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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

FOR INDEPENDENT EVALUATION OF THE

STATEWIDE SYSTEM OF SUPPORT: GEOGRAPHIC LEAD AGENCIES

ISSUED BY:

The California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE)
and the Marin County Office of Education (MCOE),
Administrative Agent for the CCEE

ISSUED ON:

July 10, 2026

PROPOSALS DUE:

July 27, 2026

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The California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (“CCEE”) and the Marin County Office of Education (“MCOE”) invite qualified organizations (“Respondents”) to submit proposals (“Proposals”) in response to this Request for Proposals (“RFP”). Proposals shall comply with the requirements set forth herein. The CCEE/MCOE is not required by law to use an RFP process but has elected to do so for the particular services described herein in order to seek qualified parties who meet the unique service needs of the CCEE.

I. Timelines

Activity	Date
Release of Request for Proposals	July 10, 2026
Questions from Respondents Due (if any)	July 15, 2026 at 4:00 p.m. (Pacific Time)
Responses to Respondents Questions (if any)	July 21, 2026
Due Date for Proposals	July 27, 2026 at 4:00 p.m. (Pacific Time)
Finalist Selected no Earlier Than:	August 1, 2026
Work to Begin no Earlier Than:	August 1, 2026
Duration of Services	Through fiscal year 2026-2027, with the possibility of annual renewal for up to 2 years.

Note: All dates are preliminary and subject to change.

II. Purpose

The California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE) is seeking proposals from qualified organizations to provide independent evaluation services for the Geographic Lead Agencies within California’s Statewide System of Support. The selected Respondent will design and implement a rigorous, practical, and improvement-oriented evaluation that produces annual formative evaluation reports during each year of the 2026-29 grant term. These annual reports will provide timely findings, analysis, and recommendations to support continuous learning and improvement. At the conclusion of the grant term, the Respondent will produce a summative evaluation report that synthesizes findings across all three years and assesses the effectiveness, impact, and future direction of Geographic Lead Agencies.

The evaluation will help CCEE, the California Department of Education (CDE), Geographic Lead Agencies, and other state partners understand how Geographic Lead Agencies are fulfilling their statutory responsibilities; strengthening county office of education (COE) capacity; coordinating assistance across Statewide System of Support (SSOS); and contributing to improved support and outcomes for local educational agencies (LEAs), including those receiving differentiated assistance (DA).

III. Background and Context

Pursuant to Education Code section 52073, the California Department of Education (CDE) and the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE), in consultation with the Executive Director of the State Board of Education (SBE), are responsible for establishing a formal process to evaluate the activities of the Geographic Lead Agencies. The current Geographic Lead grant term extends from July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2029. During this grant cycle, seven Geographic Lead Agencies are responsible for strengthening regional capacity, coordinating support across the Statewide System of Support, building the capacity of county offices of education to effectively support local educational agencies (LEAs), and, when appropriate, providing direct technical assistance to districts.

The independent evaluation will examine each Geographic Lead Agency's success in implementing regional goals, fulfilling its statutory responsibilities under Education Code section 52073(b), as well as the collective effectiveness of the Geographic Lead Agencies in strengthening the capacity of partner COEs, improving systems of support and ultimately improving student outcomes. The evaluation will also analyze regional trends in differentiated assistance (DA), including changes in the number of districts receiving DA and those that stopped receiving DA due to improved performance on the state and local indicators on the California School Dashboard.

IV. Geographic Lead Agencies



California Statewide Educational Agencies

- California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE)
- California Department of Education (CDE)
- State Board of Education (SBE)



58 County Superintendents of Schools

As those closest to their LEAs, County Superintendents and County Office of Education (COEs) serve as coaches and connectors based on the individual needs of their LEAs.



