



Workshop FAQ FOR COE'S

Please utilize this resource to help share information about the CAL-MSCS Partnership Grant. This FAQ was developed from the compiled questions during the asset mapping and action plan workshop.

[Grant Overview](#)

[Funding and Reporting Requirement](#)

[Grant Templates/Process](#)

[Asset Mapping/Data Collection](#)

[Partnership](#)

Grant Overview Questions

- **What standards and guidelines is the grant looking to address?**
 - The grant aims to expand, generate/disseminate, and coordinate mathematics, science, and computer science (MSCS) professional learning opportunities, and improve efforts to engage families and community partners in the work of MSCS implementation. Detailed information on the goals and purpose of the program from the CA Department of Education can be found [here](#). Additionally, grant projects and programming will address the MSCS Content, English Language Development, and [Digital Learning and Integration](#) Standards, and must align to the [CA Quality Professional Learning standards](#), as well as evidenced-based frameworks on supportive family and community engagement, resources for which can be found [here](#).
- **What kind of grounding documentation about the grant will be provided?**
 - You can find overview documents about the CAL-MSCS Partnership on our [landing page](#). Additionally, the [asset mapping guide](#) provides structured support and guiding questions to prompt your local implementation team through the asset mapping process and completing the Action Plan templates.
- **Is the grant aimed at the county or the region?**
 - The state grant is funded through the California Department of Education. In order to build towards a sustainable, locally responsive, state-wide network of professional learning support in MSCS, funding allocations will be provided to all 58 counties in CA. Throughout the first year of this grant, county offices of education (COEs) will begin examining their local context through the asset mapping process. From there, we hope COEs are better positioned to decide on

a COE-specific or broader regional approach to building a robust local implementation team that is sustainable and addresses all three content areas.

Funding and Reporting Requirement Questions

- **Can we get the amount of funding per county/per year?**
 - Yes, COE allocations are broken down by year and located here: <http://bit.ly/CALMSCSCOEAllocation>
- **What are the deliverables for participating COEs? What are the expectations for reporting out?**
 - The first year grant deliverables will be Action Plan A (by January 31, 2024) and Action Plan B (by June 30, 2024). We want to learn about current programming strengths (assets) and areas of need in order to identify statewide patterns and develop responsive programming and support. Fiscal and programming reporting documents and requirements are forthcoming.
- **Does the Action Plan serve as an application or proposal for receiving the grant funding?**
 - Action Plan A is a required proposal to receive grant funding. Once COE leaders and partners submit Action Plan A *and* meet with CAL-MSCS leadership teams upon submission for a feedback and thought partnership meeting, a contract will be generated (between the COE and SJCOE). Final funding allocations will become available upon final budget proposal reviews with the SJCOE Business Department.
- **Is the budgeted amount required to be divided equally into each discipline: math, science and computer science? Can a county defer their funding to another county in their region to complete this work? What flexibility is there within this grant to partner with other grants or extend this grant out as needed?**
 - CAL-MSCS funding does not have to be divided equally among each content area. Counties and their partners may choose to leverage extant funding sources (e.g. CS EWIG funds) to support local professional learning goals while finding efficient ways to use CAL-MSCS funding to address yet-to-be met needs and areas of opportunity. The design of CAL-MSCS provides COEs and partners with flexibility to leverage and coordinate with existing grants and initiatives. A main goal of the CAL-MSCS project is to coordinate with related statewide and local initiatives in mathematics, science and computer science; to not duplicate,

but amplify and extend.

