

MODEL COMMUNITY DAY SCHOOL RECOGNITION PROGRAM

2024–25

Model Community Day School Application



Application Due Date:

Thursday, September 12, 2024

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 recommends 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 community day school 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.

To be considered for the MCDS Recognition Program, an applicant must:

1. Ensure that the school meets the School Eligibility Criteria. (See p.2)
2. Complete the Intent to Submit online form by **4 p.m. on** August 30, 2024.
3. Submit **a single PDF** of the application to the California Department of Education (CDE) via the exFiles Transfer System by **4 p.m. on** September 12, 2024.
4. 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** September 12, 2024.

Note: Any applications that are not received by the September 12, 2024, deadline **will be disqualified**. Corrections may **only** be made to applications that are received by the September 12, 2024, deadline.

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

Timeline

April 19, 2024	Applications available to the field
May 2, 2024	Application Webinar
August 30, 2024	Intent to Submit online form to be completed
September 12, 2024	Applications due
October 4, 2024	Northern Applications reviewed and rated
October 18, 2024	Southern Applications reviewed and rated
October 21, 2024–December 31, 2024	Site Validation Visits
February 2025	Schools notified
April/May 2025	Awards ceremony

Public Information

Information about each MCDS may be published online by the CDE for those interested in mentorship or information. This would include contact information, the Narrative Statements, and description of exemplary practices and program summary from the Site Validation Visit report.

School Eligibility Criteria

Schools that meet the following eligibility criteria are invited to apply:

1. The school is established as a community day school according to California *Education Code (EC)* sections 48660–48666.
2. It is recommended that the school be accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). Schools that are not WASC accredited **are still eligible to apply**.
 - a. If accredited, the school’s WASC Visiting Committee Report must verify that the school has completed a full self-study, which typically involves a three- and one-half-day visit.

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; limited to two pages each)
6. WASC Award Letter (including extension letter, if applicable)

NOTE: Item 6 above is only required if the school is WASC accredited.

Application Submission Process

Applications must be uploaded into the exFiles File Transfer System by **4 p.m. on Thursday, September 12, 2024.**

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_MCDS24
- Example: Treasure High_34 65656 0000001_MCDS24

Note: Make sure that the document name **does not exceed** 45 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, "MCDS24."

Step 2: **Uploading Your PDF Document.** Follow the instructions below to complete the upload process into the exFiles File Transfer System for the "2024–25 MCDS Applications" Project:

- After creating your PDF document and labeling 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 CommunityDaySci@cde.ca.gov. The email must be received by Wednesday, September 11, 2024, (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 **Thursday, September 12, 2024, 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 2024–25 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 September 12, 2024, 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 2024–25 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.

- **If the school is WASC accredited**, a copy of the WASC Accreditation Letter indicating the WASC accreditation period is included along with an extension letter, if applicable, that lists the dates for which the school is accredited.
- 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 2024–25 application year will be for the period of April 2025 through March 2028. Schools that receive the MCDS designation are encouraged to submit a new application for MCDS recognition in the 2027–28 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 \$750 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](#).

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 reviews of MCDS applications 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 2024–25 application.

- If the applicant school is selected as an MCDS in 2025, you will be able to obtain a copy of the form from the CDE's [MCDS Recognition Program web page](#) and retain it for your records. Complete the form and submit it to the CDE on or before the following dates: **June 30, 2026**, and **June 30, 2027**. A reminder email will be sent to principals and district superintendents in mid-April 2026 and 2027. The Annual Assurance of Services Form should include electronic signatures **or** typed names. Submission instructions will be 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's [MCDS Recognition Program web page](#). 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 August 30, 2024**.

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 CommunityDayScl@cde.ca.gov.

Application Webinar

A webinar for prospective applicants is scheduled to be held on May 2, 2024. 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's [MCDS Recognition Program web page](#).

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 they may not be familiar with the programs, tests, etc., utilized at your school site. Use an additional sheet of paper, if necessary.

Section 5: Narrative Statements

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.)

