



CSLX
COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
LEARNING EXCHANGE

CCSPP Implementation

Grant Cohort 3 Applications

Some Questions, Some Answers

Through the course of our work with clients, participants in CSLX's CCSPP Grant Cohort Series, and our own conversations with practitioners, CSLX has collected a set of questions and answers about the CCSPP implementation grant Cohort 3 application requirements, components and processes.

In this resource, you'll find a list of questions we've surfaced, and what we've learned. Some of these responses reflect questions that we (and some of our LEA partners) have sent to the California Department of Education (CDE), and some come from the experiences of CSLX team members and community school practitioner partners who are well-versed in the CCSPP grant application requirements and the program overall.

We encourage you to visit the California Department of Education's [official CCSPP FAQ](#) for more information and answers to any additional questions. If you have any remaining questions, email Lisa Clark-Devine at lclark-devine@cde.ca.gov (and please copy CSLX in your emails at love@cslx.org!).

NOTE: The guidance presented here represents the thinking of the CA Community Schools Learning Exchange (CSLX); it is not representative of the CDE. We understand that there are limits to the types of assurances that CDE can make (for example, the state's budget and what CCSPP funding looks like going forward is largely determined by the Legislature).

Our best advice is to follow the directions in the Request for Proposals (RFP) to the letter. This means font choice, font size, margins, submission instructions, everything! Those seemingly little details matter, and applicants can get rejected outright for failing to adhere to grant submission guidelines.

Funding

We are a Cohort 2 Planning Grantee and anticipated two years of planning time (per the Cohort 2 Planning Grant RFA and statute). Will there be another round of implementation grants after the February 2024 round (Cohort 3) to ensure they have access to implementation funding with this 2-year planning time frame accounted for – i.e., a Cohort 4 of implementation grants?

CSLX take: The CDE, both when asked via email—and in their December 5th, 2023 CCSPP webinar—affirmed that they are “planning” for a Cohort 4 implementation grant application round next year. However, there is no guarantee. Things could change as California’s budget situation changes, with legislative changes, or because of other circumstances. In short, while we and the CDE are hopeful, there are no formal assurances that there will be a Cohort 4 of Implementation Grants.

The funding amount is determined by the size of the school and not the size of the district, correct?

CSLX take: Correct. Awards will be per school site, based on enrollment numbers.

Eligibility and competitive priorities

Should we apply for an implementation grant even if we did not apply for, or receive, a planning grant?

CSLX take: While the legislation that created the CA Community Schools Partnership Program (CCSPP) directs the CDE to give CCSPP planning grant awardees priority, eligibility and competitive priorities will still apply in the current implementation grant application process – i.e., if you have eligible schools that can also demonstrate “need” according to the competitive priorities, and you are committed to developing and sustaining a community school strategy, CSLX encourages you to apply whether you’ve already received a planning grant or not.

We were awarded a planning grant. Does that guarantee that we will get an implementation grant?

CSLX take: The planning and implementation grants are separate application processes, and the decisions that were made for the planning grants will not necessarily carry over to how implementation grants are awarded. While the legislation that created the CCSPP directs the CDE to give CCSPP planning grant awardees priority, the eligibility and competitive priorities outlined for Cohort 3 still apply in the current implementation grant award process.

Should we apply if the LEA itself is not eligible, but we have a school which is eligible by the criteria described (see page 7 of the RFA)?

CSLX take: Yes, you should apply on behalf of eligible schools because of point 2 (see page 7 of the RFA) in the eligibility description.

What are the Unduplicated Pupil Percentage (UPP) cut scores for applications and from what year will the data be pulled?

CSLX take: Fifty percent (50%) Unduplicated Pupil Percentage (UPP) is the eligibility threshold. Eighty percent (80%) is the competitive priority threshold, per legislation. For Cohort 2 Implementation Grants, CDE awarded grants to small and/or rural schools with UPPs of 70% and higher. These thresholds (or cut scores) could change based on the number of applicants, the UPPs of the schools in the applications, and the total amount of grant award monies available for this round.

What school year will CDE use to calculate UPP?

CSLX take: The Demonstrated Need data will be from SY 22-23, and since the 2023-24 data will not be complete and available during the scoring process, CDE will only be looking at 2022-23 data for Cohort 3.

Artifacts

For the required artifacts around governance, do the meeting minutes need to be from a specific school year (23/24 or 22/23) or can they be from either year?

