and learning of state content standards in other states.

(c) The selected entity or entities shall, on or before January 1, 2027, submit a report to the appropriate policy and fiscal committees of the Legislature, the Superintendent, the Department of Finance, and the executive director of the state board, consistent with Section 9795 of the Government Code, that includes the findings, a summary of processes that inform curriculum guidance, and recommendations for how the state curriculum guidance process can be improved and streamlined.

(d) The development of the report pursuant to subdivision (c) shall be informed by engagement with interest holders that results in meaningful input through interviews, surveys, and listening sessions with education partners, including all of the following:

(1) The state board, Instructional Quality Commission, and state Department of Education staff responsible for implementation of current California processes.

(2) Educators and staff from California and other states to seek their input about the resources they need from the state.

(3) Publishers and content developers to seek their views of what they need from the curriculum guidance process.

(4) Legislative staff, executive agency staff, and other interestholders, including, but not limited to, representatives from the California Community Colleges, the California State University, and the University of California.

(e) For purposes of making the computations required by Section 8 of Article XVI of the California Constitution, the appropriation made by subdivision (a) shall be deemed to be “General Fund revenues appropriated for school districts,” as defined in subdivision (c) of Section 41202 of the Education Code, for the 2025–26 fiscal year, and included within the “total allocations to school districts and community college districts from General Fund proceeds of taxes appropriated pursuant to Article XIII B,” as defined in subdivision (e) of Section 41202 of the Education Code, for the 2025–26 fiscal year.

For more information on the current process for updating California's approved instructional materials, please visit: [Instructional Materials Evaluation and Adoption - CalEdFacts](#) and [Curriculum Frameworks Adoption Process - CalEdFacts](#).

#### IV. **Scope of Services**

- A. Respondent must describe their expertise in the following domains:
- 1) Education Policy and Curriculum Development, Guidance, and Resources
  - 2) Comparative Education Research
  - 3) Research Design and Methodology
  - 4) Interest Holder Engagement and Communication
- B. Respondent must describe the overall approach in developing research criteria to ensure that all the following required elements are included in the study:
- 1) Current statutes, regulations, and policies governing the processes and practices in California, including the roles and responsibilities of the California Department of Education (CDE), the Instructional Quality Commission (IQC), the SBE, the Legislature, local educational agencies, educators, parents and guardians, and the public.
  - 2) The processes and cycles for developing, revising, and adopting content standards, curriculum frameworks, and other instructional guidance, and, if applicable, how available instructional time in elementary and secondary schools is considered. The processes examined shall also include the process for selecting aligned instructional resources in other states.
  - 3) How the curriculum guidance and instructional resources are evaluated for the extent to which they support the teaching and learning of state content standards in other states.
  - 4) What, if any additional guidance, tools, professional development or other resources, including digital resources and platforms, are provided to educators to support the teaching and learning of state content standards in other states.
- C. Respondent must describe their approach to engagement with interest holders from education partners, including but not limited to all the following:
- 1) The SBE, IQC, and CDE staff responsible for implementation of current California processes.
  - 2) Education department staff and any associated subcontractors from other states regarding their unique state processes.
  - 3) Educators and staff from California and other states to seek their input about the resources they need from the state.
  - 4) Publishers and content developers to seek their input about what they need to support the curriculum adoption process.

- 5) Legislative staff, executive agency staff, and other interest holders, including, but not limited to, representatives from the California Community Colleges, the California State University, and the University of California.
- D. Respondent must describe their approach for the successful delivery of a final report, consistent with Section 9795 of the Government Code, that includes the research findings, a summary of processes that inform curriculum guidance, and *recommendations for how the state curriculum guidance* processes can be improved and streamlined.
- E. The selected Respondent will be expected to work closely with the CDE, in collaboration with the SBE, and assigned project staff.

