

REQUEST FOR APPLICATION

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION OFFICE OF CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT AND SUPPORT

Competency Education and Assessment (CEA) Pilot Program

Deadline Date 4:00 P.M. (ET) on Friday, <i>November 15, 2018</i>	RFA Issued By Kentucky Department of Education Office of Continuous Improvement and Support
Address Questions In Writing To: Procurement Branch <u>KDERFP@education.ky.gov</u>	Submit Applications To: Procurement Branch <u>KDERFP@education.ky.gov</u>
Deadline for Submission of Questions: 4:00 P.M. (EST) on Thursday, <i>October 4, 2018</i>	

*The CEA submission deadline has been extended to Nov. 15, 2018 @4:00pm

CEA PILOT PROGRAM

Overview

As a result of input provided by the Educational Innovations Work Group during the development of Kentucky's new accountability system and as indicated in Senate Bill 1 (2017), the state is adopting an expanded view of instruction, assessment and accountability. That view has resulted in the launch of the Competency Education and Assessment (CEA) pilot program in winter of 2018. The pilot supports an approach to student learning and assessment that is based on several guiding principles. These principles, identified by the work group, support Kentucky's belief that competency-based learning and assessment methods can result in stronger and more positive outcomes for all students:

- Competency Based Education (CBE) allows students to demonstrate deeper learning on dimensions (skills and dispositions) not captured in current assessments that result in outcomes of success that extend beyond traditional academic performance.
- CBE supports the success of all students, especially those who are less likely to perform well in the current assessment and accountability.
- CBE shows evidence of stronger student engagement than do more traditional approaches.
- CBE allows (through student choice) the opportunity for students to make interdisciplinary connections across the curriculum through authentic projects and assessments.
- CBE can be implemented in a wide variety of districts and "customized" as needed.
- CBE provides additional measures of success beyond traditional academic performance.

This pilot started in the winter of 2018 with an initial cohort or two districts and is now looking to add a second cohort. The second cohort would begin in the spring of 2019 with the goal of implementing Anchor Competencies and accompanying assessment rubrics in the fall of 2019. In the future, Cohort 2 districts may join Cohort 1 in developing possible new academic competencies and new assessments for those competencies.

Cohort 2 is capped at ten (10) districts, but the final number of districts chosen will depend on how many applications meet the scoring requirements as described in the "Evaluation of Application" section of this RFA. Selected Cohort 2 districts will begin their pilot phase with key elements of the pilot having already been established by Cohort 1, including the development of "Anchor Competencies" and timelines for phases of implementation. Cohort 2 will participate in the pilot for three years, concluding with the 2021-2022 school year.

<u>Eligibility</u>

Districts must meet the following eligibility requirements to be considered for the CEA pilot program.

- Districts must show a track record of quality implementation of former and current accountability policies.
- Districts must demonstrate significant stakeholder engagement and interest in providing all students with the option for a competency-based education and assessment system.
- Districts must show evidence of the capacity to implement the planned approach with fidelity during the three-year period of the pilot, and the willingness to scale the approach system-wide over a seven-year period of time.
- Districts must commit to the use of "Anchor Competencies" developed by the Cohort 1 districts; and agree to the adoption of all characteristics of competency based education and assessment used by the pilot and its participating districts. (See Appendix B for of the Anchor Competencies.) Districts may implement and assess any other competencies they choose, in addition to the pilot Anchor Competencies.

Assurances

Districts selected for Cohort 2 of CEA pilot program will sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE). The MOU will cover the three-year implementation phase covering the 2019-2020, 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 school years; and the seven-year timeline for providing all students in the district with a competency education option. The MOU may include, but is not limited to, the following assurances.

- Districts will cooperate with other participating districts to develop new approaches to assessment (such as performance-based assessments) with the intent that successful new approaches may be included in future assessment structures.
- Districts agree to use common definitions of the terms found in Appendix A: competency based education, competencies, learning progression, mastery learning, and performance assessment.
- Districts will demonstrate continued progress toward implementation and sustainability plans, including educator professional learning, etc.
- Districts will send representatives to attend and actively participate in all CEA pilot meetings.
- Districts will use and measure common anchor competencies using mutually agreed-upon and externally vetted rubrics.
- Districts will commit to following implementation timelines for any additional assessments of Anchor Competencies or Kentucky Academic Standards designed and implemented as part of the pilot.

