

# ACCOUNTABILITY PATHWAYS



**COLORADO**  
Department of Education

## EASI Route: Offered Services

### Introduction

The Accountability Pathways is intended to support Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) and schools with planning for and implementing the statutory options, or pathways, for persistently low-performing schools and LEAs. For those nearing the end of the Accountability Clock, the grant can support exploring the pathways, taking thoughtful action, and increasing readiness for discussions with the State Board of Education. For those who receive a directed action from the state board, the grant can support implementation of the approved pathway plan.

### Program Contact

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### Eligibility & Prioritization

*Eligibility.* LEAs that meet the following criteria are eligible to apply:

- A **school** that is in Year 4 or 5 of Priority Improvement or Turnaround on the current School Performance Framework or a school that currently has an action directed by the State Board of Education; or
- A **LEA** that is in Year 4 or 5 of Priority Improvement or Turnaround on the current District Performance Framework currently has an action directed by the State Board of Education.

Eligible schools and LEAs are strongly encouraged to apply for the Accountability Pathways route in Year 4 in anticipation of state board hearings during Year 5. If a school or LEA transitions to Year 4 On Watch or Year 4 On Hold, funds may be used to support early action activities. Schools or LEAs who advance to Year 5 plus shall use funds for activities associated with State Board-directed action.

Schools and LEAs with active Accountability Pathway funds for 2024-25, 2025-26, or 2026-27 may be deemed ineligible for funding and guided to apply, if eligible, in a future EASI grant cycle. Schools and LEAs are limited to one award per fiscal year across all active EASI cohort grant cycles. An eligible school or LEA with active Accountability Pathways funding should contact the assigned CDE School Transformation Specialist to determine when it is appropriate to apply for additional Accountability Pathways funding.

*Prioritization.* In the event that not all EASI proposals can be funded, proposals that meet grant expectations will be funded in the order of the EASI school-level prioritization list. Schools with the highest number of prioritization points will be funded first. District level supports will use the average prioritization of all EASI eligible schools.

### Program Considerations & Fit

*Program Considerations.* The proposed budget and use of Accountability Pathway funds should be done in partnership with the assigned CDE School Transformation Specialist.

*Program Fit.* Accountability Pathways is specifically designed to support nearing the end of the Accountability Clock or with directed action by the State Board of Education. Accountability Pathways is a good fit for schools or LEAs with current or potentially new EASI supports including Exploration Supports, School Turnaround Leadership Development, or Facilitated Board Training for School Improvement. Accountability Pathways may not be a good fit for schools currently

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supported with Rigorous Action through Redesign, Connect for Success, or School Transformation Network. Schools and LEAs should discuss program fit with their assigned CDE School Transformation Specialist.

Active EASI Accountability Pathways or Rigorous Action through Redesign awards may be taken into consideration in determining the appropriate timing and need of additional Accountability Pathways funds. A school or LEA may be eligible for Accountability Pathways, but it may not be the appropriate year to reapply for additional funding based on the accountability status of the school or LEA.

### Sequence of Program Support

The sequence of the work is determined in partnership with Accountability Pathways program lead and the assigned CDE School Transformation Specialist. The sequence of the work should support the design and implementation of a pathways plan, but will be customized to the specific needs of the school and/or LEA.

### Available Funds & Duration

**Available Funds.** Applicants may request up to the maximum award amount for a school or LEA for eligible sites. Award may be:

- Up to \$100,000 per school per year for up to 2.5 years to support pathways plan design and implementation.
- Up to \$400,000 per year for LEAs applying on behalf of multiple schools (at least three schools) and/or the LEA itself for Accountability Pathways.

*Note: If the action directed by the State Board of Education for management at either the school and/or district level, award amounts may be increased beyond the maximum award amounts to account for the costs associated with contracting with an Accountability Pathways Partner. Any increase exceeding the award maximums is at the discretion of CDE staff, contingent on funding availability, and must include notable cost sharing on the district's behalf.*

**Duration.** Program support is designed to support schools or LEAs for 1.5 to 2.5 years, but Accountability Pathway awards are made across two fiscal years. For example, a school may be awarded up to \$100,000 for the remainder of 2024-25 and 2025-26 (i.e. 1.5 years). A second award for up to \$100,000 in 2026-27 is contingent upon the status of the school or LEA on the Accountability Clock. LEAs or schools that are in Year 4 and move to On Watch following the initial application and then fully exit the clock (e.g. do not advance to an SBE hearing in Year 5) will not receive a second year of funding. Schools or LEAs that advance on the Accountability Clock in 2026-27 will receive the additional year of funding.