## V. General Proposal Information

### A. Respondents' Eligibility/Minimum Qualifications

Research or nonprofit organizations legally constituted and qualified to do business within the State of California. The Respondent must serve as the Primary Contractor and will be the responsible entity for ensuring that all tasks and activities are successfully completed.

To be eligible, applicants must clearly demonstrate the following qualifications:

- 1) Minimum of five years of recent (within the last seven years) experience working within the California educational context and have familiarity with California education policy relating to curriculum guidance and instructional practices
- 2) Evidence of nonprofit or research organization status
- 3) Commitment for the duration of the study
- 4) Capacity for documentation and data sharing

### B. Questions and Clarifications

Respondents may submit questions and requests for clarifications or additional information regarding this RFP, in writing, via email to [statewide\\_rfp@marinschools.org](mailto:statewide_rfp@marinschools.org) by **October 20, 2025 at 4:00 P.M.** (Pacific Daylight Time). The subject line of the email must state: "**RFP QUESTIONS: CURRICULUM GUIDANCE STUDY**."

MCOE will endeavor to provide responses and clarifications by **October 27, 2025**. At its discretion, MCOE may respond to questions that are submitted late or not in proper format. All submitted questions and responses will be posted publicly on the MCOE website at [MCOE Request for Proposals](#).

The MCOE reserves the right to rephrase or not answer any question or inquiry submitted, regardless of timing or form of the question. Respondents are solely responsible for monitoring any questions or answers posted on the MCOE website and incorporating any answer or information provided by MCOE into their Proposals. Respondents shall not contact any other MCOE employee or agent regarding this RFP except for the MCOE Contact identified above.

### C. Award Terms and Conditions

- 1) Agreements with the selected Respondent will be executed on a year-to-year basis, subject to state budget authority and MCOE approval.

- 2) Carryover of funds may be permitted with prior approval.
- 3) The selected Respondent must comply with all state and federal laws related to nondiscrimination, fiscal accountability, and reporting.
- 4) The selected Respondent must disclose any past or current business or other relationship(s) with the CDE, SBE, or MCOE.
- 5) The selected Respondent must participate in all monthly partner meetings.
- 6) The selected Respondent must comply with all required reporting as outlined in Section VII., Reporting Requirements.

## **VI. Proposal Specifications/Requirements for Submittal**

Each Respondent must submit a Proposal that contains all the required items listed in this section. Any Proposal that does not include all required items may be disqualified from consideration, but the MCOE reserves the right to consider Proposals that do not meet all the requirements, at its sole discretion. Proposals should not exceed 15 pages, excluding curricula vitae of identified personnel. Proposals can utilize tables and/or bullets to clearly communicate main ideas and flow of work.

### **A. Cover Letter (2 page maximum)**

### **B. Scope of Services**

Please refer to Section IV., Scope of Services.

### **C. Description of Respondent Organization (1 page maximum)**

Include the name and contact information for your organization (address, telephone number, fax number), as well as the name and contact information (telephone number and email address) of the principal contact for your application. Provide a brief history of the organization, including:

- 1) Number of years in business/practice
- 2) Senior member(s) and length of association
- 3) Whether the organization may have been known by a different name while under substantially the same management
- 4) Location of office where project team members will design and oversee the evaluation program
- 5) List of basic services generally provided by the organization

### **D. Organizational Capacity and Previous Experience (2 page maximum)**

- 1) Proposals must describe and demonstrate the Respondent's capacity and ability to perform and administer all activities they are proposing in Section IV., Scope of Services.
- 2) Proposals must also reflect the Respondent's understanding of the requirements of this project, as outlined in the authorizing legislation.

- 3) If the Respondent will be subcontracting a portion of the work, the Proposal must describe and demonstrate the subcontractor's capacity and ability to perform the portion of the work in which the subcontractor will be involved. The Proposal must establish that all proposed subcontractors meet the eligibility requirements set forth under Section V.A., Respondents' Eligibility.

