Offered Services: School Turnaround Leadership Development

Introduction

Program Contact
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Leadership is a critical factor in creating a welcoming, equitable, and productive school environment in which students learn and consistently demonstrate strong academic achievement and growth and in which teachers are empowered to learn and grow professionally and collaboratively. In districts and schools needing improvement, leadership is acutely important. This grant and associated support offer an opportunity for Colorado educators to partner with leadership development programs that are specifically focused on developing leaders to serve students in low-performing schools. The School Turnaround Leadership Development (STLD) grant opportunity funds and connects school and district leaders with vetted providers for leadership development programming.

Participants in the School Turnaround Leadership Development Grant will have the opportunity to partner with one of the identified leadership development programs. Participants are expected to develop capacity that will directly impact student learning. The STLD grant opportunity offers two distinct tracks:

- **Turnaround Leadership:** This opportunity is intended for district and/or school leaders who are responsible for leading turnaround efforts in schools identified for improvement (see eligibility). Typical participants include district instructional leaders, principal supervisors, principals, assistant principals, and teacher leaders[1]. Approved programs focus on building turnaround competencies in participating leaders through a mix of cohort-based learning opportunities and opportunities for supported on-site application of turnaround competencies.
- **Leadership for Students with Disabilities:** This opportunity may be of particular interest for leaders in district or school systems that are identifying performance concerns for their students with disabilities, either through ESEA identification or state/local data. To make the most of this opportunity, districts and schools are encouraged to send teams to participate in offered trainings. A team should include at least two people representing both administration and special education (e.g. principal, assistant principal, Special Ed director or Interventionist). Note: BOCES team members supporting identified districts and schools are also encouraged to participate as part of a district-sponsored team.

[1] STLD is focused on the development of school and district leaders. It may be appropriate, as part of the leadership development program, to include other school staff positions. Teacher leaders, however, may not be the sole focus of STLD funding proposal.

Eligibility & Prioritization

Eligibility. Schools that meet the following criteria are eligible to apply to receive funding to support the development of school or district leaders:

- Schools identified for improvement under ESSA as Comprehensive Support (CS), Targeted Support (TS), or Additional Targeted Support (ATS); and/or
- Schools with a state identification School Performance Framework plan type of Priority Improvement, Turnaround, or On Watch

Prioritization. If not all EASI proposals can be funded, proposals that meet grant expectations will be funded in the order of the EASI school-level prioritization list. Schools with the highest number of prioritization points will be funded first. District level support requests will use the average prioritization of all EASI eligible schools. District level supports that serve specific EASI-eligible schools will use the average prioritization of the included EASI eligible schools. Details on how prioritization points are calculated and the points for each EASI eligible school are available on the EASI Resources and Technical Assistance webpage.

Program Considerations & Fit

Program Considerations. Schools or districts with upcoming or pending leadership changes should first consult with the Program Contact to determine if the timing of the staffing change aligns to the timeline of the grant. Grantees must select a STLD provider from the CDE Advisory List of Providers and review the 2026-27 STLD Providers Overview Grid. By applying for funding to participate in one of the identified STLD provider programs, participants are not guaranteed acceptance or enrollment in the program. Each identified provider has a limited capacity and number of slots for each program. In addition to submitting this application for funding, applicants should also contact the selected provider to initiate their unique application process.

Program Fit. STLD is a good fit for school or district leadership willing to engage in additional professional learning opportunities to develop their leadership skills. STLD may serve as a complement to other EASI supports, but funding of multiple EASI supports per school or district is dependent on prioritization and available funding. If STLD is awarded along with another EASI support, there is an expectation of alignment between STLD and the other improvement support.

Sequence of Program Support

The sequence of the work is based on the selected STLD provider and program. The approach, duration, and sequence of the leadership development engagement are determined by the provider in agreement with the grantee.

Available Funds & Duration

Available Funds. Awards up to $150,000 per school are based on the cost of the selected STLD approved provider and size of the identified leadership team. Award amounts may not exceed the cost of the STLD provider costs supported by a draft scope of work or quote from the selected provider. Travel may be requested, but there is no guarantee that travel to and from the leadership program will be provided. Travel funding is dependent upon available funds.

Duration. Program support is designed to support STLD participation from an approved STLD provider and the duration is dependent on the selected STLD program.

Allowable Use of Funds

Funds are intended to support participation in a leadership development program from an approved STLD provider. Allowable use of funds includes costs associated with:

- School or district turnaround leaders to participate in turnaround leadership development programs from an approved STLD provider
    - *Note: A school or district may opt for additional school improvement implementation supports from an approved STLD provider, but only the cost of the STLD program offering is allowable.*
- Reimburse school turnaround leaders for the costs they incur in completing turnaround leadership development programs offered by identified providers (i.e. materials, books)
- Reasonable travel costs (airfare, rental car, mileage, hotel) to attend the selected Targeted Professional Learning up to the amount supported by district policy or U.S. General Services Administration per diem and mileage rates. The grant cannot pay for travel upgrades (e.g. business class flights, upgraded car rentals, travel lounge access).
    - *Note: Funds to cover travel costs may NOT be awarded if requests exceed available funds in a given grant award year. Schools and districts may request funds for travel costs, but there is no guarantee that a grantee will receive funds for travel in the final award amount.*

Funds may not be used to provide stipends or benefits for the participation of school or district leaders in the selected STLD program. Funds also may not be used to support school or district implementation efforts above and beyond the set leadership development program offering or such efforts stemming from the leadership development program.