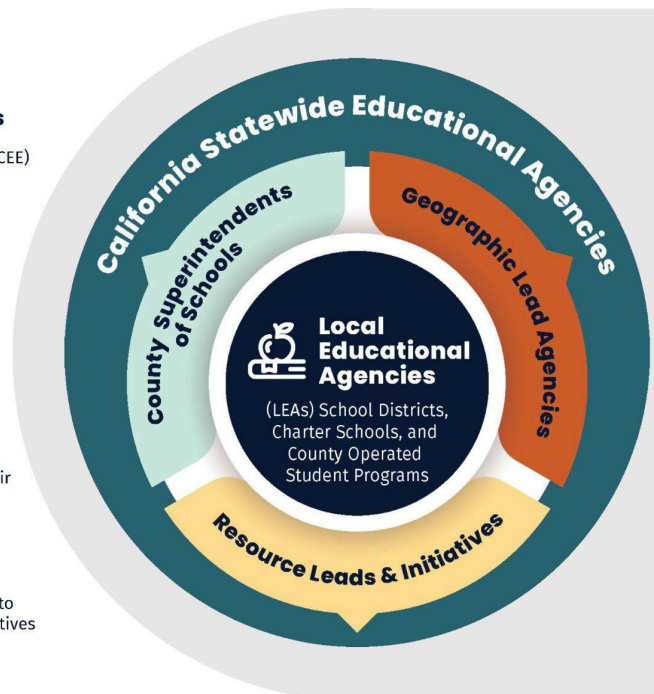
7 Geographic Lead Agencies

Nine COEs represent seven geographic regions statewide. The GeoLeads were selected to support other COEs in their regions by coordinating services and building capacity.



Resource Leads & Initiatives

Our expert assistance, training, and resources to all LEAs to ensure effective implementation of state education initiatives and support for all state and federally funded programs.



The seven (7) selected Geographic Lead Agencies, comprised of nine (9) COEs are designed to build the capacity of COEs to ensure that counties are equipped to, in turn, build the capacity of their districts to support the continuous improvement of student performance and outcomes and close the gaps in achievement between student groups.

Specifically, the Geographic Lead Agencies will work individually and collectively to fulfill the following responsibilities:

- Assist in building the capacity of county offices of education within the geographic lead agency's defined geographic area to provide effective assistance and support to school districts under the state priorities identified in subdivision (d) of Section 52060 and federal programs.
- Coordinate and calibrate assistance and support provided to local educational agencies within its defined geographic area and with other geographic lead agencies, expert lead agencies identified pursuant to Section 52073.1, special education resource leads identified pursuant to Section 52073.2, the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence, and the department.
- Provide assistance and support if another county office of education within the geographic lead agency's defined geographic area is unable to provide appropriate assistance and support to one or more school districts in that county office of education's boundaries, or at the request of a school district or county superintendent of schools pursuant to subdivision (d) of Section 52071.
- Identify existing resources, professional development activities, and other efforts currently available within its designated geographic area to assist school districts and county offices of education to improve outcomes under the state priorities identified in subdivision (d) of Section 52060 and subdivision (d) of Section 52066, and upon request, share information about these existing resources.
- Upon request by CDE and the CCEE, Geographic Lead Agencies will develop new resources and activities, designed to build capacity with school districts and COEs across the state under the state priorities, and will create a method for sharing and dissemination of Geographic Lead Agency resources and best practices statewide.
- Geographic Lead Agencies will employ and/or contract support for at least .50 full-time equivalent lead exclusively dedicated to the Geographic Lead program.
- To continue to be responsive to the needs of local Geo Lead regions, each Geographic Lead Agency will convene an Advisory Committee that will provide input into developing, implementing, and assessing work.
- Each Geographic Lead Agency will conduct an annual needs-based assessment of its region to determine its goals and intended outcomes as well as ensure that service is consistently responding and expanding in scope and depth beyond current offerings and practice in alignment with California's evolving educational environment in response to the needs of state agencies.

V. Scope of Evaluation Services

The Respondent will be expected to:

- Review and build upon prior Geographic Lead Agency evaluation plans, data sources, findings, instruments, and presentations.

- Develop, refine, and maintain an evaluation plan and logic model or theory of action aligned with statutory responsibilities, grant expectations, and CCEE priorities.
- Identify baseline measures and establish feasible, reliable data-collection processes.
- Use multiple methods, which may include document review, surveys, interviews, focus groups, observations, administrative data analysis, and case studies.
- Attend and participate in relevant virtual and in-person meetings with Geographic Lead Agencies, CCEE, CDE, and other state partners.
- Provide timely formative findings, data visualizations, and actionable recommendations that support continuous improvement.
- Support Geographic Lead Agencies and state partners in interpreting findings and using evidence to refine strategy, coordination, and implementation.
- Identify exemplars, promising practices, and conditions that support or hinder impact.
- Prepare annual and final reports, executive summaries, presentations, and other dissemination materials.

