

# CA LMI Frequently Asked Questions - FAQs

## What is the CA LMI?

- The California Labor Management Initiative, a project of the [CDE Foundation](#), brings together public school union and management leaders to co-develop structures and practices that lift staff voices and build systems for continuous improvement to create better outcomes for students and staff, parents and communities. The CA LMI fosters and supports labor-management partnerships as a foundational element of improving public schools and advancing educational equity in California.

## Why should my team participate?

- CA LMI convenings provide safe, supportive learning environments in which public school union and management leaders can have tough conversations that lead to collaborative problem-solving utilizing structures, frameworks and research to collectively meet the needs of students and staff. The CA LMI provides labor-management teams hands-on tools to lift up issues and develop practical solutions to improve outcomes.

## What types of supports does the CA LMI offer?

- If you are interested in learning more about the CA LMI and would like to participate, the California Labor Management Initiative provides districts and county offices with three tiers of support to advance labor-management collaboration.
  - **Universal Convenings**, provide labor-management teams across the state opportunities to learn about labor-management partnerships and understand key collaborative frameworks. They are designed as shared learning and team building experiences for school district and county office teams. Universal convenings take place in various regions of the state as well as online. These convenings provide a place for unions and management to learn together and build the foundations for collaboration - trust, equity and communication. See the [CA LMI website](#) for upcoming events, materials and our [CA LMI Resource Library](#).
  - **Regional Networks** connect multiple districts within a geographic region and support localized networks which build capacity and peer learning opportunities over time. Regional Networks support sustained peer-to-peer learning, and they provide a structure for teams to share resources, celebrate successes and navigate challenges. We have worked to connect our Regional Networks to County Offices of Education as a hub for convening districts and develop labor-management regional planning committees to further our networks.
  - **Individualized Supports** provide an opportunity for districts or county offices to work with the CA LMI staff or consulting partners to further support their labor-management teams. The support is tailored to the individualized context of the district or county office. Teams can contract with the CA LMI staff or our consulting partners directly to develop a customized scope of work to advance their labor-management partnership efforts via in-district coaching.

## How do we get started?

- We encourage teams to sign up to attend our convenings to begin the process. Events for new teams are held several times a year. You can find upcoming events on our [CA LMI website](#). Please contact [Gustavo Morales](#), CA LMI Program Manager, for additional information on engaging your team.

## Who should participate in my labor-management team?

- Most teams typically include at a minimum, the Superintendent, Classified and Certificated Union Presidents and a school board member. Additional key leaders may include the Asst. Supt for HR, Chief Academic Officer and other top union executive officers. As teams continue to participate

they typically add site labor-management leaders such as principals and building reps. Larger districts often roll out the effort via cohorts of school site teams once the district level leadership has engaged.

### **Can I participate as an individual?**

- We encourage you to connect with your labor and management leadership to organize your labor-management team attendance at CA LMI events. Some virtual events such as webinars are designed for individual participation but we encourage teams to participate together whenever possible to take advantage of team building and joint problem solving opportunities.

### **How much does it cost to participate?**

- The CA LMI is supported by several foundations that help reduce costs for participation. Our low cost convenings can run as little as \$50 per person. Please contact us directly for more information or see the CA LMI website for [upcoming events](#).

### **What state agencies and associations are involved?**

- The CA LMI works closely with the California Department of Education and the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence. State educational associations representing teachers, classified staff, administrators, and school board members, also play a critical role in advancing labor-management collaboration on a broad scale. CA LMI has had ongoing support from leaders of state associations and agencies, as demonstrated by their participation on our Steering Committee and involvement in CA LMI statewide institutes and trainings. The CA LMI Steering Committee members meet at least once a year to provide high level guidance to the CA LMI team and connections to their members. Representatives from state partners include:
  - **ACSA**: Association of California School Administrators
  - **CCSESA**: California County Superintendents Educational Services Association
  - **CCEE**: California Collaborative for Educational Excellence
  - **CDE**: California Department of Education
  - **CFT**: California Federation of Teachers
  - **CSBA**: California School Boards Association
  - **CSEA**: California School Employees Association
  - **CTA**: California Teachers Association

### **What research supports this work?**

- Studies from researchers such as [Anthony Bryk](#) have highlighted the importance of developing collective trust among school staff. In a labor-management context, more recent [research from Saul Rubinstein and John McCarthy](#) from Rutgers and Cornell Universities has shown the impact of labor-management partnership and collaboration on student achievement and staff retention. These impacts are particularly pronounced in high poverty schools. For instance, their work found that teacher turnover in high-poverty schools was 3.5 times the rate of that in low-poverty schools when school-level educator collaboration was low. However, when collaboration was high, there was no statistical difference between turnover in high-poverty and low-poverty schools. Additionally, Rubenstein & McCarthy found that formal union-management partnerships at the district-level seem to be a catalyst for building highly collaborative schools, finding that district partnerships are positively associated with school collaboration.

### **How do labor-management partnerships interact with district bargaining processes?**

- Developing labor-management partnerships is not a substitute for collective bargaining and the CA LMI does not get involved in negotiations. Participating with the CA LMI and building labor-management partnerships is often cited by labor and management leaders as being helpful in

providing additional problem-solving strategies/opportunities outside the formal bargaining process.

**When will you have in person convenings?**

- We hope to resume convening in-person as soon as it is safe to do so. In the meantime, we are convening teams virtually using online platforms.

**Is this work supported at the national level?**

- The effort of the CA LMI has been joined on the national level with the recent activity of the National Labor Management Partnership (NLMP). The NLMP is a working group comprised of the American Association of School Administrators, American Federation of Teachers, National School Boards Association, and the National Education Association (NEA). From their [2018 National Call to Action](#) to their recent NEA workbook [Collaborating for Student Success](#), there is a growing recognition of the importance of effective labor relations in improving public education.

**What labor-management teams have participated?**

- Over 170 district and county office labor-management teams have participated with the CA LMI since our start in 2015. Please contact us to learn about teams that have participated in your region.