CSLX take: For the meeting minutes artifact, CDE wants to see that at least one meeting that has taken place this school year (2023-24).

Could the site asset map and gap analysis be from a Google form survey that staff, students and families completed?

CSLX take: Yes. Data from Google surveys are acceptable.

Can we use planning grant data (i.e., needs assessment/asset mapping results) that came from the 2022-2023 school year?

CSLX take: Yes. The needs assessment data is not specific to the eligibility criteria, and the information you collected and relationships you built during the planning process are not only valuable jumping off points; they will help demonstrate continued commitment to and development of your work.

Implementation plan

The **S-TAC developed an implementation plan template** which can be helpful in putting together your implementation plan.

NOTE: Implementation plans AND artifacts are required for each school site in the application. Implementation plans are part of the grant application requirements – and they do NOT count as one of the five artifacts that are also required. Implementation plans are a component of the Request for Proposals (RFA), whereas artifacts are evidence that pieces of the implementation plan are happening – governance, alignment to CCSPP framework and so on. Put another way, implementation plans describe the process, governance, alignment/coherence, while artifacts give you an opportunity to prove how you came up with the plan. Bottom line: implementation plans are required for each school site, but do NOT count towards the five required artifacts.

Can implementation plans be similar across the sites?

CSLX take: Yes. There may be similarities and some subtle differences across sites, and if so, indicate those, but if there are going to be similar things happening across sites, it's fine to submit similar plans. You can also elaborate on and provide context for those similarities and differences in the project abstract.

Process and planning

Should the asset mapping and needs assessment process happen with the key interest holders, like families/caregivers, teachers, students and community partners?

CSLX take: Yes! Asset mapping and needs assessment processes should include feedback from all interest holders – students, families and caregivers, teachers, and community partners.

Can we use existing data since we are still collecting responses from our needs/ assets assessment? What data do you recommend we use?

CSLX take: Existing data is the starting point for your needs assessment. Describe what you have for each site. **The Needs Assessment Data Sources resource** can help you identify what sources of data you'd like to consider or include.

Miscellaneous

We have one school that is applying for an implementation grant, but we are starting to develop CS work in a few other schools, too. Would we be able to mark that we plan to implement a network of community schools in Question One or is this just related to how many schools we are applying for now?

CSLX take: Yes, you should indicate on the questionnaire that you plan to build a network of schools. Give yourself credit for what you plan to do.

Does the questionnaire need to be completed by someone from the district office? Or could one person complete it as a site-specific Community School Coordinator, but keeping all sites in mind when answering the questions?

CSLX take: For an LEA applicant, the questionnaire should be submitted only once, on behalf of the LEA applicant (i.e., once for each application, *not* per school included in the application). It's at the LEA's discretion to decide the appropriate person for completing the questionnaire.

How do we answer the question for “Cohort” if we are applying for one school or if our LEA consists of one school?

CSLX take: If you have one school you are applying for, or one in the district, be explicit about that in your application.

What cumulative enrollment will CDE be using?

CSLX take: CDE will be going off of SY 22-23 enrollment data.

Would costs associated with the Community School Coordinator be counted as a “service?”

CSLX take: Yes. The costs associated with the site-based Community School Coordinator role are not admin costs – they are direct service costs.

If some of your sites are in Cohort 2 and you have a site that is close to the 50% and all sites want CCSP funding, should Cohort 3 be applied as a district or by sites?

CSLX take: Each site needs to meet one of the four eligibility criteria. It may be that that site doesn't meet the 50% criteria, but it may meet one of the other three. Keep in mind, it is a very competitive grant, so having Unduplicated Pupil Percentage (UPP) below 50% will decrease that site's chances of being awarded.

That said, if one site from your application doesn't get awarded, it doesn't mean the entire LEA's application will be denied. In that case, CDE will likely reach out and let you know which sites are awarded and which are not.

What kinds of supports, funding and resources count towards the required one-third match?

CSLX take: This is a question for CDE. While the Request for Proposals (RFA) contains some broader language around sources for the required match, it doesn't include specifics, so we recommend you reach out to CDE directly.

What counts as “support services,” and what does not?

CSLX take: We recommend you refer to the definition section in the RFA – that has CDE's definition of support services. You can also reach out to CDE directly if you have additional questions.

If we have seven schools applying in one LEA, do we only need to submit one abstract?

CSLX take: Yes. Only one abstract per LEA/application is required. You do need a separate Implementation Plan and artifacts that meet the three requirements for each site, however.