Evaluation questions and measures will be finalized collaboratively during the start-up phase. At a minimum, the evaluation should examine the extent to which Geographic Lead Agencies:

- Create structures and processes that strengthen coordination, collaboration, and integration across the Statewide System of Support.
- Expand COE and LEA access to relevant resources, expertise, and support.
- Build COE capacity to provide effective assistance and support to districts and schools, including districts eligible for or receiving DA.
- Use continuous improvement processes, including annual needs assessments, to identify regional priorities, set goals, monitor progress, and adjust implementation.
- Provide and facilitate universal, targeted, and/or intensive support responsive to regional and statewide needs.

Evaluation Deliverables and Timeline

The Respondent will propose a detailed work plan and deliverable schedule. The following represents CCEE's anticipated minimum deliverables.

Year 1: 2026-07

- Start-up and document review.
- Updated evaluation plan and logic model.
- Baseline data plan.
- Initial data collection.
- Formative findings and recommendations.
- Annual report and presentation.

Year 2: 2027-08

- Refined evaluation plan, as needed.
- Ongoing data collection and analysis.
- Formative findings and recommendations.
- Identification of exemplars and promising practices.
- Annual report and presentation.

Year 3: 2028-09

- Ongoing data collection and analysis.
- Summative synthesis.
- Final report with findings, lessons learned, and policy and implementation recommendations.
- Executive summary.
- Final presentation and dissemination materials.

CCEE may refine deliverables annually based on emerging needs, available funding, and findings from the evaluation. CCEE will evaluate the Respondents' performance and success in fulfilling the evaluation services. At the conclusion of each contract term, CCEE may renew the selected Respondent for another term. Contract renewal is contingent on continued funding by the California State Budget authority and Congress if applicable.

VI. General Proposal Information

A. Respondents' Eligibility

Sole proprietorships, partnerships, and public or private agencies may submit Proposals in response to this RFP. The Respondent must be legally constituted and qualified to do business within the State of California. The Respondent responding to this RFP must serve as the Prime Contractor and will remain responsible for all work performed by staff, subcontractors, and consultants.

B. Minimum Qualifications for Respondents

Respondents must have a minimum of five years of recent (within the last seven years) full-time experience in conducting evaluation studies within the educational setting. Demonstrated experience with mixed-methods evaluations, longitudinal studies, education policy, and complex systems or capacity-building initiatives is strongly preferred.

Please see Section VII.E., Qualifications of Respondent Personnel, for additional information pertaining to personnel requirements.

C. Questions and Clarifications

Respondents must submit questions and requests for clarifications or additional information regarding this RFP, in writing only, to Melissa Hodgson (the "CCEE Contact") at mhodgson@ccee-ca.org no later than **July 15, 2026** at 4:00 p.m. (Pacific Time). CCEE will endeavor to provide responses and clarifications via CCEE's website at ccee.ca.org by **July 21, 2026**. At its discretion, the CCEE may respond to questions that are submitted late or not in proper form. The CCEE reserves the right to rephrase or not answer any question or inquiry submitted, regardless of timing or form of the question. Respondents are solely responsible

for monitoring any questions or answers posted on the CCEE's website and incorporating any answer or information provided by CCEE into their Proposals. Respondents shall not contact any other CCEE or MCOE employee or agent regarding this RFP except for the CCEE Contact identified above.

VII. Proposal Specifications/Requirements for Submittal

Each Respondent must submit a Proposal that contains all of the required items listed in this section. Any Proposal that does not include all required items may be disqualified from consideration, but the CCEE reserves the right to consider Proposals that do not meet all the requirements, at CCEE's sole discretion. Proposals should be no longer than 15 pages, excluding curricula vitae of identified personnel. Proposals can utilize tables and/or bullets to more clearly communicate main ideas and flow of work.

A. Cover Letter

A signed cover letter identifying the Respondent, principal contact, and commitment to perform the proposed work.

B. Scope of Project

A narrative addressing all elements of this RFP and the Respondent's understanding of the work.