- Districts will continue to complete all elements of the current assessment system in addition to developing new approaches to assessment.
- Districts will build upon initial grade level/subject implementation with the goal of eventual full district implementation.
- KDE will conduct monitoring visits throughout the pilot period. KDE reserves the right, pursuant to the terms of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), to discontinue such an agreement with a participating district, should the district fail to meet deliverables specified in the agreement and fail to ensure that the best interest and needs of students are met.
- Districts will provide each student the option of competency-based instruction by the 2025-2026 school year.
- KDE will continue monitoring visits every two to three years.
- Districts agree to serve as a mentor district or hub of best practice for competency education for other school districts.

Application Components

The following <u>must</u> be included in each application:

- 1. The application cover page, with identifying information for the district, included in this RFA.
- Narrative responses to ten (10) application questions, limited to <u>nine (9) total pages</u>. Responses must be in <u>Times New Roman or Arial 12-point font with 1.5 spacing and 1 inch margins all around</u>.

The following <u>may</u> be included in each application:

3. An appendix containing supporting documents for your narrative responses. Examples of such supporting documents may include, but are not limited to: your district's active graduate profile to support your response to question 2; documentation of current professional learning opportunities for district staff to support your response to question 4; letters of commitment from community and district stakeholders to support your response to question 7.

Submission of Application

The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) must receive, in its email inbox, the application by Thursday, November 15, 2018 4:00 PM (ET). Applications received after this time and date will not be reviewed or considered for award. Furthermore, applications not complying with any of the technical requirements or applications with identifying information in the narrative or budget sections may be deemed non-responsive. It is the district's responsibility to check the KDE Competitive Grants webpage regularly for new information (including changes) regarding this RFA. Applicants are responsible for contacting KDE confirming the receipt of their application.

To formally submit an application:

1. Save the completed application in its entirety – the cover page (including all signatures), up to nine pages of narrative responses, and optional appendix containing supporting

documents – to PDF format. The file name should be *CEARFA-FY19-District*. (For example: Adair County would save the original application as *CEARFA-FY19-Adair County*.)

- 2. Email the completed application to <u>KDERFP@education.ky.gov</u>
 - The date/time on the received email must be on or before 4:00 PM (ET), October 26, 2018. Applications not received by the deadline will not be reviewed or considered for the pilot program.
 - □ On the subject line of the email, type *CEARFA/name of district*.
 - □ Keep in mind that email coming in to the Kentucky Department of Education is routed for security purposes through multiple networks and servers. Allow ample time for this and the possibility that email is not always received on the first try.

Evaluation of Application

A committee consisting of persons knowledgeable about personalized learning initiatives will review applications meeting all eligibility criteria using the scoring rubric found in Appendix C.

To be considered for acceptance to the CEA pilot, applications must receive a total score of at least 70 (seventy) points, out of 90 (ninety) possible points. In addition, applications must receive a minimum score of ten (10) points on their response to Question 10 and a minimum of 3 (three) points on their response to Question 9.

Applications meeting the minimum criteria will be ranked according to total score. No more than 10 (ten) districts will be admitted to Cohort 2 of the CEA pilot.

The Kentucky Department of Education reserves the right to negotiate particulars of the district's proposed plan with applicants.

Selection

Districts chosen to participate in the CEA pilot program will receive notice on or around **December 1, 2018.**

Competency Education and Assessment (CEA) Pilot Program

2018-2019 Application Cohort 2

District:		
Address:		
City:	State:	Zip:
Superintendent:		
Chair, Board of Education:		
Point of Contact:		
Point of Contact Email Address:		
Point of Contact Phone Number:		
Superintendent signature:		

Chair, Board of Education signature:

Narrative Questions

Directions:

Please answer the following ten (10) questions in a separate document, in no more than nine (9) pages. Use Times New Roman or Arial 12-point font with 1.5 spacing and 1 inch margins all around.

