KODELY · FIELD GUIDE NO. 07

The 2026 ELO-P Vendor Selection Guide

For California Expanded Learning Coordinators, Program Directors, and Superintendents' Offices — the 12 questions to ask before you sign, the compliance traps that show up on audit, and a 90-day selection timeline.

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K-8 ENRICHMENT · STEM · ARTS · SEL

01 Why this guide exists

> If you're a district ELO-P coordinator, you've been handed an ELO-P allocation with limited state guidance on which vendors to trust — and a board that expects programming to look meaningfully different from generic afterschool care.

The wrong vendor spends your budget on supervision and leaves gaps in the 9-hour day. The right one turns ELO-P dollars into real enrichment, covers your non-school days, and leaves a clean paper trail for audit.

This guide is written from the district operator's seat. Not the vendor pitch seat.

WHAT'S INSIDE

1. The 12 questions to ask every ELO-P vendor before you sign
2. What ELO-P requires of every program
3. The 90-day vendor selection timeline
4. Common mistakes districts make

02 The 12 questions to ask every ELO-P vendor

COMPLIANCE & STRUCTURE

`Q · 01`

Can your program hit the full 9-hour day, or do you only cover the afterschool block?

Vendors who only cover 3-6 PM force you to layer several providers to fill the day. Ask for their per-site staffing model at full 9-hour scope.

`Q · 02`

What is your TK/K ratio and your 1-6 ratio?

ELO-P caps ratios at 10:1 for TK/K and 20:1 for grades 1-6. Ask how the vendor's staffing plan stays inside those caps on every day, including non-school days.

`Q · 03`

How do you cover the 30 non-school-day requirement (summer, intersession, breaks)?

This is a common gap. Vendors built for the school year only can disappear on non-school days, leaving you to backfill.

`Q · 04`

Do you have an active ELO-P contract with at least 3 other California districts we can call?

Ask for the reference list. Call two of them and ask about renewal decisions.

FINANCIAL & CONTRACT

Q · 05

How do you price — per-child, per-hour, per-site, or blended?

Per-child aligns vendor incentives to your enrollment reality. Per-site is easier to budget but rewards under-attendance. Ask for a written pricing methodology, not a verbal quote.

Q · 06

What's included in the base price vs. add-on?

Specifically: materials, snacks, transportation, family engagement events, showcases, staff overtime. "Materials included" varies wildly. Get a line-item list.

Q · 07

Will you invoice against ELO-P specifically (with program plan alignment and expenditure category coding)?

Some vendors bill you a lump sum and force your finance team to reverse-engineer allowability. Reject that.

Q · 08

What happens if enrollment drops mid-year — is there a per-child refund mechanism or a fixed floor?

Get the answer in writing before you sign.

PROGRAMMING & QUALITY

Q · 09

What percentage of your programming is academic support vs. enrichment vs. supervision?

ELO-P is meant to be enrichment, not just supervision. If most of the day is supervision, you're paying enrichment prices for childcare.

Q · 10

Can you deliver arts (Prop 28 §8820) AND STEM under the same roster?

One vendor across arts and STEM means one contract, one compliance package and one point of contact. Note that only arts disciplines qualify for Prop 28 funds.

Q · 11

What is your instructor turnover rate and hiring standard (background check, TB, mandated reporter, Live Scan, CPR)?

Strong vendors will name a number. Vague answers usually mean churn.

Q · 12

Are you MWBE / DVBE / SBE certified?

Certified vendors can help your district meet its own supplier-diversity goals.

03 What ELO-P requires of every program

Before you score any vendor, confirm their model fits the statute (Education Code §46120). Every ELO-P program must:

- Offer at least 9 hours of combined instructional time and expanded learning on school days
- Offer at least 9 hours a day on at least 30 non-school days (summer and intersession)
- Keep ratios at or below 10:1 for TK/K and 20:1 for grades 1-6
- Serve a nutritious snack or meal
- Run under a program plan approved by your governing board in a public meeting
- Reach unduplicated pupils (low-income students, English learners and foster youth). AB 2107, effective January 1, 2027, adds priority and targeted outreach for these students.

ASK YOUR CBO

Allowable-cost questions (facilities, technology, field trips, indirect costs) vary by situation. Check them against CDE's ELO-P FAQ and your county office before you sign, not after the invoice arrives.

04 The 90-day vendor selection timeline

DAY 0-14 — SCOPE

- Confirm budget, target sites, target enrollment, and non-negotiable outcomes
- Review last year's audit findings
- Align with your board on 3-5 measurable success criteria

DAY 15-30 — RFP OR RFQ

- Issue RFP with the 12 questions above baked in as scored criteria
- Set a mandatory bidder conference
- Require live demo / sample lesson observation from finalists

DAY 31-60 — EVALUATE

- Score against a written rubric. One sample weighting: program quality 40%, compliance 30%, financial 20%, vendor stability 10%
- Do 2-3 site reference calls per finalist
- Have your ELO-P coordinator sit in on a live class at an existing partner site

DAY 61-75 — NEGOTIATE

- Get written pricing methodology
- Get written per-site staffing model
- Get written 30 non-school-day plan

- Get MWBE cert on file if applicable

DAY 76-90 — CONTRACT + KICKOFF

- Board approval
- MOU signature
- Compliance package (Live Scan, TB, insurance certificates) received
- ELO-P program plan updated to reflect the new vendor

05 Common mistakes districts make

1. **Selecting on price alone** — the lowest per-child price often hides ratios or materials you will end up paying for elsewhere.
2. **Skipping the site reference calls** — vendors curate their reference list; you dig one layer deeper.
3. **Under-scoping the 30 non-school-day requirement** — summer and intersession are where coverage most often breaks down.
4. **Layering 3-4 single-domain vendors** — coordination overhead eats your budget.
5. **Signing without a written per-site staffing model** — vendors under-deliver on TK/K ratios first when volume compresses margin.

FREE · 20 MINUTES

Want a second read on your ELO-P plan?

Book a 20-minute call with Kodely. We'll walk through your context and share how we would answer the 12 questions if we were bidding — whether or not we ever work together.

BOOK THE 20-MINUTE CALL →

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Kodely runs hands-on K-8 enrichment across STEM, arts, entrepreneurship, sports and SEL for public school districts and private schools, in afterschool and summer settings. NYC SBS-certified M/WBE.

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