

**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TECHNOLOGY**

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April 27, 2026

Honorable John Laird, Chair
Joint Legislative Budget Committee
1020 N Street, Room 553
Sacramento, CA 95814

SUBJECT: REVIEW OF THE COMMON CLOUD DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

Dear Senator Laird:

Provision 23(g)(3) of Item 6870-101-0001 in Section 193 of the Budget Act of 2025 (Assembly Bill 102) requires the Department of Technology (CDT) and the Department of Finance (DOF) to review a report from the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges (CCCC) that details the progress of the Common Cloud Data Platform (CCDP), which includes the CCDP Demonstration Project. The provision requires CDT and DOF to verify that the CCCC plan for further development and expansion of the CCDP is well planned and a reasonable use of resources. The following review provides the relevant policy and fiscal committees of the Legislature with recommendations related to further CCDP development and expansion.

Summary Recommendation

CDT recommends the CCDP Demonstration Project for further development and expansion. The recommendation to continue investment is based on a comprehensive review of the CCDP Legislative Report, January 15, 2026, and review of information provided by the Chancellor's Office in response to specific programmatic and technical questions. The review below addresses the following functional areas: project management, enterprise architecture, cloud architecture, information security, operational resilience, and contract solicitation.

Project Overview Summary

The CCDP Demonstration Project reports meaningful progress toward building a unified, real-time data infrastructure for the California Community Colleges, with 23 colleges onboarded and core components such as the statewide data lake and Chancellor's Dashboard already operational. The report also highlights meaningful student-focused benefits, such as improved transfer visibility for California State University (CSU) students and reduced credit loss through better integration of course, transcript, and pathway data across districts.

The program's structured project planning across infrastructure, integration, governance, and change-management activities are notable, especially the milestone planning and transparent lessons-learned process that allowed the team to address early testing and workflow challenges constructively. From an oversight perspective, several areas require continued attention. These include unresolved challenges in CCCC's enhanced reporting functionality for student transfer and outcomes (known as Management Information Systems (MIS) and 320), earlier testing and workflow alignment issues, and the need to mature data governance and quality assurance before systemwide deployment. Ensuring schedule adherence, stronger vendor quality controls, and consistent district readiness will be critical to achieving statewide adoption. The CCDP report provides a structured milestone roadmap, but successful execution will require disciplined project management, transparent reporting, and verification that promised efficiencies and data-quality improvements materialize as planned.

Overall, the CCDP report and additional information provided demonstrates a disciplined project management approach and a solid trajectory toward statewide success. CDT notes that continued investment, careful risk management, and consistent execution will be essential to fully realizing the CCDP's transformative impact.

Enterprise Architecture Review

The project documentation does not specifically cite an Enterprise Architecture (EA) capability within CCCC, however, the documentation reflects several key EA principles, such as establishing a modern data architecture. The project's goals, such as enabling data-informed decision-making, operational efficiency, equity, and student success, align with strategic business objectives and suggest an architectural approach to achieving them. The project also seeks to leverage architectural principles to build a systemwide, production-grade service.

The technology investments made by the CCDP appear to align with business objectives. The project is described as central to the goals of the CCCC, which include commitments to data-informed decision-making, operational efficiency, equity, and student success. The investment is intended to transition the CCDP from a project to an operational utility, providing a reliable, equitable, and data-rich foundation for California Community Colleges to serve students and communities statewide. The expected benefits include strategic planning, improved budget and finance forecasting, program evaluation, and enhanced integration for expanding state services.

Cloud Architecture Review

Several areas of the CCDP would benefit from additional clarity. While the CCDP is designed for high availability through cloud-native redundancy and distributed services, CDT notes that the program should be specific on availability standards and disaster recovery objectives. Expectations for uptime and recovery appear to be driven primarily by vendor service commitments and operational procedures rather than a single standard that the program can consistently measure and validate. In addition, several operational capabilities (such as monitoring, incident response, backup and recovery, and escalation procedures) are not yet fully defined. Leveraging the mature California Managed Cloud (CAMC), CDT's fully managed cloud service, could help establish clearer operational guardrails and better align the environment with statewide resiliency practices. CDT also noted a few architectural considerations. The current design relies on multiple integration paths and vendor handoffs, which introduce additional dependencies and potential failure points. Moving toward a more unified integration approach that consolidates data into a coordinated solution could improve reliability.