The nine (9) page maximum excludes an optional appendix. This appendix may contain supporting documents for your narrative responses. Examples of such supporting documents may include, but are not limited to: your district's active graduate profile to support your response to question 2; documentation of current professional learning opportunities for district staff to support your response to question 4; letters of commitment from community and district stakeholders to support your response to question 7.

The Kentucky Department of Education is looking for district commitment to the CEA pilot project that focuses upon competency-based education and assessments; it is expected that accepted districts may be at different development stages in implementing this work.

Remember that the expectation of approved districts is that, while the district may start the three year pilot with a select group of students or schools, the intention must be to scale to districtwide implementation of a competency-based education and assessment option for all students within seven years.

Narrative Questions:

Question 1: Describe your district's theory of action for implementing competency-based education and assessment if accepted into the pilot. (Reminder: your theory of action should take the form of an "if... then" statement.)

Question 2: Describe your districts plan for attaining a vision for competency based education and assessment, including existing vision implementation.

Question 3: Describe how, if any, your district currently uses performance assessment (e.g., list various subjects and grade levels).

Question 4: Describe any current professional learning practices for teachers and staff about competency based education and assessment.

Question 5: Describe any continued or prior participation with outside experts, such as a competency-based education and/or assessment development network or organization.

Question 6: Identify and explain at least one student learning outcome your district hopes to gain though participation in the CEA pilot.

Question 7: Describe, for each stakeholder group listed below, how you have built (or plan to build) and how you will support efforts to incorporate into your district accountability system locally-determined reporting measures that may include innovative forms of assessment (i.e. performance assessment).

- Students
- Parents
- Teachers & Administrators
- Community / Business & Industry
- Local Board of Education

Question 8: Describe your district's plan for implementation, evaluation and continuous improvement of a competency-based option toward high school graduation for every student, in a maximum time period of seven years. Specifically, discuss the district's strategies for transforming learning, measuring student success, ensuring adequate teacher support, ensuring rigor, addressing deficiencies and preventing unintended consequences.

Question 9: Provide a timeline that reflects the scaling plan for districtwide implementation (within seven years) as described in Question 8.

Question 10: Explain your district's plan for sustainability, particularly as it relates to teacher turnover and school/district leadership transitions.

APPENDIX A: COMMON DEFINITIONS

Districts who submit an application and are accepted to the CEA pilot program agree to use the following definitions of terms to create a common language.

Competency-Based Education¹

A learning framework that reflects student progress based on a mastery of competencies, regardless of time, pace or place of learning. A competencies-based system has several attributes:

- Students advance upon mastery.
- Competencies include explicit, measurable, transferable learning objectives that empower students.
- Assessment is meaningful and a positive learning experience for students.
- Students receive timely, differentiated support based on their individual learning needs.
- Learning outcomes emphasize competencies that include application and creation of knowledge, along with the development of important skills and dispositions.

Competencies¹

Competencies are the knowledge, skills and/or behaviors student must master in a specific content or performance area. A well-designed competency has the following characteristics:

- A competency describes knowledge and skills that can be applied to novel, complex situations.
- The skills described in a competency will be valuable ten years from now even if the content knowledge has changed.
- Learning objectives are accompanied by clear performance criteria that help students identify their performance level(s) and what they need to do to improve.
- Learning objectives are accompanied by effective rubrics that help students understand themselves better as learners.
- The competency and the learning objectives allow for personalization and opportunities for deeper learning.

Learning Progressions²

Learning progressions refer to the scaffolding of learning in a vertical way over an extended period of time. Learning is envisioned as a development of progressive sophistication in understanding and skills within a domain. It does not refer to grade or age level expectations. Instead, learning is conceived as a sequence or continuum of increasing expertise. A vertical conceptualization of learning is intrinsic to the notion of learning progressions, thus supporting a more developmental view of learning.

Mastery Learning³

Mastery learning maintains that students must achieve a level of mastery (e.g., 90% on a knowledge test) in prerequisite content knowledge, skills and dispositions before moving forward to learn subsequent information. If a student does not achieve mastery on the test, they are given additional support in learning and reviewing the information and then tested again. This cycle continues until the learner accomplishes mastery, and they may then move on to the next stage. Mastery learning methods suggest that the focus of instruction should be the time required for different students to learn the same material and achieve the same level of mastery. This is very much in contrast with classic models of teaching, which focus more on differences in students' ability and where all students are given approximately the same amount of time to learn and the same set of instructions. In a mastery learning environment, the challenge becomes providing enough time and employing instructional strategies so that all students can achieve the same level of learning.