- No, a county cannot defer their funding to another county. Every COE will receive their allotment of funds through a contract with the SJCOE, however COE's can then sub-contract with others to combine funding towards resources and support in a cross-county or regional approach.
- COEs that do not have coordinators specific to the content disciplines can reach out to their districts and outside partners, such as the CA Subject Matter Projects, CAL-MSCS [steering team partners](#), and others, to build their local implementation teams and leadership. This is also an area where COEs might decide to take a more regional approach to support asset mapping and improvement planning, or use funds to build a local implementation team composed of a diverse array of community and content partners, and grow the team's capacity to provide support to educators working in the project's three content areas.
- **What are the allowable expenses for CAL-MSCS funds?**
 - CAL-MSCS funding can be used in myriad ways, including to fund a percentage of an FTE at the county office or for an LEA member's time to help gather data during asset mapping activities (e.g., a TOSA or District Administrative partner). Funds can be used for teacher stipends (e.g., to buy out their time for empathy interviews during the asset mapping and plan development process), for paying for substitute teachers, etc. Expenditures should be tied to strategies that help COEs and their partners *understand* (e.g., asset map) as well as *meet* identified needs of educators, families and students. We encourage COEs to use funds to create durable capacity so expenditures support sustainable shifts in operations, professional learning delivery, etc.
 - Food is currently a non-negotiable, non-allowable expense. We encourage county office content leaders and their business office partners to sign up for office hours to discuss additional questions about use of funds.
 - COEs should also avoid potential supplanting of funds. For example, if utilizing your funds to cover a portion of an employee's FTE, that employee should be eligible and not already covered full-time for their FTE by another initiative or grant.

Grant Templates/Process Questions

- **What is due in January?**
 - Action Plan A - 4 parts. This is the first deliverable in an iterative, ongoing process with subsequent action planning phases.
 - A proposed Budget aligned to work that will be completed between January and June 2024; templates to be shared in all COE folders soon.
- **Will COE's fill out separate Step 1's for each discipline area, or can they be combined? Do county offices have more than 1 action plan?**
 - Every COE is required to submit one action plan (A) that addresses all 3 content areas. Step 1 on Action Plan A can have separate rows for content areas but can also have interdisciplinary assets identified in a single row as well. COEs should not submit more than one action plan, however they may be identified as a collaborative partner on another COEs action plan.
- **How are we integrating with all the other initiatives?**
 - A main goal of the CAL-MSCS project is to coordinate with related statewide and local initiatives in mathematics, science and computer science; to not duplicate but amplify and extend. The diverse composition of our [Advisory Council](#) and content area [Steering Teams](#) serve as examples of this at the state level. We also hope to support local level leaders to braid efforts with other initiatives, and are realistic that building cohesion will take time. Integration and sustainability is an end goal of CAL-MSCS.
- **How do we INNOVATE and not just do more of the same?**
 - This is an excellent thought-provoking question that we will continue to explore throughout this process. What we are asking as a leadership team is for COEs and partners to begin shifting their mindsets towards an asset-based lens and explore opportunities currently within their local systems that can be amplified or leveraged to build capacity in mathematics, science, and computer science education. If opportunities do not currently exist, we want to provide a larger system of support to address those needs and build towards a sustainable local system infrastructure. Thinking carefully about how to integrate and provide cohesion among local projects hopefully will result in different ways of operating and innovation in how work is conducted to support local educators.
- **How am I going to take the lead on this to make sure it's done in a meaningful way? We don't have anything or anyone to support computer**

science.

- There are multiple ways to approach this, and larger and smaller COEs may do it differently, but it involves taking initial steps to understand the three content areas and what's going well in professional learning and implementation in your communities. Talk to a passionate teacher, ask COE colleagues, reach out to CAL-MSCS Steering Team members, come to office hours, etc. With each step, ask what you have learned and what you don't yet know. Perhaps sign up for office hours to brainstorm next steps with CAL-MSCS leadership team members. There are many layers of support and leadership built into the CAL-MSCS Partnership specifically designed to address such needs and provide opportunities for a meaningful exploration and implementation of resources and support systems.
- **How does this process look for our diverse COE's? What might this mean for rural, small, medium, large COE's based on their structure and systems?**
 - The CAL-MSCS leadership teams have purposefully designed many layers of support and leadership to meet the diverse needs of our COEs. For example, CAL-MSCS has partnered with Lake COE to provide specific perspectives and proven strategies to support rural COEs in implementation of professional learning opportunities for educators. There is no "one-size fits all" solution just as there is no correct "grouping" of partners. This is an iterative process that will continue to grow your understanding, your creativity, and your relationships with many different people/partners. We would like to encourage you to keep an open mind and begin a dialogue with your current partners and colleagues as well as reach out and connect to new organizations and people. We can all learn from each other and CAL-MSCS is here to support that process and your journey.
- **Is there a facilitator guide to help guide this process? Or consultation on plans?**
 - Yes, there's an asset mapping process [guide](#) located within your COE folder as well as posted on our landing page found [here](#). We also have weekly [office hours](#) and you can reach out for additional support and coaching sessions. If there is a particular resource you need that is not yet developed, share that with CAL-MSCS leadership during office hours and we'll work collectively to address your needs.
- **What happens after the first version of the asset mapping is turned in? Will it be evaluated? Will COE's receive feedback?**

