COLORADO
Department of Education

EASI
District Designed & Led (DDL) Office Hour



October 29, 2026

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Agenda

Outcome- School and district staff members have the information and resources necessary to determine if District Designed & Led is a good fit and how to craft a strong application.

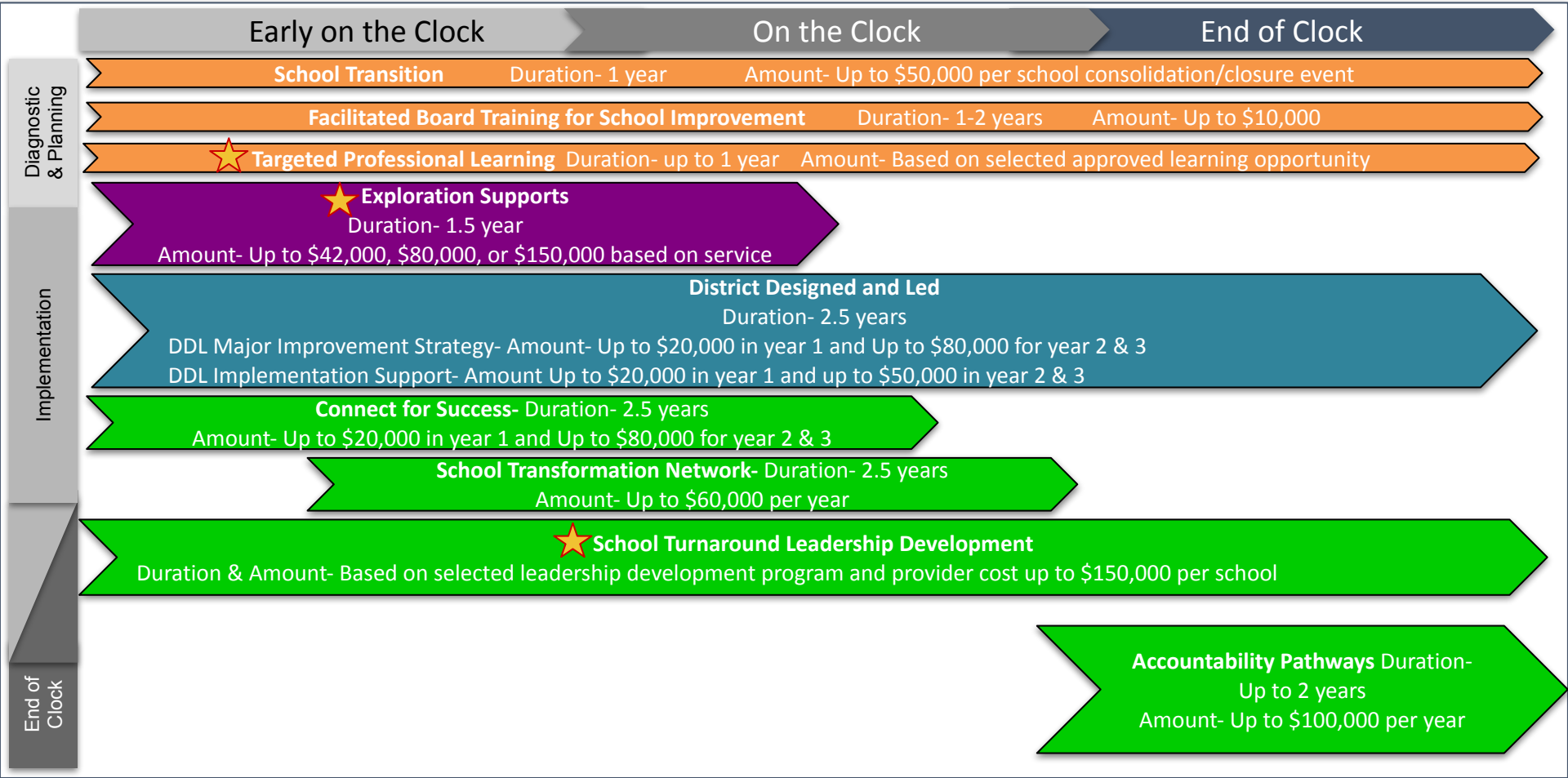
- Fit, Eligibility, and Prioritization
- DDL- Implementation Support
- DDL- Major Improvement Strategy
- Q & A



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Overview of EASI Routes and Services

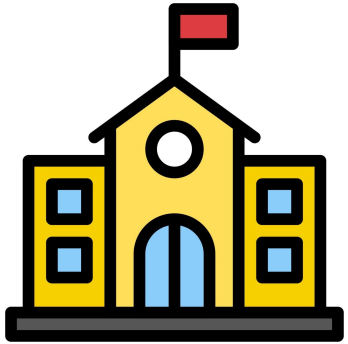
★ Approved provider required for at least one component



Good Fit for District Designed & Led Route

Districts, and their schools, that have invested time in **identifying a need** and are **ready for implementation** of a selected improvement strategy.

