# Other Services: School Transitions

## Introduction

| Program Contact |
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School closures and consolidations are challenging for students, staff, and families at both the closing and receiving schools. School Transitions offers support focused on ensuring that students, staff, and families are welcomed and successfully integrated into a new school community following the closure or consolidation of schools. Funds for School Transitions must be focused on the implementation of one core component outlined in CDE's Family, School, Community Partnership Strategy Guide 2.1 (FSCP).

## Program Description

School Transitions is designed as a short-term support aimed at supporting transition activities in the spring prior to school closure or consolidation through the beginning of the new school year. Grantees are asked to narrow the transition support to one core component from the FSCP strategy guide aligned to the highest priority needs resulting from the school closure or consolidation. Core components of the FSCP strategy guide include:

- Welcoming All Families into the School Community
- Communicating Effectively
- Supporting Student Success
- Speaking Up for Every Child
- Sharing Power
- Collaborating with Community

Every school closure or consolidation is unique based on the local context. Grantees are strongly encouraged to consider the highest priorities of both the closing and receiving school(s) in developing the focus of the School Transitions support.

## Eligibility & Prioritization

**Prerequisites.** A school closure or school consolidation plan must have been approved by the local board of education that is taking effect at the end of 2026-27. If the local board of education approval of the school closure is pending prior to the application deadline, a district may apply with the understanding that funding is contingent upon the school closure or consolidation and funds may not be reallocated to other improvement efforts if the school closure is not approved.

*Note: In scenarios of a potential school closure or consolidation without a clear date of local board of education approval/voting, please contact the program staff listed above to discuss the local context to determine if School Transitions is an appropriate support.*

**Eligibility.** A district is eligible to apply on behalf of schools if either the closing school or the receiving school (receiving at least 50% of the student population from a school closure or consolidation) is identified as:

- 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

*Note: In scenarios of a school consolidation involving several school sites, please contact the program staff listed above to confirm eligibility.*

**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**. The timeline for use of funds has a short duration and funds are not allowed to be reallocated or extended. Districts should have a clear school closure or school consolidation plan in place with defined uses of the funds to support student, staff, and family transitions into a new school community.

**Program Fit**. School Transitions is a narrow support designed only to address needs arising from school closure or consolidation. If the receiving school is eligible for EASI supports, districts may want to consider District Designed & Led- Major Improvement Strategy focused on the FSCP Strategy Guide 2.1 over School Transitions to extend the duration of the support and amount of the grant.

## Sequence of Program Support

The sequence of School Transitions is dependent on the local context and needs related to the upcoming school closure or consolidation. All activities must be aligned to the selected core component of the FSCP Strategy Guide 2.1 to support transition and integration efforts and are limited in duration but may vary based on needs. Below is a sample sequence under School Transitions:

Example- *FSCP Strategy Guide 2.1 Core Component- Welcoming All Families into the School Community*

- Spring preparations for upcoming school closure and transition- Students, Staff, and Families (March-May 2027)
    - Launch student, staff, and family surveys to determine the needs of the impacted school communities as it relates to the school closure, barriers to family participation, and engagement efforts
    - School Transitions team (staff, student, and family representatives from closing and receiving schools) review survey results and develop a plan for building a community of belonging and inclusiveness
- Summer Transition Activities (June-August 2027)
    - New and incoming staff members attend summer professional learning to develop skill sets related to building communities and developing a sense of belonging
    - Planning and implementation days to incorporate professional learning into the plan developed by the School Transitions team
- Back to School Kick-Off Activities (August-September 2027)

- Activities related to the successful launch of a new school year as a new school community

## Available Funds & Duration

**Available Funds.** Awards are up to $50,000 in Year 1 for each school closure or consolidation with a district cap of $100,000 per year. For school consolidation plans with multi-year implementation plans, applicants should only apply in the final year. A school may not receive School Transitions funding for school closure or consolidation plans over multiple EASI cohorts.

**Duration.** Program support is designed as a short-term school transition support for ending the current school year and beginning the next school year following a school closure or consolidation. Grantees are expected to obligate funds by 09/30. Funds remaining after 09/30 may not be reallocated to another improvement effort or extended.

## Allowable Use of Funds

Funds are intended to support the transition of students, staff, and families as aligned to the selected core component of the FSCP Strategy Guide 2.1. Allowable use of funds includes costs associated with:

- Hiring an external provider to assess and review needs of students from a closing school and/or develop a school transition plan
- Hiring an external provider to facilitate student, staff, family or community engagement activities
- Development of a school transition team to support FSCP efforts (stipends, benefits, non-food meeting costs)
- Staff time for the implementation of school transition activities aligned to the FSCP guide (stipends, benefits)
- Stakeholder engagement (stipends for teachers, translation, childcare, surveys, focus groups, etc.)
- Development and implementation of a two-way communication to support the school closure transition
- Student transition engagement activities related to the school closure transition
- Creation of an inclusive environment for students, staff, and families (events, childcare, materials)
- Other expenses aligned with the selected core component of the FSCP guide

Funds may not be used to provide stipends or bonuses to school or district leaders involved in the school closure or consolidation process. Food expenses are only allowable if they are for community engagement events and are limited to light snacks.

**Budget Recommendations.** For the application, a draft budget should include how the funds may be used. General placeholders are not acceptable due to the short duration of this grant support. Any expenses related to an external provider must be supported by a scope of work (draft version acceptable) that clearly outlines timelines, deliverables, involved schools, and costs for the LEA.

*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 |
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| **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 |
| **March- September** | School Transitions support implemented to prepare for the school closure or consolidation and support beginning of year activities |
| **September 30th** | All funds obligated |

## Evaluation and Reporting

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

- Develop and report on implementation milestones and performance targets
- Other evaluation survey results as determined in partnership with CDE
- 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:**

- Designate a program contact person or small working team who will be responsible for the implementation of the supported improvement effort related to the school closure
- 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.

## Related Resources & Information

**Colorado Department of Education's EASI Website**

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