### Allowable Use of Funds

Funds are intended to support development or implementation of a pathways plan, continuation of early action activities, or to support the implementation of directed action by the State Board of Education. Allowable use of funds include costs associated with:

- Consulting and technical assistance for pathway plan
- Visiting other sites with successful or promising implementation of a pathway option
- Diagnostic reviews for the purpose of identifying systemic issues and determining pathway fit
- Events, facilitated meetings, or community gatherings regarding pathways
- Translation services
- Stipends for teachers and support staff to attend pathways activities
- Travel to CDE-led convenings or meetings regarding grant activities
- Technical assistance on strategic resource allocation for pathways
- Costs incurred during the recruitment of and negotiations with an innovation partner, management partner, and/or a charter school operator. Such costs may include stipends for staff time or legal fees incurred during the establishment of contracts with partners
- Fees for third-party providers contracted to implement the state board directed action
- Activities associated with early action or early implementation of pathways plan



**Budget Recommendations.** For the application submission, a draft budget should include how the funds may be used as aligned to the pathways plan or directed action by the State Board of Education. It is acceptable, however, to use a general placeholder in the budget if approved by the assigned CDE School Transformation Specialist or if the site is in the initial stages of pathway plan development. Any expenses related to an external provider must be supported by a scope of work (draft version acceptable) that clearly outlines timelines, deliverables, and costs for the eligible school.

**Fund Considerations.**

- Funds from this opportunity must be used to **supplement and not supplant** any federal, state, and local funds currently being used to provide activities.
- Post-award revisions must be approved by 06/30 and funds drawn down by 09/30 of each respective fiscal year.
- A school or district may carry funds forward in alignment with funding source restrictions and with CDE approval. At the end of the grant performance period, any non-requested federal funds are reverted and any unspent state funds must be returned to the state.
- CDE may terminate a grant award upon thirty days’ notice if it is deemed by CDE that the applicant is not fulfilling the requirements of the funded program as specified in the approved project application, or if the program is generating less than satisfactory results.
- Multi-year or future award year amounts are contingent on allocations of state and federal funds to CDE in each respective fiscal year.

**Important Program Dates**

Program Dates	Activity
September- December	Meet with CDE School Transformation Specialist to discuss interest in applying for support and outline a proposed budget
December	Application due
January	Award notifications

**Evaluation and Reporting**

Each grantee of the program must, at a minimum, agree to the following evaluation, reporting, and/or progress monitoring components:

- Integration of pathways work within the school or LEA’s Unified Improvement Plan (UIP)
- If the school or district reaches the end of the Accountability Clock, the LEA will be expected to present its pathway plan—developed with CDE support—to the State Board of Education prior to any end-of-clock statutory deadlines. LEAs using grant funds for implementation activities will be required to comply with all progress monitoring requirements requested by CDE staff and the state board.
- Annual Financial Report (AFR) each fiscal year by 09/30

*Note- All data collected will protect personally identifiable information (PII) protected and is only reported on an aggregate level for purposes of evaluating the EASI support and/or supporting future program improvements.*

**Program Assurances**

**LEA Commitments:**

- The LEA will invest a portion of its own budget to support implementation of its state board directed action (if applicable).

**District Leadership Commitments:**

- Identify a point person with decision-making authority who will lead the process for the school(s) being served by the grant. This person must be an LEA employee who sits on the Superintendent’s leadership team and has the authority to work with the local school board.



*School Leadership Commitments:*

- School leader will participate on the LEA team in all grant activities.
- School leadership team and staff representatives attend events, meetings, and community gatherings.
- School leader collaborates with LEA and CDE on developing a timeline for pathways.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND RESOURCES**

**EASI: Accountability Pathways: [www.cde.state.co.us/fedprograms/exploration-accountabilitypathways](http://www.cde.state.co.us/fedprograms/exploration-accountabilitypathways)**

**CDE: Accountability Clock Webpage: [www.cde.state.co.us/accountability/accountability\\_clock](http://www.cde.state.co.us/accountability/accountability_clock)**