E. Qualifications of Respondent Personnel (2 page maximum, including Organization Chart)

Please include the name of all individuals proposed by the organization to perform the duties described above in Section IV., Scope of Services, including the qualifications of each and what each would be doing. Current résumés for each individual must be included as attachments to the submitted Proposal and will not be counted in the page limits.

E.1. Project Lead

Proposals must identify a dedicated Project Lead by name and include descriptions of how the proposed Project Lead meets the qualifications described herein. The Proposal must describe how the Project Lead will effectively coordinate, manage, and monitor the efforts of assigned staff, including subcontractors and/or consultants, to ensure that all tasks, activities and functions are completed in an effective and timely manner.

The Project Lead will serve as the primary contact for MCOE and will be expected to provide regular updates and ongoing communications with identified MCOE staff.

E.2. Changes to Key Personnel

Once a Respondent is selected, the assigned project personnel, including the Project Lead, cannot be changed or substituted without MCOE's prior written approval. Any substitute personnel shall meet or exceed the qualifications and experience level of the previously assigned project staff/personnel.

E.3. Subcontracts

Subcontractors must have 501(c)(3) status and legal authority to work in California in order to enter into a contract with the Respondent. A subcontract is defined as any and all agreements between a Respondent and another entity, individual or business, for the accomplishment of any task, or component of a task, in whole or part, described in this RFP. All work assigned to subcontractors remains the responsibility of the selected Respondent. For each proposed subcontractor, the Respondent must include:

- Description of the activities and functions that will be performed by the subcontractor/consultant;
- Brief explanation as to why the subcontractor was selected; and
- Curriculum vitae for each consultant or personnel of a subcontractor who will be assigned to the project.

E.4. Organization Chart

An organization chart, including organizational titles, project roles, and names should be included with the Proposal.

**F. Conflict of Interest**

Please disclose any past or current business or other relationship(s) with instructional materials publishers or MCOE, CDE, SBE and other state departments of education.

**G. Project Budget**

Provide a detailed breakdown and narrative justification of the proposed costs for the activities described in the Proposal.

The total annual fees and costs must be stated as a “not-to-exceed” amount. Describe Respondent’s willingness to commit to the estimate provided, and what factors may influence the estimate in the event of technical and programmatic changes.

- Clearly describe how proposed costs are necessary, reasonable, and aligned to project activities.
- Fee structure (e.g., hourly rate, fixed rate deliverable, or a combination of hourly rate within a fixed rate, not-to-exceed deliverable)
- Any additional relevant fees/costs
- All expenditures must contribute to accomplishing the project’s scope and activities.
- Budget revisions and carryovers must receive prior approval from CDE/MCOE.
- Funds may not supplant existing expenditures.
- The awarded Respondent must comply with audit and fiscal accountability requirements established by state law.

**H. References (Half page maximum)**

Provide a list of clients (including name, address, email address, and telephone number of contact person, as well as a bullet description of the work performed) for whom Respondent has performed similar services.

**VII. Reporting Requirements**

As part of the grant award, the selected Respondent must commit to meeting all reporting requirements. The selected Respondent will be required to comply with the final reporting schedule by the specified deadlines:

Due By Date	Report Name	Description
January 16, 2026	First Draft Research Criteria	Submit to CDE the first draft of research criteria used to ensure the required elements are included in the study (see Section IV. B.).
August 31, 2026	Draft of Preliminary Research Findings	Submit to CDE a draft of the preliminary research findings using the criteria established in the research criteria. This report must include the extent to which engagement with interest holders informed the results through meaningful input from education partners, including all the following:

		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The SBE, IQC, and CDE staff responsible for implementation of current California processes.</li> <li>2) Education department staff from other states regarding their unique state processes.</li> <li>3) Educators and staff from California and other states to seek their input about the resources they need from the state.</li> <li>4) Publishers and content developers to seek their input about what they need to support the curriculum adoption process.</li> <li>5) Legislative staff, executive agency staff, and other interest holders, including, but not limited to, representatives from the California Community Colleges, the California State University, and the University of California.</li> </ol>
October 30, 2026	Detailed Draft of Report	Submit to CDE a detailed draft of the report, consistent with Section 9795 of the Government Code, that includes the findings, a summary of processes that inform curriculum guidance process can be improved and streamlined.
January 1, 2027	Final Report	Upon Approval, submit a final report of recommendations to the appropriate policy and fiscal committees of the Legislature, the Superintendent, the Department of Finance, and the Executive Director of the SBE.

#### VIII. Rights of the Marin County Office of Education

This RFP does not commit the MCOE to award a contract or pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a response to this RFP. MCOE, at its sole discretion, may reject all Proposals and/or enter into direct negotiations with a Respondent or other party and enter into an agreement for all or part of the services set forth herein outside of the RFP process. The MCOE reserves the right to accept all or part of any Proposal or to cancel in part or in its entirety the RFP. The MCOE further reserves the right to select the Respondent that it considers to be in the best interests of MCOE.

#### IX. Submission Details

- A. As noted above, MCOE will begin accepting Proposals upon the date of issuance of this RFP, and will continue to accept Proposals until **October 31, 2025 at 4:00 P.M.** (Pacific Daylight Time).
- B. Respondents must submit an electronic signed copy of the original Proposal (as a PDF) via email to **statewide\_rfp@marinschools.org** with the subject line: **"RFP SUBMISSION: CURRICULUM GUIDANCE STUDY."** Hard copy Proposals may not be accepted.
- C. Respondent shall be solely responsible for ensuring its Proposal arrives to MCOE by the deadline set forth above in order to be eligible for MCOE's initial selection process. The MCOE shall not be responsible for any technical issues with email delivery.
- D. All Proposals should be verified before submission. Adjustments may not be permitted

after submission. The MCOE will not be held responsible for any Respondent errors or omissions in the preparation of their Proposal.

- E. Any costs incurred by the Respondent in the preparation of any information or material submitted in response to this RFP shall be the Respondent's sole responsibility.
- F. The MCOE reserves the right to reject any and/or all Proposals, or to refuse to negotiate or withhold the award of any contract, for any or no reason. The MCOE may also waive or decline to waive irregularities in any Proposal. The MCOE reserves the right to select the Proposal(s) that it considers to be in the best interests of the MCOE.
- G. The MCOE may begin negotiations with the selected Respondent at the MCOE's discretion.
- H. Upon selection of a Respondent, the MCOE shall provide an agreement for negotiation by the Parties.
- I. All Proposals submitted in response to the RFP become the property of MCOE and a public record and, as such, are subject to public disclosure.

**X. Receipt of Proposals; Contact Information**

Respondents are not to contact MCOE, including Marin County Board members, the Marin County Superintendent or any other employee or representative of the MCOE regarding this RFP. Contacting such officials, employees and/or representatives may result in the Respondent's disqualification. MCOE shall not be bound by any statement made by any MCOE employee or agent regarding this RFP and/or the work set forth herein, except for the responses provided by the MCOE as set forth herein.

All inquiries or questions for additional information should be directed in writing to **statewide\_rfp@marinschools.org** by **October 20, 2025 at 4:00 P.M.** (Pacific Daylight Time). MCOE will make every effort to respond, but any failure or delay in responding shall not excuse a Respondent's failure to comply with any requirements for submission set forth herein, including the submission deadline.

In order to be considered in the initial evaluation of timely Proposals, the Respondent must submit an electronic signed copy of the original Proposal (as a PDF) via email to **statewide\_rfp@marinschools.org** by **October 31, 2025 at 4:00 P.M.** (Pacific Daylight Time) with the subject line: **"RFP SUBMISSION: CURRICULUM GUIDANCE STUDY."**