

MODEL COMMUNITY DAY SCHOOL RECOGNITION PROGRAM

2023–24 Model Community Day School Application



Application Due Date:
October 20, 2023

California Department of Education
Educational Options Office
916-323-2183
CommunityDayScl@cde.ca.gov

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INTRODUCTION

This application addresses legal requirements and recommended best practices governing school practices. The application provides guidance, but itself is non-binding and does not have the effect of law.

The Model Community Day School (MCDS) Recognition Program identifies and recognizes outstanding programs and creates a resource list of quality programs for school visitations and other forms of peer mentoring. These schools provide comprehensive services to at-risk youth through the use of exemplary instructional strategies and social, emotional, and mental health and guidance support services.

The MCDS application packet includes instructions for completing the application and required forms, reference materials, and instructions for submitting the application.

1. Complete the Intent to Submit online form by **4 p.m. on** October 13, 2023.
2. Submit **a single PDF** of the application to the California Department of Education (CDE) via the exFiles Transfer System by **4 p.m. on** October 20, 2023.
3. In accordance with the application screening process (see p. 6), if corrections are made, submit **a revised single PDF** of the application to the CDE via the exFiles File Transfer System. Corrected applications must be received by **4 p.m. on** October 20, 2023.

Note: Any applications that are not received by the October 20, 2023, deadline **will be disqualified**. Corrections may **only** be made to applications that are received by the October 20, 2023, deadline.

Note: Late and/or incomplete submissions of the **final** application will result in **disqualification** from the reading process.

Timeline

September 12, 2023	Applications available to the field
September 20, 2023	Application Webinar
October 13, 2023.....	Intent to Submit online form to be completed
October 20, 2023.....	Applications due
November 3, 2023	Applications reviewed and rated
November 13, 2023–December 15, 2023.....	Site Validation Visits
February 2024	Schools notified
April/May 2024.....	Awards ceremony

Public Information

Information about each MCDS may be published online by the CDE for those interested in mentorship or information.

APPLICATION PREPARATION

Application Assembly

The completed application is to be submitted as a **single PDF**. Each of the items listed below must be included for the application to be considered complete and must be assembled in the order listed below.

1. Application Cover Sheet (Attachment A)
2. School Information Sheet (Attachment B)
3. Certification Form (Attachment C)
4. Glossary (Attachment D)
5. Narrative Statements (5 statements)

Application Submission Process

Applications must be uploaded into the exFiles File Transfer System by **4 p.m. on Friday, October 20, 2023**.

Instructions for naming your PDF document and uploading your PDF document to the exFiles File Transfer can be found below.

Step 1: **Naming Your Document.** When you create your document, please name it as described below:

- School Name County-District-School (CDS) code_MCDS23
- Example: Treasure High_34 65656 0000001_MCDS23

Note: Make sure that the document name **does not exceed** 40 characters, including blank spaces. It is appropriate to shorten your school's name, if necessary. Your 14-digit CDS code **must** be included in its entirety along with the text, "MCDS23".

Step 2: **Uploading Your PDF Document.** Follow the instructions below to complete the upload process into the exFiles File Transfer System for the "2023–24 MCDS Applications" Project:

- After creating your PDF document and labelling as instructed above, enter the **Project URL** for the exFiles File Transfer System into your web browser.

- Once you arrive at the exFiles File Transfer System web page, you will be prompted to enter the **Project Code**.
- After you enter the Project Code, you will be prompted to enter the **Password**.

Note: The Project URL, Project Code, and Password can be obtained by sending a request to the Educational Options Office (EOO) by email at CommunityDayScl@cde.ca.gov. The email must be received by Thursday, October 19, 2023, (one day before the application deadline).

- Next, you will be asked to select a file to upload. Click the “Browse” button. Then navigate to the PDF document you want to upload.
- After selecting the PDF document, you will return to the file upload screen. In the description text box, enter the exact name of the PDF document selected for upload.

Note: The name of the PDF document you selected and the description **must** be the same.