C. Description of Respondent Organization (1 page maximum)

Include the name and contact information for your organization (address, telephone number), as well as the name and contact information (telephone number and email address) of the principal contact for your application. Provide a brief history of the organization, including:

- Number of years in business/practice
- Senior member(s) and length of association
- Whether the organization may have been known by a different name while under substantially the same management
- Location of office where project team members will design and oversee the evaluation program
- List of core services generally provided by the organization and how these services have previously demonstrated growth and improvement in building capacity.

D. Organizational Capacity and Previous Experience (2 page maximum)

Proposals must describe and demonstrate the Respondent's capacity and ability to perform and administer all activities related to this project. This includes a demonstration of the Respondent's experience in evaluation research, study design and implementation, and high-stakes research projects, particularly those related to education. The Proposal should also reflect the Respondent's understanding of the California education policies, especially those associated with the Local Control Funding Formula, the California School Dashboard, and the System of Support, as well as broader education policy and research as it relates to the work outlined in this RFP.

If the Respondent will be subcontracting a portion of the work, the Proposal must describe and demonstrate the subcontractor's capacity and ability to perform the portion of the work in which the subcontractor will be involved.

E. Qualifications of Respondent Personnel (2 page maximum, including Organizational Chart)

Please include the name of all individuals proposed by the organization to perform the duties described above in the Scope of Evaluation Services, including the qualifications of each and what each individual would be doing. Current résumés for each individual must be included as attachments to the submitted Proposal and will not be counted in the page limits.

E.1. Project Lead

Identify a dedicated Project Lead with at least three years of recent experience (within the last 7 years) managing projects of comparable size, scope, and complexity. Describe how the Project Lead will serve as the primary contact for CCEE and coordinate, manage, and monitor staff, subcontractors, and consultants.

E.2. Changes to Key Personnel

Once a Respondent is selected, the assigned project personnel, including the Project Lead, cannot be changed or substituted without the CCEE's prior written approval. Any substitute personnel shall meet or exceed the qualifications and experience of the originally proposed personnel.

E.3. Subcontracts

Describe all proposed subcontractors, their responsibilities, rationale for selection, and qualifications. All subcontracted work remains the responsibility of the Prime Contractor.

For each proposed subcontractor, include:

- A description of the activities and functions to be performed.
- A brief explanation of why the subcontractor was selected.
- Resumes for each consultant or subcontractor staff member assigned to the project.

E.4. Organization Chart

An organization chart, including organizational titles, project roles, and names, should be included with the Proposal.

F. Proposed Work Plan

Please include a description of the Respondent's proposed work plan to accomplish the duties described above in the Evaluation Scope of Services Work. The work plan shall include time estimates for each significant segment of the work, the number of staff to be assigned, including supervisors where appropriate, the level of each of the staff members to be assigned, and any specialists or subcontractors who will be assigned.

G. Conflict of Interest

Please disclose any past or current business or other relationship with the CCEE, CDE, CCEE Governing Board members, or MCOE.

H. Costs and Fees (1 page maximum)

Provide a detailed three-year budget with annual not-to-exceed amounts, fee structure, staffing costs, travel assumptions, deliverable costs, and any other relevant expenses. Explain factors that could affect costs if programmatic changes occur.

The proposed budget must include:

- Cost to complete proposed deliverables.
- Fee structure, such as hourly rates, fixed deliverable rates, or a combination of hourly and fixed rates.
- Annual not-to-exceed amounts.
- Any additional relevant fees or costs.

Due to the year-to-year nature of the CCEE's funding, while Proposals may include multi-year projects, any contract with the selected Respondent's organization will need to be written such that it is for a single fiscal year with the ability to extend it to the next fiscal year at the exclusive option of the CCEE.

Respondents' cost estimates may be a factor in awarding the contract. Since an RFP is not required, the CCEE/MCOE is not obligated to accept a bid based on cost estimates.

I. References (maximum one-half page)

Provide a list of clients (including name, address, email address, and telephone number of contact person, as well as a description of the work performed) for whom Respondent has performed similar services.