Performance Assessment⁴

Performance assessment is the application of knowledge, skills, and work habits through the performance of tasks that are meaningful and engaging to students. These tasks, occasionally marking gateways in learning, are strategically placed in the lesson or unit to enhance learning as the student reaches understanding. Performance tasks are both an integral part of the learning and an opportunity to assess the quality of student performance.

Resources

- 1. Sturgis, C. 2012. <u>The Art and Science of Designing Competencies</u>. A CompetencyWorks Issue Brief, International Association for K-12 Online Learning.
- Heritage, M. 2008. <u>Learning Progressions: Supporting Instruction and Formative Assessment</u>. Paper prepared for the Formative Assessment for Teachers and Students (FAST) State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards (SCASS) of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO).
- 3. Revolvy. Mastery Learning.
- 4. Hibbard, K. et al. 1996. Performance-Based Learning and Assessment.

APPENDIX B: ANCHOR COMPETENCIES

These are the Anchor Competencies that were agreed upon by the Cohort 1 Districts. Districts in the pilot agree to incorporate these competencies into the competency education program and adhere to measurement and reporting requirements as deemed appropriate by the KDE.

Critical Thinker

Thinks deeply and makes informed decisions to create solutions or new understanding supported by relevant and reliable evidence.

Communicator

Engages diverse audiences respectfully by exchanging ideas and information responsibly, listening actively, speaking and writing clearly, and using print and digital media appropriately.

KAS

Empowered Learner

Demonstrates mastery and application of academic competencies. Develops the skills and dispositions to persist through difficulties and plan for a future of selfimprovement.

Engaged Citizen

Applies learning, shows respect and empathy, embraces diversity of opinion, seeks cultural understanding, and participates in the democratic process to challenge the status quo to positively impact the community and world.

Collaborator

Engages with others to achieve a common goal through building positive relationships, actively listening, showing empathy, and making individual contributions to a larger group.

APPENDIX C: SCORING RUBRIC

Competency Education and Assessment (CEA) Pilot Program Scoring Rubric

Question	Point	Inadequate – Poor	Fair – Good	Very Good – Excellent
	Range			
Question 1 Describe your district's theory of action for implementing competency-based education and assessment if accepted into the pilot. (Reminder: your theory of action should take the form of an "if then" statement.)	0-10	 The district does not have a strong or clear vision for implementing competency-based education and assessment. The theory of action fails to: Address the expected role of leadership in the transition to competency education and assessment; Provide an evidence-based rationale to support the vision; and Identify supports needed to make changes in practice. 	 The district may have a vision for implementing competency-based education and assessment, but specifics are lacking. The theory of action does not fully: Address the expected role of leadership in the transition to competency education and assessment; Provide an evidence-based rationale to support the vision; and Identify supports needed to make changes in practice. 	 The district has a strong, clear, and detailed vision for implementing competency-based education and assessment. The theory of action does fully: Address the expected role of leadership in the transition to competency education and assessment; Provide an evidence-based rationale to support the vision; and Identify supports needed to make changes in practice.
		Points: 0-3	Points: 4-7	Points: 8-10

Question 2	0-5	It is not clear what plan the district	The district has a plan for attaining	The district has a clear plan to attain
Describe your		has to attain its vision for	its vision for competency-based	its vision for competency based
districts plan for		competency based education and	education and assessment, but the	education and assessment. Past
attaining a vision		assessment. The district did not	strategies are vague and past	successes and challenges are
for competency		provide any examples of strategies	successes and challenges are	explicit. Examples of strategies may
based education		in the application index.	unclear. Examples of strategies	be listed in the narrative response or
and assessment,			may be listed in the narrative	evidence may be provided in the
including existing		Points: 0-1	response or evidence may be	application appendix, and may
vision			provided in the application	include:
implementation.			appendix, and may include:	• Development of a
			Development of a	graduate profile;
			graduate profile;	 Development of local
			 Development of local 	competencies;
			competencies;	Use of formative
			Use of formative	assessments to guide daily
			assessments to guide daily	instruction;
			instruction;	Multiple opportunities for
			 Multiple opportunities for 	students to demonstrate
			students to demonstrate	mastery of content areas;
			mastery of content areas;	or
			or	Implementation of
				alternative assessments
			Implementation of alternative assessments	
			such as performance based	such as performance based assessments.
			assessments.	assessments.
			assessments.	
				Points: 4-5
			Points: 2-3	

