SUMMARY OF YEAR 2 ACTIVITIES
JULY 2022–JUNE 2023

California Center for School Climate

The California Center for School Climate (CCSC) is a California Department of Education (CDE) initiative led by WestEd that provides free support and training on school climate and data use to local education agencies (LEAs) in California. In its second year, individuals from about a third of California LEAs participated in CCSC activities. This summary provides an overview of the CCSC's major activities and accomplishments between July 2022 and June 2023.

Supports Provided

To launch the second year of CCSC services, a kickoff webinar cohosted by the CDE and WestEd in partnership with the State Board of Education was held on September 1, 2022. It provided an overview of available and upcoming supports, technical assistance (TA), and resources for Year 2.

Types of Technical Assistance Offered

General TA activities were designed as events open to any LEA. For example, the *school climate annual event*, titled The Power of Relationships in Positive School Climate, was held on February 28, 2023, and included eight virtual sessions that covered a range of topics, including the promotion of school connectedness and school wellness centers, culturally responsive pedagogy, and caring relationships in school.

The CCSC also offered a *data use webinar series* that consisted of seven webinars from October 2022 to May 2023. For this series, CCSC partnered with the California School Climate, Health, and Learning Surveys (CalSCHLS);

> "A safe and supportive environment consists of welcoming, acceptance, awareness, and celebration of many different cultures, beliefs, and backgrounds."
>
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> MEMBER OF THE CALIFORNIA CENTER FOR SCHOOL CLIMATE YOUTH ADVISORY TEAM

the University of California, Santa Barbara; Children Now; and school districts to highlight practices in using data to improve school climate and student well-being.

Targeted TA activities were intended for smaller audiences, allowing time for participants to engage with one another. For example, the *Peer Learning Exchange (PLE) sessions* are intended as a space for education leaders from across the state to connect on a range of timely and relevant school climate topics. PLE sessions were held roughly once a month from September 2022 to May 2023.

The *Safe and Supportive Learning Environments (SSLE) Essentials* is a cohort-based professional learning series to which kindergarten through grade twelve (K–12) district staff, school staff, and administrators can apply. Each course in the series aims to develop the mindsets, knowledge, and capacity to infuse trauma-informed, restorative, and culturally responsive practices; social–emotional learning; and school climate and whole-person related practices into everyday instruction and experiences. Two cohorts were offered in Year 2: one for educational leaders and a second to meet the unique professional development and capacity-building needs of county offices of education (COEs). The cohort for COEs included small COE teams and emphasized leadership, sustainability, and systems-related content.

Intensive TA activities featured one-on-one assistance such as coaching and consultation, thought partnership, strategic planning, and resources identification for LEAs who reached out or completed a TA form.

In Year 2, three new TA supports were launched. The *School Climate Data Use Peer Networks for LEAs* collaborated with 10 districts to support the districts in building local data use capacity. The supports provided by the Peer Network included virtual community of practice sessions for all participating district teams, in-person workshops, and district-based coaching supports.

The *SSLE Deep Dive* course, *Talking About Race as a Healing Practice,* was offered for K–12 district and school staff and administrators to learn about racial literacy and its role in safe and supportive learning environments. In six weekly virtual sessions, participants collaborated with peers and SSLE facilitators to strengthen their mindsets, knowledge, and capacity to engage in conversations about race and racism from a mindful rather than a reactive space in their work.

Finally, the *School Climate Collaboratives* were partnerships with selected districts across the state who received individualized, intensive school climate supports and services related to three school climate improvement strategies: student listening circles, family forums, and professional learning. Each district team met monthly with a CCSC coach. Together, CCSC and partner districts examined school climate improvement at the individual, collective, and systemic levels through in-person coaching, TA, and events in order to strengthen the district's school climate goals.

> "Student input was crucial in learning about school climate. We plan to implement their ideas next year."

STUDENT LISTENING CIRCLE PARTICIPANT

Types of Resources Developed

A total of five resources were completed in Year 2, including the *Calming Spaces in Schools and Classrooms* brief, which includes strategies for creating calming spaces for students, a vignette that highlights the Tahoe Truckee Unified School District Wellness Center Program, and related practical advice and resources. Another resource completed and launched in Year 2

is the _Be Well_ *virtual space (web page)*, which features research-based strategies, support, and ideas for understanding and practicing self-regulation and stress management for youth-serving adults.

Additionally, a *guide*, _Participatory Systems Change for Equity_, developed in collaboration with the national Center to Improve Social and Emotional Learning and School Safety, and a *toolkit*, _Cultivating Caring Relationships at School: 15 Activities That Promote Staff and Student Connection_, coauthored by the Center's Youth Advisory Team, were posted during Year 2.