Underlying Questions When Writing Narrative Statements

Within the five Narrative Statements, keep in mind these four underlying questions:

- What do we want all students to know and be able to do?
- How will we know if they learn it?
- How will we respond when some students do not learn?
- How will we extend the learning for students who are already proficient?

Narrative Statement Topics and Requirements

1. School Profile

Please describe the following:

- The school, grade levels served, student demographics, community context, staffing, and district support.
- Discuss your daily schedule (and be prepared to share your schedule with the site visitation team).
- While you are asked to discuss supporting individual students below in the narratives about Educating “This Whole Child” (Instruction) and Educating “This Whole Child” (Social, Emotional and Mental Health and Development), describe here in the School Profile narrative the general ways staff in all roles come together as a full team and in smaller groups to: (1) evaluate academic, behavioral, attendance, school climate data; (2) share observations of academic, behavioral and social strengths, successes and challenges faced by students; (3) significant events and student interests; (4) family input; and (5) schoolwide practices and district policy. The aforementioned gatherings are sometimes officially scheduled under the general term “professional learning communities.”
- Discuss how you prepare students to be ready for and successful in the next levels following participation in your school (another school, society, college and/or vocational schools, career readiness and other opportunities). How do you help them to be aware of the possibilities?

- Describe the use of professional development in response to identified needs and approaches to support continuous improvement for students and the community day school.
- What safety measures are in place?

2. School Leadership and Management

Please describe the following:

- How staff, students, and other educational partners are involved in collaborating and contributing to school management, including identifying challenges and the means for identifying and implementing needed changes.
- 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 and adapted 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. Discuss 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) and how this is monitored and supported.
- 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.
- Have you identified and addressed systemic practices, including those regarding school culture and climate, which have undermined some or all students?

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., formal and

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’s [School Climate and Student Discipline Resources web page](#).

informal data including student, staff, family and other educational partners' input, and other examples). This includes information about students and also systemic practices.

- How the school measures and records ongoing value-added academic, social and emotional progress, compared to from before the student entered this school, and throughout their participation in the 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.

NOTE: The following two sections are only applicable if the school is WASC accredited.

Section 6: Western Association of Schools and Colleges Award Letter

Submit a copy of the most recent WASC Accreditation Letter indicating the WASC accreditation period is included along with an extension letter, if applicable, that lists the dates for which the school is accredited.

Section 7: Western Association of Schools and Colleges Visiting Committee Report

If selected for a Site Validation Visit, the applicant must prepare a digital copy of the most recent WASC Visiting Committee Report and make it available to the review team on the day of the Site Validation Visit.

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

Appendix 4

List of Current Model Community Day Schools

Designation is from April of the first year to March of the final year.
The California Continuation Education Association Plus is organized into four [regions](#).

School	Region	Designation Period	School Address	School Phone	Administrator
Dorothy V. Johnson High School	2	4/2024–3/2027	10601 South Grandee Avenue Los Angeles, CA 90002	323-568-8400	Kenyatta Stiger
Hesperia Community Day School	1	4/2024–3/2027	16633 Lemon Street Hesperia, CA 92345	760-948-3999	Chris Fore
Lighthouse Community Day School	4	4/2024–3/2027	250 South Sanderson Way Fort Bragg, CA 95437	707-961-2889	Kristin Larson Balliet
Lindsay Community Day	3	4/2024–3/2027	270 North Harvard Avenue Lindsay, CA 93247	559-679-1751	Amalia Lopez
Montebello Community Day School	2	4/2024–3/2027	123 South Montebello Boulevard Montebello, CA 90604	323-887-7900	Juan Herrera
Pathway Community Day School	3	4/2024–3/2027	11 South Teilman Fresno, CA 93706	559-287-4667	Jill Young
REACH Academy	1	4/2024–3/2027	1325 East 4th Street Santa Ana, CA 92701	714-431-1800	Chad Greendale
Sanger Community Day School	3	4/2024–3/2027	818 L Street Sanger, CA 93657	559-524-6630	Alfredo Ponce