Security monitoring responsibilities should also be more clearly defined, particularly with respect to operational ownership and escalation procedures. The program should consider leveraging CDT's Security Operations Center as a Service (SOCaaS) offering to provide centralized monitoring, coordinated incident response, and established escalation pathways. Finally, while the CCDP indicates support for U.S. data residency, the documentation does not clearly describe the technical controls (such as region restrictions, replication policies, or administrative access constraints) that would enforce this requirement.

Information Security Review

The CCCC provided specific responses that adequately address information security concerns focused on: data governance; system security plan elements (system diagram, security controls); U.S. hosting/U.S. processing; cloud security governance; and security monitoring/alerting. The project appears well focused on ensuring information security best practices are designed into the system during development and into operations.

Operational Resilience Review

The CCDP represents a meaningful modernization initiative with the potential to improve interoperability, data visibility, and systemwide coordination across the California Community Colleges. The program's goals – particularly around improving statewide data access, accelerating reporting timelines, and enabling more consistent analytics – align with broader objectives to modernize data infrastructure while supporting operational and student success outcomes. The program's phased implementation approach, engagement with participating districts, and

responsiveness to lessons learned during early deployment phases are positive signals that the CCDP is evolving as intended beyond the initial demonstration phase.

As the initiative continues to scale toward broader systemwide adoption, CDT encourages continued focus on stabilization practices that support long-term operational resilience. In particular, the program's responses highlight that reliability and recovery expectations are currently largely inherited from underlying cloud and vendor service agreements, while governance and data quality capabilities are continuing to mature as the CCDP expands. As the CCDP becomes more deeply integrated into statewide reporting and operational workflows, further clarification of program-level operational standards, validation of performance during peak reporting periods such as enrollment and MIS cycles, and continued investment in governance and data stewardship will help ensure the CCDP can operate as a durable and reliable statewide utility while continuing to advance the modernization goals described in the CCDP report.

Solicitation Review

CDT recommends that the CCCC explicitly state the purpose and expected outcomes of any open solicitation for the CCDP, emphasizing transparency and actionable insights. The scope should be clearly defined, including technical, operational, contractual, legal terms, policies, and focus areas related to Common Cloud scaling. The project should develop and provide a detailed feedback template that outlines minimum expectations for submissions. This will ensure response consistency, facilitate data consolidation, and streamline the evaluation process. To promote broader participation, outreach should be expanded through diverse channels, such as community forums and targeted efforts to include underrepresented groups. Hosting webinars and partner conferences can also help guide prospective participants. Additionally, making evaluation criteria publicly available will enhance transparency. All evaluators should receive training on applying these criteria to ensure fair and consistent consensus scoring.

Evaluation should include both qualitative and quantitative criteria to identify dominant themes and emerging ideas. Supporting documentation in the solicitation should include a roles and responsibilities matrix, a cost worksheet (if applicable), and a clear Statement of Work that defines key terms such as "feasibility assessment," "thematic coding," and "adoption report" to prevent ambiguity and foster understanding across diverse audiences. After proposal submission, review outcomes should be documented thoroughly, including an action log that traces proposals through decision points to tangible results. Communication with participants regarding follow-up activities (post proposals submission), such as pilots, should be handled fairly, with information disseminated simultaneously. Implementing these recommendations

can maximize participation, ensure rigorous analysis, and produce a meaningful, actionable report that advances the program's goals.

CDT Conclusion

CDT has concluded that the CCDP is effectively planned and has delivered value to the CCCC. It is important to note that the CCCC has more to accomplish through FY 2026-2027 and FY 2027-28 to achieve full system completion and delivery. Building on success to date, the efforts of the CCCC will likely result in successful delivery of the final system through continued good governance and careful resource management, project management, and risk management. If you have any questions or would like to discuss this review with CDT, please contact Aakash Bhatt, Legislative Manager, at Aakash.Bhatt@state.ca.gov.

DOF Concurrence

The Department of Finance reviewed the CCDP report from the CCCC and concurs with CDT's recommendations. Please contact Rob Trojan, Chief of the Information Technology Unit, at Rob.Trojan@dof.ca.gov for questions or comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jared Johnson', followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Jared Johnson
Chief Deputy Director
California Department of Technology

cc: Honorable Jesse Gabriel, Chair, Assembly Committee on Budget
Hans Hemann, Consultant, Joint Legislative Budget Committee
Elisa Wynne, Staff Director, Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee
Christian Griffith, Chief Consultant, Assembly Committee on Budget
Olgallia Ramirez, Chief Consultant, Senate Education Committee
Jeanice Warden, Chief Consultant, Assembly Committee on Higher Education
Joe Stephenshaw, Director, Department of Finance