- After Action Plan A is submitted, the CAL-MSCS leadership team will reach out to schedule a Zoom meeting with your local team to discuss your learnings to date and your plans to continue learning and gathering information during spring 2024. The CAL-MSCS leadership team will act as a thought-partner and provide feedback and support. The SJCOE Business Department will review your proposed budget and ensure that it meets all CDE requirements. Specific requirements for your budget and the criteria for alignment of Action Plan A with your proposed budget will be shared soon.

Asset Mapping/Data Collection Questions

- **When do we engage with district partners?**
 - Engage them at the outset! Ask them what's working, why it's working, what's not working, what they need, identify areas of expertise within district staff, and engage district partners on local implementation teams. The CAL-MSCS partnership is about capacity building at every level of the system. This is an opportunity for counties to collaborate with districts and other community partners to build professional learning systems that better support educators, students and families.
- **How can counties effectively address asset mapping across math, science, and computer science subjects while accommodating local variations? What strategies can be employed to balance the focus on these subjects during the asset mapping process?**
 - All three subjects should be addressed throughout the asset mapping process. How, and to what degree, a county will organize their asset mapping and subsequently choose to focus on each subject as they begin to define their work will be determined locally. For example, a county might take a phased approach to understanding their assets, beginning first in one subject and learning from that process to expand asset mapping in other areas, as well as how the three areas overlap. **Understanding your current context for all three subject areas is your first priority; not developing solutions or actions.** This first phase of work to understand and asset map your local systems, in collaboration with coaching calls you may join with project leadership, can help you identify goals for Action Plan B. As you map your assets, we encourage you to be generative and make a long list of assets and needs - you do not need to limit ideas at this stage although being comprehensive will take more time. Consider the current capacity and realities in your locale and how you will transition to build greater capacity and assets in your goal-setting and action plans.



- After asset mapping is underway and your understanding of your local system has grown, local implementation teams will need to process what makes most sense to focus on locally in terms of the balance across the three subject areas (we encourage teams *not* to identify these focal areas until well into the spring to ensure enough time has been spent understanding what is and isn't working currently). Of course, teams will want to build on and leverage other initiatives (e.g., EWIG) in the process! While subject area focus across counties and teams may differ, in this grant we want to be able to aggregate all the assets from the counties so that across the state there are equal opportunities for all three subject areas.
- **To what extent can we / how do we embed content agnostic pedagogies & practices? (ie - equitable grading, media literacy, etc.)**
 - Our advice is that you take a broad view of math, science, and computer science and consider assets (and also needs) that might be relevant for students and teachers in each of these subject areas. Talk to partners who focus on supporting multilingual learner needs, community-based partnerships, or who use environmental literacy to thread learning across content areas. We know students' social-emotional mindsets and trauma do impact learning and there are more and less effective instructional strategies that extend across subject areas, so it would make sense to include assets in your locale that provide support to students and teachers in MSCS in indirect ways as well.
- **Is this asset mapping just for grades 4-12? or TK-12?**
 - Sometimes the real work of education doesn't slice and dice as easily as grant funding. While the funding of this grant is targeted toward grades 4-12, you may learn a lot by mapping the assets for students across a broader age range. The limitation will be your capacity and time to do so comprehensively. Our advice is that you target grades 4-12 first and go from there.
- **How similar or different is the CAL-MSCS asset mapping process from other asset mapping processes?**
 - Our action plan and asset mapping template is built specifically for this project, drawing on asset mapping work by others. For example, we aren't actually creating "maps" that demonstrate any kind of asset heat maps; yours will probably be more like lists. If we can graphically represent the assets, that will be a bonus. If you want to review resources on asset mapping, you can of course incorporate those ideas into your work. You might examine these two resources: Burns, Paul, & Paz (2012) and McKnight & Kretzmann (1990).
- **This process of asset mapping is a great opportunity for community building! How do we put people at the center of this process?**