- Once you have selected the PDF document and entered the PDF document name into the description text box, click the “Upload File” button.

Note: Do not encrypt the file. Do not select a file encryption type or enter anything into the File Encryption Password text box. Just click the “Upload File” button.

- After you click “Upload File”, the name of the PDF document and the description of the PDF document (these should be the same), will be displayed in the File Listings table.
- Within the File Listings table, a date and time stamp will be displayed next to the PDF document name and description of your application.

Note: The information displayed in the File Listings table will serve as your confirmation receipt. It is highly recommended that you print this page for your records.

It is the responsibility of each applicant to ensure their application is completed in full.

If you suspect that your PDF document does not include all of the required elements, you must contact the EOO by email at CommunityDayScl@cde.ca.gov and request your previous submission be deleted. Once the previous submission has been deleted, you must then upload the new PDF document in its entirety, prior to the deadline on **Friday, October 20, 2023, at 4 p.m.**

If an applicant submits multiple PDF documents with only partial information, regardless of whether they comprise all the requirements in the 2023–24 MCDS Application, they will be

considered two separate incomplete applications, and the application will automatically be disqualified from the reading process.

Application Evaluation Process

Step 1: **Application Screening.** Each application received by the application deadline, 4 p.m. on October 20, 2023, will be downloaded and reviewed by EOO staff to ensure it meets the minimum eligibility criteria outlined below.

- The required signatures/typed names are provided on both the Application Cover Sheet (Attachment A) and the Certification Form (Attachment C).
- The application is on 8 ½ by 11-inch paper.
- All required forms listed in the Application Assembly Section are included and are in the exact format as provided on the 2023–24 MCDS Application.
- Five Narrative Statements are included and are each a maximum of two pages, typewritten, in 11 or 12-point Arial font, single-spaced, normal character spacing, with one-inch margins. Applications that do not include the title of the statement as a header will also be disqualified.
- The application is assembled in the order and includes all of the required information outlined in the Application Assembly Section
- The application is submitted as a single PDF document.

Applicants that do not pass the screening process will be notified via email.

Step 2: **Application Review.** Applications that pass the screening process performed by EOO staff will be evaluated by trained field experts.

Each Narrative Statement will be rated on a twenty-point scale, as follows, representing ratings of being exemplary (above the performance of normally effective community day schools) for a possible combined total of 100 points. Applications that receive a total score of 75 points or more will qualify for a Site Validation Visit. Applications that receive less than 75 total points will be disqualified.

Rating	Possible Score
Excellent	15–20 points
Moderate	6–14 points
Not above normal expectations	0–5 points

Applicants that receive a score of less than 75 points will be notified via email. Notifications will be sent out following the conclusion of the reading process.

Step 3: Site Validation Visit. A review team will conduct a Site Validation Visit to applicant schools receiving a total score of 75 points or more. The purpose of the visit is to evaluate evidence that establishes the school as an MCDS.

During the Site Validation Visit, the review team will interview the principal, teachers, students, guidance and support staff, stakeholders, and others familiar with the school. The review team may select teachers and students at random for brief interviews during the visit. Based on the Site Validation Visit, the review team may recommend the applicant school for MCDS status to the CDE, where a final determination will be made. The review team must share their recommendation with the principal prior to the end of the Site Validation Visit.

Recommendations and Final Decisions

The site review teams make recommendations to the CDE.

Applicants that are not recommended for MCDS designation will be notified via email.

Applicants that are recommended for MCDS designation will be notified via congratulatory phone call from EOO staff and official letter and news release issued by the CDE's Communications Division.

Model Community Day School Designation Period

Schools that are awarded MCDS designation for the 2023–24 MCDS application year will be for the period of April 2024 through March 2027. Schools that receive the MCDS designation are encouraged to submit a new MCDS application in the 2026–27 MCDS application year to avoid a possible gap in model school designation status.