Audio resources continued to be created in Year 2. The _CCSC audio gallery_ includes stories of California educators, school and district leaders, students, and family members who are serving the whole-person needs of their communities with practices rooted in equity. Each audiocast includes a transcript, a brief, resources, and questions to consider when using the audiocasts to help educators adapt what they learn to their local contexts. Five audiocasts were developed and completed in Year 2 and feature stories related to student wellness improvement, youth engagement in creating a school climate, youth perspectives on school safety, educator listening circles, and classroom strategies that emerged from district policy and a commitment to equity and anti-racism.

Finally, in Year 2 WestEd continued to manage and expand the _CCSC website_, housed within the California Safe and Supportive Schools website. *Website pages* for new TA activities—such as the School Climate Data Use Peer Networks for LEAs, the School Climate Collaboratives, and the SSLE Deep Dive course—and the resources described in this section on supports the CCSC provided were created and updated on an ongoing basis.

Who the CCSC Reached

TA Participants and Organizations

During this reporting period, CCSC services reached 2,761 participants. This includes 1,525 unique individuals in California, more than double the 728 unique individuals served last year. Of these individuals, nearly one in five participated in two or more TA events. Among these unique participants, **444 unique California LEAs are represented—or about a third of all California LEAs—across all TA activities**. This also represents a 33 percent increase in the number of LEAs CCSC services have reached compared with last year.

Table 1 provides a summary of the numbers of registrants or accepted applicants, attendees, and unique California LEAs represented at the major CCSC TA events and activities.

Table 1. Registrants or Accepted Applicants, Attendees, and Unique LEAs Represented at Major Year 2 CCSC TA Events and Activities

TA Event or Activity	Registrants or Accepted Applicants	Attendees	Number of Unique LEAs
Annual Event	928	583	207
Data Use Webinars	1,583	826	323
Peer Learning Exchanges	N/A	343	146
SSLE *Essentials*	47	47	27
LEA Peer Network	10	6	6
SSLE Deep Dive	18	17	7
Collaboratives	9	7	7

Note. For the LEA Peer Network and the Collaboratives, the number of registrants or accepted applicants shown represents districts, not individuals. The number of attendees shown for these two supports represents the number of districts that completed all activities and events that comprise each support.

Participants from other types of organizations besides California LEAs were also represented, including foundations, TA and out-of-school-time providers, community-based organizations, mental health and juvenile justice organizations, private schools, and universities and research organizations. Individuals from at least six other states also participated. During Year 2, student and family members attended some TA events.

Overall, more than half of the individuals who registered for CCSC TA events and activities **attended** them. Compared with attendance numbers in Year 1—in which about a third of registrants attended a given TA activity or event—the number of participants who attended the annual event and PLEs in Year 2 nearly tripled, and the number who attended the data use webinars increased by a third. Similar increases were observed in the number of unique LEAs represented.

Finally, 15 TA requests were received in Year 2. Most TA requests were related to locating resources on school climate topics such as school connectedness and mental health. Other requests were related to school climate data use practices that required consulting on the alignment of school climate data with a local control and accountability plan (LCAP) or accessing the California Healthy Kids Survey data dashboard.

Resources Accessed

The views of CCSC resources via CCSC web pages remained steady in Year 2 (see Table 2). With the exception of the CCSC Overview page, views of which decreased slightly from Year 1 to Year 2 (4,093 versus 3,982), views of other web pages increased in Year 2, and the number of views of most web pages was at least double the number in Year 1.

Table 2. Views of CCSC Web Pages in Year 2

CCSC Web Page	Page Launch Date	Number of Views
CCSC Overview	12/17/21	3,982
CCSC Events	1/3/22	3,387
Audio Gallery	5/31/21	806
Annual Virtual Event	1/19/23	9,744
Data Use Webinars	2/11/22	1,041
Peer Learning Exchanges	1/13/22	809
SSLE *Essentials*	1/13/22	2,465
TA Requests	4/4/22	130

Note: The page launch date shown for the annual virtual event is the date on which information about the second annual event went live. The number of page views shown for this event includes views for the general annual event and specific sessions.

Table 3 shows the number of views of CCSC web pages for TA activities that were new in Year 2.

Table 3. Views of CCSC Web Pages for New TA Activities in Year 2

New CCSC Web Page	Page Launch Date	Number of Views
LEA Peer Network	8/19/22	1,298
SSLE Deep Dive	12/12/22	652
Collaboratives	8/19/22	2,116

What Is the Impact of the CCSC?

To explore impact in Year 2, we used data from 1,087 participants who responded to three feedback questions on surveys[1] and in-session polls. Two questions asked to what extent respondents agreed or disagreed whether specific strategies, practices, or approaches could be (a) applied to their work and (b) shared with others. A third question asked to what extent respondents agreed or disagreed that they would use the information or

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[1] During Year 2, all feedback surveys used a version of these three questions, adapted slightly to align with each type of TA support.

resources. Participants used a four-point Likert agreement scale (strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree) to indicate their responses.

Table 4 shows the percentage of participants who responded that they agreed or strongly agreed with each statement after their participation in TA activities.

