

July 26, 2019

Chair Sue Burr and Board Members
California Collaborative for Educational Excellence
915 L Street, Suite 1430
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Item 3 – CCEE Provisions in State Budget Act of 2019 & Education Trailer Bill

Dear Chair Burr and Board Members:

We represent a coalition of community, student, teacher, civil rights and advocacy organizations and write regarding agenda item three and the provisions of the Education Omnibus Trailer Bill (SB 75, Ch. 51 of the Statutes of 2019) that pertain to the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE).

Specifically, we'd like to express our desire for participation in any stakeholder process moving forward with the 21st Century California School Leadership Academy and the Educator Workforce Investment Grant program and their respective accompanying Requests For Proposals (RFP). We'd also like to outline our recommendations to aide in ensuring that appropriations for these programs are optimally leveraged to help improve student outcomes and close opportunity and achievement gaps.

The Educator Workforce Investment Grant Program

Professional learning opportunities, if done well, play a critical role in boosting the expertise and capacity of teachers and paraprofessionals across California to help them best serve students. Although not clearly outlined in the trailer bill language, we believe the entities interested in delivering professional learning to teachers and paraprofessionals should face a robust and thorough RFP process. Without it, we are concerned that the appropriated funds may ultimately go to support online activities with minimal alignment to identified areas of need and no evaluation or follow-through to ensure that the professional learning opportunities have actually improved practice and student outcomes.

As such, we would suggest that the CCEE establish an RFP process that ensures that all grantees demonstrate the following:

- **A clear link to local need as identified by the California School Dashboard and developed with continuous improvement at its core.** Any professional learning for teachers and/or other school professionals should be focused on areas identified through the lens of the continuous improvement model in which stakeholders are part of a root cause analysis to determine areas of locally-tailored student need. The data on the California School Dashboard should be a key starting point, with local educators involved to explore the nuance of identified need(s).
- **A demonstrated history of effectiveness.** Grantees eligible to be selected should provide relevant metrics that demonstrate the effectiveness of the professional learning that they have previously provided. We suggest professional learning opportunities proposed use research-based best practices, including active learning, collaboration, coaching and expert

support, feedback and reflection, and of sustained duration to enable participants to adequately learn, practice, implement, and reflect¹.

- **Proof that the grantee can staff the field with the necessary experts and a focus on creating sustainable teacher-led professional development.** Online modules will not suffice. Any grantee should demonstrate that they have expert staff to send out and follow up appropriately with local entities. Additionally, any grantee should clearly define how the professional learning opportunities will be job-embedded and teacher-led to maximize effectiveness and sustainability.
- **A clear connection to the System of Support and how the proposed professional learning opportunities align.** The CCEE should ensure any professional learning to be provided is not simply consistent with the statewide System of Support but that the grantee has affirmatively defined how their professional learning opportunities align within it. There must be integration within the System of Support to best leverage these opportunities.
- **Willingness to participate in a rigorous statewide evaluation.** The process for selecting grantees should require that grantees identify metrics to measure the effectiveness of the professional learning that they provide and under which the grantees will be evaluated and their success in performance identified. Additionally, any grantee should be willing to administer surveys, participate in any statewide evaluation of performance and to provide program information to the CCEE and the California Department of Education (CDE).

The 21st Century California School Leadership Academy

Similar to the Educator Workforce Investment Grant Program, it is our view that professional learning opportunities for principals and other school leaders, if done well, benefit students and staff in California’s public schools and play a critical part in improving outcomes for students. While the trailer bill language for the 21st Century California School Leadership Academy provided a better-delineated and more robust outline for what grantees should face during the RFP process, we reiterate the position that the RFP process is a crucial juncture where CCEE can thoroughly evaluate which professional learning opportunities can actually improve practice and student outcomes.

We see great opportunity to help California’s educators, school leaders and, most importantly, students through these grants. We look forward to further participation in these efforts and stand willing to help in the process. If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Dr. Elisha Smith Arrillaga
Executive Director
The Education Trust – West

Sarah Lillis
Executive Director
Teach Plus California

Efrain Mercado
Director, Education
Children Now

Dean Drescher
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EdVoice

Rigel S. Massaro
Senior Legislative Counsel
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¹ Linda Darling-Hammond, Marla E. Hylar, Madelyn Gardner, *Effective Teacher Professional Development*, Learning Policy Institute, June 2017, at pp. 23-24, available at https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/Effective_Teacher_Professional_Development_REPORT.pdf

Cc: Tom Armelino, Executive Director, California Collaborative for Educational Excellence