Obligations of Model Community Day Schools

The MCDS Recognition Program is a partnership between the CDE and the California Continuation Education Association Plus (CCEA Plus). The CCEA Plus expends a significant amount of funding each year for costs associated with the evaluation of applications and the completion of site validation visits to applicant schools.

All applicant schools that pass the screening process by EOO staff will incur an assessment of \$500 from CCEA Plus to cover the processing costs for review and evaluation of the applicant school's application.

The CCEA Plus will provide critiques, application evaluations, and follow-up technical assistance to schools whose applications score below 75 points and are disqualified.

Technical assistance can be scheduled by contacting a representative from the CCEA Plus. You can find a list of contacts on the CCEA Plus State Officers and Representatives web page at <https://cceanet.org/about-us/state-officers/>.

MCDSs provide examples of promising practices in the field. Schools that are selected as MCDSs commit to being willing to serve as peer mentors and will be asked to offer Site Visits, sample materials, telephone consultation, and training and/or virtual website links, if requested by schools and districts in need of technical assistance. Staff from schools selected as MCDSs will be asked to participate in MCDS Application reviews in the future, including application rating and Site Validation Visits to applicant schools. The CDE may also ask MCDSs to participate as experts in webinars about exemplary practices.

Annual Assurance of Services

Schools selected as MCDSs agree to submit an Annual Assurance of Services Form by June 30 for each of the **second and third years** of designation. The Annual Assurance of Services Form certifies that the school meets or exceeds the MCDS Recognition Program standards as described in the 2023–24 application.

If the applicant school is selected as an MCDS in 2024, you may obtain a copy of the form from the CDE MCDS Recognition Program web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/sr/mr/index.asp> and retain it for your records. Complete the form and submit it to the CDE on or before the following dates: **June 30, 2025**, and **June 30, 2026**. A reminder email will be sent to principals and district superintendents in mid-April 2025 and 2026. The Annual Assurance of Services Form should include electronic signatures **or** typed names. Submission instructions are provided on the form.

Intent to Submit an Application

Principals who intend to submit an application **must** complete the Intent to Submit online form in order to be considered for model school status. A link to the online form is available on the CDE MCDS Recognition Program web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/sr/mr/index.asp>. Submitting the Intent to Submit online form **does not** obligate the principal to submit an application.

It is the prospective applicant's responsibility to ensure that the Intent to Submit online form is submitted to the CDE by **4 p.m.** on October 13, 2023,

Please be sure to print a copy for your records. An automated email will be sent to the principal to confirm receipt of the Intent to Submit. If a confirmation email is not received within 72 hours, please contact the EOO by email at CommunityDaySci@cde.ca.gov.

Application Webinar

A webinar for prospective applicants is scheduled to be held on September 20, 2023. Any principal interested in applying may participate or whomever they appoint to attend in their place. The webinar will provide information regarding the application and the application process. It will point out items that have disqualified applicants in previous years and will address as many questions as possible submitted during the webinar.

To sign up for the webinar and receive the required login information, check for scheduling and details on the CDE MCDS Recognition Program web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/sr/mr/index.asp>.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Section 1: Application Cover Sheet

The Application Cover Sheet (Attachment A) may include electronic signatures, original signatures, or typed name. Include the completed Application Cover Sheet as the **first page** of your application.

Section 2: School Information Sheet

Complete all items on the School Information Sheet (Attachment B).

Section 3: Certification Form

Complete the Certification Form (Attachment C). The applicant school's District Superintendent/Designee must sign this form. If required, the designee signing must be an employee of the school district. An electronic signature, original signature, or typed name must be provided.

Section 4: Glossary

Create a glossary for your application using Attachment D. Spell out any acronyms or initialisms used within the Narrative Statements. (See example below.)

- CTE = Career Technical Education
- WASC = Western Association of Schools and Colleges

Note: This tool will assist the reviewer of your application since he and/or she may not be familiar with the programs, tests, etc., utilized at your school site. Use an additional sheet of paper, if necessary.