Table 4. Percentage of Participants Who Responded "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" to Feedback Questions on Survey or In-Session Poll

TA Event or Activity	Apply in Work	Share with Others	Intend to Use
Annual Event	**97.4%**	**98.3%**	**98.3%**
Data Use Webinars	**90.1%**	**91.0%**	**91.7%**
Peer Learning Exchanges	**98.1%**	**98.1%**	**98.1%**
LEA Peer Network	**98.6%**	**98.6%**	**99.3%**
SSLE (*Essentials* and Deep Dive)	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**
Collaboratives	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

On average, 97.1 percent of respondents agreed that the TA activities provided information that could be applied to their work, 97.6 percent agreed they could share this information with others, and 97.6 percent agreed that they intended to use the information or resources provided. **This suggests that, at least among survey and poll respondents, the TA activities and resources likely impacted the work of participants.**

Specific examples of *how* practitioners or their work was impacted came from interviews with a small number of SSLE *Essentials* and Deep Dive course participants. SSLE *Essentials* COE participants mentioned how rare it is to have the opportunity to learn from and network with

other COEs in one space, resulting in stronger networks built on a foundation of common language and work. The SSLE *Essentials* afforded them that space:

> "Being able to make those contacts across the state and with neighboring counties and being able to work with them—in some aspects I think it really gives us some commonality in language and work. That's pretty amazing."

SSLE COE PARTICIPANT

Another theme was the helpfulness of CCSC resources. Interviewees appreciated the organization of resources and their ability to refer to or share resources with others when needed:

> "I would save all those resources . . . and when I do my biweekly newsletter with districts, I incorporate that information in it. And when I'm having my one-on-ones with teachers, depending upon what I'm troubleshooting with them, I'll share certain articles with certain teachers to help them progress."

DEEP DIVE PARTICIPANT

Interviewees also shared that what they learned and *how* they learned it modified their subsequent actions and work. For example, one interviewee talked about the impact their Deep Dive learning experience had on their confidence and skill set, enabling them to verbally address a microaggression in their workspace.

Another interviewee modeled the next class they taught on their SSLE experience. Serving as a "guide" instead of an instructor, the interviewee let class participants "do the heavy lifting" by allowing them to draw on their experiences in order to inform the conversation, creating a climate in which contributions were "not just acknowledged but honored" and all participants were "honoring and accepting other people's experiences." The interviewee described the class as "one of the best sessions I've ever led as an instructor, and I'm talking about 22 years of teaching."

Although conclusions about impact cannot be drawn from these limited data, these quotes offer some evidence of the impact of CCSC supports.
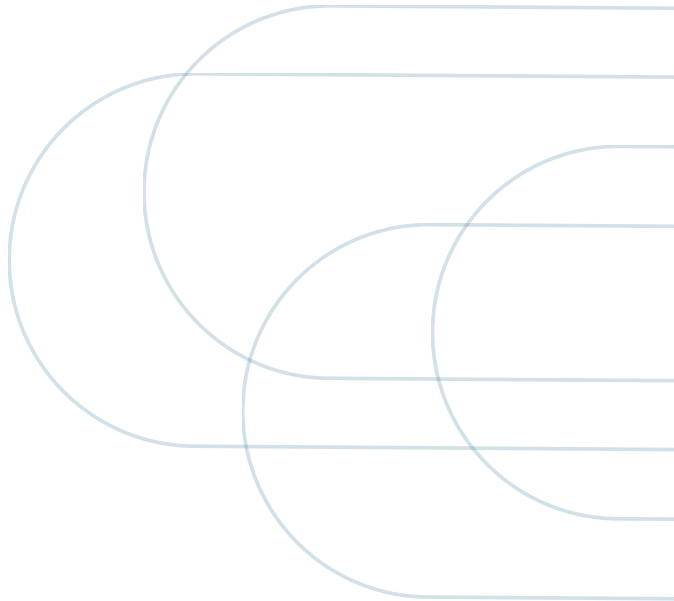
Participant Voices Regarding Impact

In response to open-ended survey questions following various TA activities, participants provided good examples of ways in which CCSC supports were most helpful and how they may have impacted the work of participants.

"I think the sessions confirmed some prior knowledge and expanded it with some new ideas. There were some phrases and tools that I definitely took away from the day."

ANNUAL EVENT PARTICIPANT

"What was most useful was having the time and space to review the CHKS data, discuss with our teams, and create goals and start gathering ideas on how to execute and meet our goal."

LEA DATA USE PEER NETWORK PARTICIPANT

"This was my first time, and I loved the presentation and the exchange of ideas. WOW! I walked away richer and with items we could implement."

PEER LEARNING EXCHANGE PARTICIPANT

"[What was most useful from the session was] hearing the students' thoughts and feelings and being able to create realistic action plans with students."

SCHOOL CLIMATE COLLABORATIVES PARTICIPANT