Question 3 Describe how, if any, your district currently uses performance assessment (e.g., list various subjects and grade levels).	0-10	 The district has no prior experience with performance assessment. There is no evidence, either in the narrative response or in the application appendix, that the district has: Piloted performance assessments with students, at least in certain grade levels or subjects; Provided some district training around performance assessment; or Incorporates performance assessment in local reporting of student achievement. 	 The district may have some experience with performance assessment, but the narrative response as well as evidence included in the application appendix leaves it unclear to what extent the district has: Piloted performance assessments with students, at least in certain grade levels or subjects; Provided some district training around performance assessment; or Incorporates performance assessment in local reporting of student achievement. 	 The district has systemic, ongoing experience with performance assessment. The narrative response as well as evidence included in the application appendix demonstrates that the district has: Piloted performance assessments with students, at least in certain grade levels or subjects; Provided some district training around performance assessment; or Incorporates performance assessment in local reporting of student achievement.
		Points: 0-3	Points: 4-7	Points: 8-10

Question 4 Describe any current professional learning practices for teachers and staff about competency-based education and assessment.0-5The district has not offered professional development in competency-based education and assessment learning practices that:•Targets teachers and staff across the district;•Is purposeful and needs based; and•Draws on best practices identified by leading organizations in competency-based education.	 The district has made an attempt to introduce competency-based education and assessment learning practices to teachers and staff. The professional learning may be in the beginning stages but still: Targets teachers and staff across the district; Is purposeful and needs based; and Draws on best practices identified by leading organizations in competency-based education. Points: 2-3 	It is clear that there are currently strong, sustained professional learning practices to support competency-based education and assessment for teachers and staff in the district, and that professional learning: • Targets teachers and staff across the district; • Is purposeful and needs based; and • Draws on best practices identified by leading organizations in competency-based education. Points 4-5
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Question 60-10Identify and explain at least one student	 Leverage learning from such partnerships; and Identify changes in schools as a result of partnerships. 	such partnerships; andIdentify changes in schools as a result of partnerships.	 education; Leverage learning from such partnerships; and Identify changes in schools as a result of partnerships.
	Points: 0-1 The district does not describe any outcomes for participating in the CEA pilot, or has outcomes that do not address topics related to the CEA pilot, such as: • Student success; and • Equity.	 Points: 2-3 The district has at least one outcome, but it is not clear how it connects to participation in the CEA pilot. The outcome(s) should address: Student success; and Equity. Points: 4-7 	Points 4-5 The district has explicit, achievable outcomes for their participation in the CEA pilot. Detailed outcomes should address: • Student success; and • Equity. Points 8-10

