Other Services: Targeted Professional Learning

Introduction

Targeted Professional Learning is designed to enable school staff to attend a vetted and approved professional learning option. This is short-duration support with a narrow focus on targeted professional learning areas. Guided by CDE's Strategic Plan (2025-28) priorities, three targeted areas were identified as aligned to CDE's Four Domains for Rapid School Improvement. The targeted professional learning areas include:

- Domain 3: Instructional Transformation: 3.1 Vision for Instruction
- Domain 3: Instructional Transformation: 3.3 Assessment Systems and Data Culture

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Grantees must select an approved targeted professional learning offering. A list of the approved options are available on the CDE Advisory List of Providers webpage under Targeted Professional Learning.

Eligibility & Prioritization

Eligibility. Schools that meet the following criteria are eligible to apply:

- 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. 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. Specifically for Targeted Professional Learning, schools that do not already have EASI grant funding for 2026-27 or 2027-28 will be funded first.

Program Considerations & Fit

Program Considerations. Grantees must select a provider and a targeted professional learning option listed on the CDE Advisory List of Providers under Targeted Professional Learning. By applying for funding to participate in one of the identified learning opportunities, participants are not guaranteed acceptance or enrollment in the selected professional learning. Each identified provider may have limited capacity and number of slots for each program.

Targeted Professional Learning is designed as a school-level support. Grantees may, however, include district staff that directly support the school in the application and budget.

Program Fit. Targeted Professional Learning is a good fit for school staff who are willing to engage in additional professional learning opportunities around one of the identified targeted areas. Targeted Professional Learning may serve as a complement to other EASI supports, but schools without active EASI funds will be funded first.

Sequence of Program Support

The sequence of the work is based on the selected provider and professional learning offering. Professional learning offerings range from single day events to multi-day learning series or conferences. The approach, duration, and sequence of the professional learning offering is outlined on the CDE Advisory List of Providers.

Available Funds & Duration

Available Funds. Award amounts may not exceed the cost of the professional learning from the selected provider and associated allowable costs for school staff and supporting district partners. Travel may be requested, but there is no guarantee that travel to and from the professional learning offering will be provided. Travel funding is dependent upon available funds. At time of application, grantees must indicate the funding period for the selected professional learning offer of either January 1- September 30, 2027 or July 1, 2027-June 30, 2028.

Note: Schools identified under ESSA are eligible for federal awards and schools identified under the state accountability system for state awards. CDE projects a greater availability of federal funds versus state funds for Targeted Professional Learning. As such, CDE encourages schools identified under ESSA with low prioritization points to apply.

Duration. Program support is designed to support participation from an approved provider for up to one year in the selected time period, either January 1- September 30 or July 1 or June 30. Awards will not be issued for multiple years, and carryover will not be allowed on federal awards.

Allowable Use of Funds

Funds are intended to support participation of a school staff in an approved Targeted Professional Learning option from an approved provider. Allowable use of funds includes costs associated with:

- Registration costs for the professional learning offering for school staff or district partners supporting the school
- Substitute teacher pay (daily rate and benefits as supported by district policy) to provide coverage for teacher to attend the professional learning
- Costs incurred in completing professional learning (e.g. required materials, user license for training materials, or books for participation in the professional learning) for school staff or district partner supporting the school. Costs associated with the implementation of the strategies or approaches presented in the professional learning sessions are not allowable.
- 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.*

Other professional learning options offered by an approved provider, but not on the approved professional learning list, are not allowable. Funds may not be used to provide stipends or benefits for the participation of staff members outside of contract days/hours. Additionally, funds may not be used to support school or district implementation efforts stemming from professional learning or additional services offered by the provider (e.g. follow up coaching services, implementation support, data tracking or progress monitoring systems).

Budget Recommendations. For the application submission, a draft budget should include the costs associated with the selected professional learning. 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.

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

Year 1 awards January-September 30 -OR-	Grantees attend selected Targeted Professional Learning and complete the required evaluation survey at the end of the grant cycle.
Year 2 awards July 1- June 30	Grantees attend selected Targeted Professional Learning and complete the required evaluation survey at the end of the grant cycle.

Evaluation and Reporting

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

- Each Targeted Professional Learning participant must report on the following through a survey evaluation:
  - Impact on school systems and staff practices aligned to the Four Domains for Rapid School Improvement;
  - Transferability of learning into practice; and
  - Quality of professional learning experience
- 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 and/or register for the selected targeted professional learning.
- Any additional expenses beyond what are approved in the application will be the responsibility of the LEA.
- Ensure funds are only used for approved professional learning offerings, 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:

- 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 Targeted Professional Learning prior to services being changed (i.e. delayed participation, change in provider, change in number of participants)

Participant Commitments:

- Participants will engage in the selected Targeted Professional Learning and complete the program specific requirements.
- Participants will work with and provide requested data to CDE within the time frames specified on the evaluation requirements.

Related Resources & Information

Colorado Department of Education's EASI Website

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