Ensure that each of the five Narrative Statements focus on the specific qualities and innovative characteristics that make the applicant school an exemplary model and that could be useful to other schools. Summarize the elements the school uses that have led to continuous school improvement. Cite evidence that your school performs above and beyond the performance of a normally effective community day school. Include a description of how your school is helping to close the Achievement Gap (defined as the gap between test scores for African American and Hispanic students compared to test scores for white and Asian students).

Each Narrative Statement is limited to two pages and must include the title of the statement as a header, be typewritten on 8½ by 11-inch white paper, using an 11 or 12-point Arial font, single-spaced, normal character spacing, with one-inch margins.

Each Narrative Statement will be rated on a twenty-point scale, representing ratings of being exemplary (above the performance of normally effective community day schools). (See pp. 6–7 for scoring details.)

Section 5: Narrative Statements

1. School Profile

Please describe the following:

- The school, grade levels served, student demographics, community context, staffing, and district support.
- Describe the use of professional learning communities and professional development to identify needs and approaches to support continuous improvement for students and the community day school.

2. School Management

Please describe the following:

- How staff, students, and other educational partners are involved in collaborating and contributing to school management.
- How the community day school coordinates with the traditional schools and other alternative education schools within the district to provide for seamless and supportive transfer into and from the community day school, including how student assets are emphasized in addition to any challenges.
- How district leadership, other district schools, educational partners and community members are informed of the activities, successful academic, social and emotional progress of community day school students, and challenges within the community day school needing additional support.

3. Educating “This Whole Child” (Instruction)

Please describe the following:

- How instruction and curriculum are matched to student developmental levels, student learning strengths and interests, and the student’s lived-experience and identity.
- All methods students may use to earn credits. Indicate the maximum number of credits that can be earned per quarter, semester, and year.
- The scoring rubrics for projects, essays, and other individual assignments.
- The use of competency, mastery, in-class and out-of-class projects, homework, and length of each class period. State if all credits and partial credits are transferable to other schools in the district.
- The instructional delivery system (e.g., directed teaching, project-based assignments, group projects, and other modalities).
- If the number of credits to graduate from the community day school is less than the number required to graduate from the traditional high school(s) in the district, explain the differences and the rationale for requiring fewer credits.

4. Educating “This Whole Child” (Social, Emotional and Mental Health and Development)

Please describe the following:

- How social, emotional, and mental health needs and appropriate responses are identified and provided to students, including trauma-informed practices, and by whom. How are these elements integrated into the total school program?
- How respect for the student within the school community is actively supported.
- How the school culture, climate, and practices are supportive as a learning community, personally and culturally relevant, sustaining and revitalizing, respectful of the lived experience of the student and family, and how implicit and explicit bias are identified and addressed.
- The alternative means of supportive improvement and intervention used to prevent or respond to behavioral and/or attendance challenges and barriers, and to minimize the use of exclusionary practices such as suspension, expulsion and other restrictions on students’ active engagement and opportunities within the learning community. These might include restorative practices, student success teams, social, emotional, and mental health supports, and other positive, asset-based recommended practices per California *Education Code* sections 48900.5 and 48900 paragraphs (v) and (w). Provide a specific explanation of how those practices relate to any

disproportionate representation of minority students and any other identified equity concerns in such interventions.¹

- How you collaborate with the student in identifying valid challenges, goals, values and pains that might be being expressed problematically, including those that the student identifies as a response to specific school practices, and in identifying positive, viable alternatives to the problematic behaviors.

5. School Evaluation of Effectiveness

Please describe the following:

- How the school evaluates the effectiveness of its educational program, both on an ongoing basis and as measured over time.
- What procedures are used to determine what is working and what needs to be improved (e.g., test results, student surveys, teacher feedback, and other examples).
- How the community day school measures and records ongoing value-added academic, social and emotional and attendance progress, compared to from before the student entered the community day school, and throughout their participation in the community day school.
 - Discuss how staff use these objective and formative data to support instructional and school culture improvement, and how this information is shared with the student, family members, community day school staff, district, educational partners and community members.