EASI Eligibility - DDL



Any school identified for school improvement:

- **State identified**
  - Priority Improvement, Turnaround, or On Watch
- **Federal identified**
  - Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CS) low graduation rate or lowest 5%
  - Targeted Support and Improvement (TS)
  - Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (A-TS)

Any district with at <u>least one federal or state identified school</u> is eligible

EASI Prioritization & DDL applications

- Prioritization for DDL applications is based on the included schools
- If the DDL is supporting a district-level initiative **and** the district has been identified as having a high concentration of identified schools, then one bonus point is added.

Example- District A's application is focused on a district-wide initiative to address attendance across the three EASI-eligible high schools. The district is identified as a district with a high concentration of identified schools.

- High School A- 9 pts
- High School B- 5 pts
- High School C- 4 pts
- Application average is 6 pts plus 1 bonus point = 7pts

Get More Information
Prioritization Overview
&
Preliminary Eligibility & Prioritization

DDL Limitations

District Capacity

- Active DDL initiatives from prior EASI cohorts
- Competing initiatives or multiple DDL requests

School in Multiple DDLs

- Schools may only be included in one DDL application

DDL Funding Cap

(2026-27 to 2028-29)

- Districts with fewer than 20 EASI eligible schools may not exceed $1M total DDL award
- Districts with 20 or more EASI eligible schools may not exceed $1.2M total DDL award

DDL Renewals

- Up to one continuation is allowed for a given improvement strategy

Types of DDLs

Either district-wide strategies to support improvement efforts at identified schools or strategies designed to support one or more identified schools.

Implementation Support

- Based on a recent external diagnostic review or EASI support with diagnostic review component
- District or school is ready to implement or continue implementation based on needs assessment
- Direction of implementation plan determined by school/district

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Major Improvement Strategy

- Based on an aligned demonstrated need
- District or school is ready to implement a selected CDE Major Improvement Strategy Guide 2.1
- Direction of implementation plan is **tightly** tied to the selected MIS guide

DDL - Implementation Support

Prerequisites

- External diagnostic review completed in the last two years from time of application
- Recent completion of an EASI support with a diagnostic review component (e.g. Exploration Supports, Transformation Network, Connect for Success)

Funding (per school)

- Up to $20,000 in Year 1 (2026-27)*
- Up to $50,000 in Year 2 (2027-28)
- Up to $50,000 in Year 3 (2027-29)

Note- Only request Year 1 funds if the school does have an existing 2026-27 award or funding.

Get More Information
DDL-Implementation Support

DDL - Implementation Support

Good Fit

- Designed for schools or district seeking implementation support for a well-developed plan for an improvement initiative that is ready to start or has already began
- Allows for a greater degree of flexibility in the how the selected improvement strategy is being implemented, but requires a higher degree of implementation planning on behalf of the district

Get More Information DDL-Implementation Support

Application Example

- District recently completed District Strategic Planning in EASI Cohort 9
- District has two EASI eligible schools in EASI Cohort 10
- District Strategic Planning diagnostic report identified two top priorities
  - Purposeful community engagement
  - Talent development and staff retention

Apply for **DDL - Implementation Support**

- Application uses the recent diagnostic review report from the District Strategy Planning (DR) to demonstrate need
- Grant activities focus on talent development and staff retention evidence-based strategies at the district level started during the early implementation phase of District Strategic Planning
- Budget focused on continuation of services from an external provider and costs associated talent development initiatives
  - *Note- School level expenses will be limited the two EASI eligible schools.*

DDL - Implementation Support Application “Look Fors”

- Selected strategy must be evidence-based (tier 1-3)
- Narratives need to clearly communicate a well-developed plan for implementation
- Budget aligned to key actions/implementation milestones without placeholders
    - Involved groups or persons are clearly identified and aligned
- Improvement strategy must be aligned to either the recent diagnostic review or strategies initiated in a previous EASI support with a diagnostic review component
- Contextual fit for each included school or the overall district must be explained in the narrative
- Expected student outcomes align to the improvement strategy and activities

DDL - Implementation Support Application Tips



- Narrow and refined the focus
- Ensure a clear connection between the need of the sites and the selected initiative
- Strong alignment between budget, activities, student outcomes
- Budget includes cost breakdown details or supporting documentation

EASI Planning Document

EASI Budget Guidance

DDL - Major Improvement Strategy

Prerequisites- Must have a demonstrated need for the selected major improvement strategy guide 2.1

- Recent external diagnostic review or internal district diagnostic review completed in the last two years
- S-CAP review in the last two years
- Relevant school or district-level data trends for the last three years

Funding (per school)

- Up to $20,000 in Year 1 (2026-27)*
- Up to $80,000 in Year 2 (2027-28)
- Up to $80,000 in Year 3 (2028-29)

Note- Only request Year 1 funds if the school does have an existing 2026-27 award or funds.