- You might start with the kinds of people who come into contact with students in the three subject areas regularly, and then expand your map of assets more broadly. This might mean starting with families and teachers. In fact, since a major goal of this work is to improve local efforts to engage families and communities in MSCS education, starting by learning from families could provide you a unique lens through which to approach outreach to other educators and partners.
- **What data could be collected for Math/Science/Computer Science to show needs in these areas?**
 - We would encourage you to explore data outside of standardized test scores, including the CA Dashboard, to identify needs for all three content areas. Consider course taking patterns, course access and available pathways in your partner districts and schools (e.g., do the high schools in your partner districts offer computer science?) Look at staffing data - for example, which elementary schools do/don't have science specialists? Utilize qualitative data such as empathy interviews and speak directly to students and teachers about their experiences and needs. Consider what [street data](#) you might collect, since "what is measurable is not the same as what is valuable and that data can be humanizing, liberatory and healing" (Safir & Dugan 2021). By expanding the concept of "data," we might unearth new, relevant, and under-represented perspectives and voices that can lead to innovative ideas for systemic (and sustainable) transformational change.

Partnership Questions

- **I'm seeing that there are office hours as a follow-up. Is this something we should coordinate with our COE team?**
 - Yes, you can coordinate with your COE team for office hours, however you can also attend on your own to hear additional examples, ask questions, and receive coaching from the CAL-MSCS leadership team. There is no limit to the number of times you can sign up for office hours, and if the times don't work for you, reach out to any member of the CAL-MSCS team to schedule a window that works.
- **Which groups should we be engaging with? How do we ensure the right folks are at the table during the asset-mapping process - who do we ensure needs to be at the table?**
 - It is important that all three content areas are explored during the asset

mapping process. Begin with your own sphere of influence and then branch out from there. Consider people and voices that are often missing at the table. Have you spoken to a student recently about their experiences in math, science, and computer science education? Have you heard from special educators and their paraprofessionals about NGSS implementation and hands-on activities in their classroom? What community-based partners are available locally to support educators and students? Who are the “strong” voices/organizations you might connect with? and which voices/organizations don’t have that power or influence? This is an ongoing conversation and process that will continually expand your network and uncover more connections and opportunities for collaboration and partnership. We are looking for diversity, equity, and inclusion in order to address the needs of our beautifully diverse students and their access to high quality mathematics, science, and computer science education.

- **Is there a resource on the leadership team who might be able to assist counties with outreach?**
 - Yes! Please explore our [CAL-MSCS Leadership page](#) to learn more about our current partnerships and layers of leadership. Any one of these team members can assist you with outreach such as facilitating introductions, brainstorming possible local partners, asking questions to help dig deeper into asset mapping, providing 1-on-1 coaching, etc.
- **Are we limited to a specific number of partners? Is the example a limit or a target? Why were 5 chosen on the Action Plan A template?**
 - We understand that the partner outreach portion of the Action Plan A template can seem overwhelming and/or a heavy lift, especially for our smaller COEs. Therefore, we suggest starting with reaching out to 3 additional partners as a manageable starting point in this process between now and January. On the template we provided 5 spots (or rows), however this is just a beginning template. Feel free to add additional rows as needed (in any section). Ideally, your asset mapping process is a journey that will grow your list of partners in all three content areas. You can plan to reach out to as many additional partners as necessary after January as well, to keep on building connections, relationships, and knowledge. Feel free to make additional outreach a central activity in your plan for spring 2024.