J. Submission Review Rubric

All proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria, with a total available point value of 60 points:

Evaluation Criterion	Reviewer Score and Multiplier	Maximum Weighted Points
Understanding of the Geographic Lead Agency Context	x 1.00	
Understanding of Evaluation Purpose and Priorities	x 1.00	
Evaluation Design and Methodology	x 1.25	
Annual Formative Evaluation Approach	x 1.25	
Summative Evaluation Approach	x 1.25	
Capacity Building and System Level Measures	x 1.25	
Approach to Measuring Impact and Contextual Factors	x 1.00	
Partner Engagement and Partnership	x 1.25	
Organizational Capacity and Relevant Experience	x 1.25	
Qualifications of Project Lead and Team	x .75	
Work Plan, Timeline, and Deliverables	x .75	
Cost, Cost Effectiveness, and Completeness of Proposal	x .75	
Total Possible Points		60.00

VIII. Rights of the CCEE/MCOE

This RFP does not commit the CCEE/MCOE to award a contract or pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a response to this RFP. CCEE/MCOE, at its sole discretion, may reject all Proposals and/or enter into direct negotiations with a Respondent or other party and enter into an agreement for all or part of the services set forth herein outside of the RFP process. The CCEE/MCOE is not required by law to use an RFP process but has elected to do so for the particular services described herein in order to seek qualified parties who meet the CCEE's unique service needs. The CCEE/MCOE reserves the right to accept all or part of any Proposal or to cancel in part or in its entirety the RFP. The CCEE/MCOE further reserves the right to select the Respondent(s) that it considers to be in the best interests of the CCEE.

IX. Submission Details

- A. As noted above, the CCEE/MCOE will begin accepting Proposals upon the date of issuance of this RFP, and will continue to accept Proposals until **July 27, 2026** at 4:00 p.m. (Pacific Time).
- B. To be considered in the initial evaluation, Respondents must submit an electronically signed copy of the original Proposal (as a PDF) via email to Melissa Hodgson, mhodgson@ccee-ca.org with the subject line: "**Geographic Lead Agency Evaluation RFP Submission.**" Hard copy Proposals may not be accepted.
- C. Respondents shall be solely responsible for ensuring its Proposal arrives to the CCEE by the deadline set forth above in order to be eligible for CCEE's initial selection process. The CCEE/MCOE will not be held responsible for any Respondent errors or omissions in the preparation of their Proposal.
- D. Any costs incurred by the Respondents in the preparation of any information or material submitted in response to this RFP shall be the Respondent's sole responsibility.
- E. The CCEE/MCOE reserves the right to reject any and/or all Proposals, or to refuse to negotiate or withhold the award of any contract, for any or no reason. The CCEE/MCOE may also waive or decline to waive irregularities in any Proposal. The CCEE/MCOE further reserves the right to select the Proposal(s) that it considers to be in the best interests of the CCEE.
- F. The CCEE/MCOE may begin negotiations with selected Respondents at the CCEE's discretion.
- G. Upon selecting a Respondent, the CCEE/MCOE shall provide an agreement for negotiation by the Parties.
- H. All Proposals submitted in response to the RFP become the property of the CCEE and a public record and, as such, may be subject to public viewing and disclosure pursuant to applicable laws, including the California Public Records Act (Gov. Code § 7922.535, et seq.).

X. Receipt of Proposals; Contact Information

Respondents are not to contact the Marin County Office of Education, including Board members, the Superintendent, or any other employee or representative of the MCOE or the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence, including Board members, the Executive Director, or any other employee or representative of the CCEE, apart from the CCEE Contact identified

herein, regarding this RFP. Contacting such officials, employees and/or representatives, other than the CCEE Contact identified herein, may result in the Respondent's disqualification. CCEE and MCOE shall not be bound by any statement made by any CCEE/MCOE employee or agent regarding this RFP and/or the work set forth herein, except for the responses provided by the CCEE Contact as set forth herein.

All inquiries or questions for additional information should be directed in writing to the CCEE Contact, Melissa Hodgson, mhodgson@ccee-ca.org, by **July 15, 2026** at 4:00 p.m. (Pacific Time). CCEE will make every effort to respond, but any failure or delay in responding shall not excuse a Respondent's failure to comply with any requirements for submission set forth herein, including the submission deadline.

Respondents must submit an electronically signed copy of the original Proposal (as a PDF) via email to the CCEE Contact, Melissa Hodgson, mhodgson@ccee-ca.org, by **July 27, 2026** at 4:00 p.m. (Pacific Time) with the subject line: **"Geographic Lead Agency Evaluation RFP Submission."**