Get More Information
DDL- Major Improvement Strategy

DDL - Major Improvement Strategy

Good Fit

- Districts or schools with a demonstrated need aligned to one of CDE Major Improvement Strategy guides 2.1
  - Attendance Strategy Guide 2.1
  - Community Schools Strategy Guide 2.1- **NEW!**
  - Coaching Strategy Guide 2.1
  - Colorado Multi-tiered System of Supports (COMTSS) Strategy Guide 2.1
  - Data Driven Instruction Strategy Guide 2.1
  - Family, School, Community Partnership (FSCP) Strategy Guide 2.1
  - High Dosage Tutoring Strategy Guide 2.1
  - Ninth Grade Success Strategy Guide 2.1
  - Professional Learning Communities (PLC) Strategy Guide 2.1
  - Trauma-Informed Education Strategy Guide 2.1
- Districts and schools seeking a greater degree of structure for a select improvement strategy with a strong research base

Application Example

- District recently completed District Strategic Planning in EASI Cohort 9
- District has two EASI eligible schools in EASI Cohort 10
- District Strategic Planning report identified needs and named two top priorities
  - Purposeful community engagement and
  - Talent development and staff retention

Apply for **DDL- Major Improvement Strategy** to implement Family, School, Community Partnership 2.1 guide

- Application uses the recent diagnostic review report from the District Strategy Planning (DR) to establish the need
- Narrative clearly communicates core components to be implemented and aligned activities
- Grant supports district level expenses for implementation
  - *Note- School level expenses will be limited the two EASI eligible schools.*

Application Example

- School is identified as Priority Improvement- Year 2
- No prior diagnostic review
- Attendance trend data (chronic absenteeism and habitually truant) for the last three years, as compared to the district and state, indicates an area for improvement
- School has started work on an attendance initiative by working first on data collection and protocols

Apply for **DDL- Major Improvement Strategy** to implement Attendance 2.1

- Application uses trend data to establish the need
- Narrative clearly communicates the school has established an infrastructure to collect and analyze data (core component #1) and will focus grant efforts on partnerships to support family and community involvement (core component #2) and development and implementation of tiered strategies (core component #3)

DDL - Major Improvement Strategy Application “Look Fors”

- Narratives response indicate an understanding and adherence to the strategy guide
- Demonstrated need and contextual fit aligns to the selected strategy guide
- Key actions, implementation milestones, and/or activities are aligned and supported by the selected core components of the strategy guide
- Selected core components align to recommendation in guide and implementation plan follows any related sequence
- Expected student outcomes align to the improvement strategy and activities
- Budget aligned to key actions/implementation milestones without placeholders

DDL - Major Improvement Strategy Application Tips



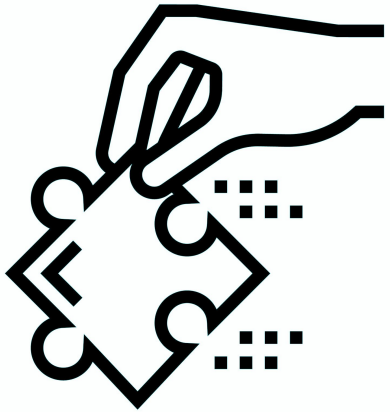
[EASI Planning Document]

[EASI Budget Guidance]

- Implementation plan and budget tightly connected to the selected MIS guide
- Clear connection between the need and contextual fit of the sites and the selected initiative
- Strong alignment between budget, activities, student outcomes
- Budget includes cost breakdown details or supporting documentation

DDL - Major Improvement Strategy Common Pitfalls

- Q6- Narrative response needs to clearly outline the how the district and/or schools meets the prerequisite as connected to the selected improvement strategy
- Q7- Narrative response needs to demonstrate an evaluation of where the district and/or school is as it relates to the core components
- Q8- Implementation plan MUST align to the strategy guide (e.g. sequentially or concurrent implementation) and demonstrate a clear plan for implementation and grant focus



Budget Guidance

- Budget should clearly align to the narrative responses and clearly communicate a clear plan for implementation
- May only cover costs associated at the district level or identified and EASI eligible schools
- Expenses from an external provider must be supported by a draft scope of work
- Budget descriptions should include details to help determine that the expenses is a reasonable cost (e.g. breakdown details) and necessary (e.g. connected to the strategy)

EASI Budget Guidance

EASI Cohort 10 Provider Scope of Work Guide

Allowable Uses

All expenses must be **aligned** to selected improvement strategy and the implementation plan

Typical Allowable Use Types

- External provider to support implementation
- Stipends for teachers and support staff to design, develop, or implement activities in support of the named improvement strategy
- Materials and supplies needed for implementation
- Stakeholder engagement costs (stipends, translation, childcare)

Allowable Uses

DDL- Implementation Support

DDL- Major Improvement Strategy



Questions?