Budget Recommendations. For the application submission, a draft budget should include the costs associated with the selected STLD provider's program. Any expenses related to an external provider must be supported by a scope of work (draft version acceptable) or quote that clearly outlines timelines, deliverables, number of staff members, and costs for the eligible school. If the cost of the STLD provider program exceeds $150,000, budget description must indicate how the remaining expenses will be paid.

Note: If entering indirect costs, the total request amount may not exceed the maximum allowable amount.

Indirect Costs. Applicants may elect to include indirect costs in the application budget. Indirect cost rates based on the district's restricted indirect cost rate. The total request amount (indirect costs plus other budget lines) may not exceed the maximum allowable amount. There are some exclusions for distorting items that apply, such as the limitation of indirects on the first $50,000 on provider contracted services. Grantees should note that indirect costs are only allowed on federal awards. If the grantee receives a state award, indirect costs must be removed during the post-award revision process. More information regarding indirect cost rates is available on CDE's School Finance webpage at https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdefinance/icrc.

Fund Considerations.

- Funds from this opportunity must be used to **supplement and not supplant** any federal, state, and local funds currently being used to provide activities.

- Post-award revisions must be submitted and approved in the online system prior to incurring expenses. Any expenses incurred prior to approval are the responsibility of the LEA. All post-award revisions must be approved by 06/30.
- For federal awards, funds must be obligated by 09/30 and requested by 11/1 of each respective fiscal year.
- For state awards, funds must be obligated by 06/30 of the final year of the grant cycle.
- A school or district may carry funds forward in alignment with funding source restrictions and with CDE approval. At the end of the grant performance period, any non-requested federal funds are reverted and any unspent state funds must be returned to the state.
- CDE may terminate a grant award upon thirty days' notice if it is deemed by CDE that the applicant is not fulfilling the requirements of the funded program as specified in the approved project application, or if the program is generating less than satisfactory results.
- Multi-year or future award year amounts are contingent on allocations of state and federal funds to CDE in each respective fiscal year.

Important Program Dates

Program Dates	Activity
September- December	Meet with the appropriate school and district teams to discuss interest in applying for EASI support and develop an application. If needed, meet with supporting CDE staff.
December	Application due
January	Award notifications
February-April	Awardees complete all application procedures with identified STLD provider program
May	Confirm STLD participants and selected STLD program no later than 5/31.
End of Program Reporting	At the end of the first year of participation, STLD participants are requested to complete the STLD evaluation survey.

Evaluation and Reporting

Each grantee of the program must, at a minimum, agree to the following evaluation, reporting, and/or progress monitoring components:

- Each district must confirm STLD participants and STLD programming by 5/31 following award notifications.
- Each STLD participant must report on the following through a survey evaluation:
  - Number of people who participated and in which programs;
  - Schools served;
  - Completion status of people who participated in STLD program;
  - Impact on student achievement and school culture;
  - Impact on school systems and staff practices aligned to the Four Domains for Rapid School Improvement; and
  - Change in principal or aspiring leader's actions/behavior, as measured by self and staff assessments.
- Any school or district contact working with an approved external provider funded through the EASI grant may be asked to serve as a reference for provider approvals as part of the CDE School & District Support RFI process in the following year.

- Final Expenditure Report (FER) in GAINS each fiscal year by 09/30.
- *Note: All data collected will protect personally identifiable information (PII) protected and is only reported on an aggregate level for purposes of evaluating the EASI support and/or supporting future program improvements.*

Program Assurances

LEA Commitments:

- LEA to develop specific contracts with identified leadership development provider programs.
- Any additional expenses beyond what are approved in the application will be the responsibility of the LEA.
- Ensure STLD funds are only used for approved STLD provider programs, participants, and eligible schools included in the original application.
- Ensure the LEA and staff will not discriminate against anyone regarding race, gender, national origin, color, disability, or age.
- LEA will be required to submit Final Expenditure Reports (FER) the end of each fiscal year.
- LEA understands that unobligated funds state funds will be returned to CDE and unobligated federal funds will be rescinded at the conclusion of the grant cycle.
- Funds will be used to supplement and not supplant any federal, state, and local moneys currently being used to provide services and grant dollars will be administered by the appropriate fiscal agent.
- Funded projects will maintain appropriate fiscal and program records and fiscal audits of this program will be conducted by the grantees as a part of their regular audits.
- If any findings of misuse of these funds are discovered, project funds will be returned to CDE.

District Leadership Commitments:

- Ensure the STLD participant list, final roster, is up to date and submitted to CDE by May 31st of the application year.
- District staff will provide requested data to CDE within the time frames specified on the evaluation requirements.
- Communicate and seek approval from CDE for any changes in the selected STLD program prior to services being changed (i.e. delayed participation, change in provider, change in STLD participants)

STLD Participant Commitments:

- STLD participants will engage in the selected STLD provider program and complete the program specific requirements.
- STLD participants will work with and provide requested data to CDE within the time frames specified on the evaluation requirements.
- STLD participants will complete all reporting requirements.

Related Resources & Information

Colorado Department of Education's EASI Website

www.cde.state.co.us/fedprograms/easiapplication

EASI: School Turnaround Leadership Development Program

www.cde.state.co.us/fedprograms/districtwide-turnaroundleaders

CDE: School Turnaround Leadership Development Program
www.cde.state.co.us/accountability/turnaroundleadership