Question 7	0-15	It is not apparent how each	There is evidence that a dialogue has begun with each stakeholder	There is clear evidence that each
Describe, for each stakeholder group listed below, how you have built (or plan to build) and how you will support efforts to incorporate into your district accountability system locally- determined reporting measures that may include	(total)	stakeholder group is engaged in the inclusion into the district accountability system of locally- determined reporting measures that may include innovative forms of assessment (i.e. performance assessment). It is not apparent how each stakeholder group is afforded input opportunities or understands how district decisions are made.	has begun with each stakeholder group or that a plan exists to build support for the inclusion into the district accountability system of locally-determined reporting measures that may include innovative forms of assessment (i.e. performance assessment).There is evidence that each stakeholder group is afforded input opportunities and understands how district decisions are made.	stakeholder group supports and is engaged with the inclusion into the district accountability system locally-determined reporting measures that may include innovative forms of assessment (i.e. performance assessment), and that a plan exists to sustain support. It is clear that each stakeholder group is afforded input opportunities and understands how district decisions are made.
innovative forms of assessment (i.e. performance		Stakeholder group: students	Stakeholder group: students	Stakeholder group: students
assessment).		Points: 0-1	Points: 2	Points: 3
StudentsParents		Stakeholder group: parents	Stakeholder group: parents	Stakeholder group: parents
• Teachers &		Points: 0-1	Points: 2	Points: 3
Administrators • Community / Business &		Stakeholder group: teachers and administrators	Stakeholder group: teachers and administrators	Stakeholder group: teachers and administrators
Industry		Points: 0-1	Points: 2	Points: 3
• Local Board of Education		Stakeholder group: community/business and industry	Stakeholder group: community/business and industry	Stakeholder group: community/business and industry
		Points: 0-1	Points: 2	Points: 3
		Stakeholder group: local Board of Education	Stakeholder group: local Board of Education	Stakeholder group: local Board of Education
		Points: 0-1	Points: 2	Points: 3

Question 8 Describe your district's plan for implementation, evaluation and continuous improvement of a competency-based option toward high school graduation for every student, in a maximum time period of seven years. Specifically, discuss the district's strategies for transforming learning, measuring student success, ensuring adequate teacher support, ensuring rigor, addressing deficiencies and preventing unintended consequences.	0-15	It is not clear how the district plans to implement, evaluate, or continuously improve a competency pathway option for every student within seven years. It is not clear that the district has strategies to: • Transform learning; • Measure student success; • Ensure adequate teacher support; • Ensure rigor; • Address deficiencies; and • Prevent unintended consequences. Points: 0-4	 There is evidence that the district has plans to offer a competency based option for every student within seven years, but all stages of implementing, evaluating, or continually improving are not fully defined. The district has some strategies to: Transform learning; Measure student success; Ensure adequate teacher support; Ensure rigor; Address deficiencies; and Prevent unintended consequences. Points: 5-10 	 The district has a clear and purposeful plan for implementing, evaluating, and continually improving a competency based option for every student within seven years. The district has coherent, explicit strategies to: Transform learning; Measure student success; Ensure adequate teacher support; Ensure rigor; Address deficiencies; and Prevent unintended consequences. Points 11-15

Question 9 Provide a timeline that reflects the scaling plan for districtwide implementation described in Q8.	0-5	 The timeline does not address how districtwide implementation of a competency pathway option for all students will be accomplished within seven years. The timeline does not address: Scaling efforts; Teacher preparation; and □ Leadership actions. 	The timeline indicates districtwide implementation of a competency pathway option for all students will be accomplished in seven years, but scaling efforts are unclear or impractical. The timeline generally addresses: Scaling efforts; Teacher preparation; and Leadership actions.	 The timeline is clear and shows districtwide implementation of a competency pathway option for all students within seven years. The timeline reflects a feasible plan that addresses: Scaling efforts; Teacher preparation; and Leadership actions.
		Points: 0-1	Points: 2-3	Points: 4-5
Question 10 Explain your district's plan for sustainability, particularly as it relates to teacher turnover and school/district leadership transitions.	0-10	 The district does not provide a detailed plan for sustainability of competency-based practices. Evidence of the following is either absent or limited in explicit details: Policies that permit for innovative practices; Fiscal, human and other resources to aide in system transformation; Specific strategies for onboarding new teachers to competency-based education and assessment; and Specific strategies for ensuring continuity through school/district leadership transition. 	 The district provides a plan for sustainability of competency-based practices. The plan includes limited details and/or addresses some, but not all, of the following: Policies that permit for innovative practices; Fiscal, human and other resources to aide in system transformation; Specific strategies for onboarding new teachers to competency-based education and assessment; and Specific strategies for ensuring continuity through school/district leadership transition. 	 The district has a clear and compelling plan for sustainability of competency-based practices, including all of the following: Policies that permit for innovative practices; Fiscal, human and other resources to aide in system transformation; Specific strategies for onboarding new teachers to competency-based education and assessment; and Specific strategies for ensuring continuity through school/district leadership transition.
		Points: 1-3	Points: 4-7	Points: 8-10