¹ For assistance in this area, you may review recent guidance issued by the U.S. Department of Education (ED) and the Department of Justice on the ED School Climate and Student Discipline Resources web page at <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/school-discipline/index.html>.

APPENDIX 1

Expectations for Site Validation Visits

The applicant school is responsible for showcasing the components that make it a Model Community Day School (MCDS). Remember that the emphasis is on what makes the school exemplary, rather than simply a good school. The following steps must be completed:

1. The applicant school must submit a Site Validation Visit agenda (See Appendix 3) to the site review team in advance of the visit.
2. The following activities are expected to take place during the Site Validation Visit:
 - a. Classroom visits to see all or a representative sample of the entire program. It is the school's responsibility to arrange classroom visits.
 - b. Meetings with administrators and staff members.
 - c. Meetings with stakeholder group(s).
 - d. Meetings with student focus group(s), individual students, and parent/guardian/caregiver focus group(s).
 - e. Opportunities to observe evidence or discuss all components of the self-nomination as an MCDS. This can occur through meetings with appropriate staff and observations of exemplary components and/or practices.
 - f. A meeting with site review team members before the exit interview to discuss tentative findings.
 - g. An exit interview that includes the following:
 - The site review team summarizes what they saw as exemplary components and cites areas of concern. The school staff will have the opportunity to ask clarifying questions and respond to any concerns.
 - The site review team offers positive recommendations and gives indications of exemplary practices that were observed.
 - The site review team informs the principal if it is not recommending the school as an MCDS. The team must identify specific areas that failed to meet model school standards. The team should offer the school technical assistance or provide a referral for technical assistance.
 - The site review team may inform the principal if it recommends that the school be designated as an MCDS. However, the site review team must make it absolutely clear that the final decision will be made by the California Department of Education.

APPENDIX 2

Common Problems with Site Validation Visits

The following are common problems that may occur during the Site Validation Visits:

1. The site review team does not find evidence to support the elements that have been presented in the application.
2. The school does not provide sufficient opportunity for the site review team to meet representative samples of stakeholder groups, students, administrators, staff, and others.
3. The Site Validation Visit schedule does not allow time for the site review team to meet and compile their report.
4. The site review team fails to hold an exit interview and/or fails to identify specific areas of concern that support a recommendation against recognition as a Model Community Day School (MCDS).
 - a. The site review team must inform the principal if the applicant school is not going to be recommended as an MCDS and must provide reasons that support the findings.
 - b. Technical assistance or a referral for technical assistance should be provided and, if appropriate, the school should be encouraged to reapply the following school year.
5. The site review team informs the school that it has been selected as an MCDS by the California Department of Education.

APPENDIX 3

Sample Site Validation Visit Agenda

Note: This sample agenda is provided as a general guideline. The sample agenda items should be considered as suggestions only and may be modified at the discretion of the applicant school.

DAY ONE

- 1 p.m. Entrance interview with principal (and anyone else the principal chooses)
- 1:30 p.m. Focus group (district superintendent, administrators, school board members)
- 2:15 p.m. Focus group (service provider partners, members of nonprofit agencies, social services, probation, law enforcement, treatment providers, others)
- 3 p.m. Focus group (members of the community, private sector, service clubs, faith community, others)
- 3:45 p.m. Focus group (parents/guardians/caregivers)
- 4:15 p.m. End of Day One

DAY TWO

- 7:45 a.m. Meet with principal/greet arriving students
- 8 a.m. Prepare for classroom observations
- 8:30 a.m. Classroom observations
- 10:30 a.m. Focus group (students)
- 11:30 a.m. Classroom observations
- Noon Lunch, perhaps combined with focus group (teachers)
- 1:30 p.m. Classroom observations
- 2 p.m. Site review team meeting (come to consensus, draft report)
- 3 p.m. Exit interview with principal (and anyone else the principal chooses)
- 3:45 p.m. End of visit