REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

Proposals Due: July 7, 2014 by 4:00 p.m.

School Readiness Assessment Systems

School Year 2014-15

For more information contact:

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Issued by:

COLORADO
DEPARTMENT *of* EDUCATION

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Background

Senate Bill 08-212, Colorado's Preschool to Postsecondary Education Alignment Act, also known as the Colorado Achievement Plan for Kids (CAP4K), passed in 2008 with the goal of aligning Colorado's preschool through postsecondary education system. CAP4K includes requirements for both local education providers and the State Board of Education related to school readiness.

Section 22-7-1004, C.R.S. requires the State Board of Education to adopt a description of school readiness. The State Board of Education defined school readiness in 2008:

> *School readiness describes both the preparedness of a child to engage in and benefit from learning experiences, and the ability of a school to meet the needs of all students enrolled in publicly funded preschool or kindergarten. School readiness is enhanced when schools, families, and community service providers work collaboratively to ensure that every child is ready for higher levels of learning in academic content.*

Section 22-7-1004, C.R.S. further requires the State Board of Education to adopt one or more assessments aligned with the definition of school readiness. In December 2012, the State Board of Education voted to offer districts a menu of school readiness assessments. The first approved assessment tool for the menu is Teaching Strategies GOLD.

Beginning in the fall of 2013, local education providers were required to ensure all children in publicly-funded preschool or kindergarten receive an individual school readiness plan. Also, local education providers must administer the school readiness assessment to each student in kindergarten. Given the need to expand the school readiness assessment menu, the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) has advised districts to phase-in this provision of CAP4K by the 2015 – 2016 school year.

The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) is initiating this request for information (RFI) to solicit additional school readiness assessment systems for Colorado's menu of school readiness assessments. Upon review and approval by the State Board of Education, additional school readiness assessment systems will be added to the menu of approved school readiness assessments.

School readiness assessments should provide actionable information to teachers and families on the status and ongoing progress a child makes throughout the kindergarten year within the domains of physical well-being and motor development, social and emotional development, language and comprehension development, and cognition and general knowledge. By monitoring each child's progress across multiple domains, teachers, parents, schools, and caregivers can provide needed support to ensure each child's success in school. Information gathered from school readiness assessments is to be used for supportive and instructional purposes but cannot be used to deny a student admission or progression to kindergarten or first grade.

Purpose

The purpose of this Request for Information (RFI) is to solicit additional school readiness assessment systems for inclusion on CDE's approved school readiness assessment menu. This is not a competitive process. Any provider that meets the criteria specified in the eligibility requirements set forth below and delineated through the review rubric may be included on the provider list. The State Board of Education approved menu will be available to Colorado schools and school districts via the CDE's website: http://www.cde.state.co.us/schoolreadiness/assessment.asp.

Districts and schools must choose from the menu for their use of a school readiness assessment system. This RFI does not include a provision for expenditure of state funds to providers on the list, and there is no guarantee that providers will be selected by schools/districts. The list of providers will be maintained by CDE. The list will be updated every three to five years based on the adequacy of the assessments to provide information to meet the requirements of CAP4K. When the review process is initiated, there will be an opportunity for new providers to apply to be added to the list by meeting the criteria specified herein. Providers may be removed from the list if their assessments are found to no longer meet the stated criteria. The state may revise its criteria over time as needed.

Eligibility Requirements

In order for any assessment system to be considered for inclusion on the menu of school readiness assessments, the assessment system must meet the following criteria:

1. **The assessment tool has strong psychometric properties.** There is strong evidence to show that the assessment is valid and reliable. Study methodology is sound.
2. **The assessment tool provides information about the "whole child."** The assessment addresses developmental as well as academic domains (i.e., physical well-being and motor development, social and emotional development, language and comprehension development, and cognition and general knowledge).
3. **The assessment tool is research based.** The academic and developmental content assessed is based on child development and education research.
4. **The assessment tool promotes methods appropriate for young children.** The assessment is observational, is completed by familiar adults and occurs in children's everyday routines, activities and places.

Review Process

Three (3) copies of the entire assessment tool and assessment scoring criteria, teacher and student materials, and technical reports must be submitted to assure consistent application of the evaluation criteria. All materials must be submitted to Suzanne Rougier by July 1 by 4:00 pm. Incomplete or late proposals will NOT be considered.   Applicants that do not meet the qualifications will be notified and may reapply in future years.

Timeline

May 12, 2014	Request for Information available on the CDE website.
July 7, 2014	Proposal must be received.
July 7 – August 13, 2014	CDE will review proposals.
August 31, 2014	Vendors notified of review process outcomes
September 10-11, 2014	Anticipated presentation of recommendation to the State Board of Education on additions to the school readiness assessment menu.
October 8-9, 2014	The Colorado Department of Education will vote to adopt school readiness assessments.
October 10, 2014	The Colorado Department of Education will post to their website the State Board menu of approved school readiness assessments.

Required Elements

Proposals must include **three (3) copies** of the following information:

- Part 1 Cover Sheet
- Full student assessment materials
- Full teacher administration materials
- Technical adequacy reports

Incomplete proposals will not be reviewed.

Proposals will be due **by 4 p.m. on July 7, 2014 to:**

Camilla Zardo

Colorado Department of Education

Competitive Grants and Awards

1560 Broadway, Suite 1450

Denver, CO 80202

Colorado State Board of Education
Approved Menu of School Readiness Assessments
2014-2015

PART I: COVER PAGE *(Complete and submit with assessment materials)*

Name of Entity:

Contact Person for the Proposal:

Mailing Address:

Telephone:	Webpage:

Email:

Assessment domains: *Indicate below all major areas of assessment*

- ☐ Physical development and health
- ☐ Social and emotional development
- ☐ English language development
- ☐ Language development
- ☐ Literacy knowledge and skills
- ☐ Logic and reasoning
- ☐ Mathematics knowledge and skills
- ☐ Science knowledge and skills
- ☐ Social studies knowledge and skills
- ☐ Creative arts expression
- ☐ Approaches to learning
- ☐ Other (Please explain)

Please check the components of your assessment that you will be submitting:

In addition to the complete assessment, administration materials, and technical adequacy report:

- ☐ Supplemental Materials
- ☐ Other (Please explain)

Colorado State Board of Education
Approved Menu of School Readiness Assessments

Level I: Minimum requirements
Level II: Quality indicators
Level III: How the Assessment Meets the Identified Criteria

Pass/Fail
____/15
____/6

TOTAL (all areas):

____/21

TOTAL POINTS: ___out of 21 possible

GENERAL COMMENTS: *Please indicate support for scoring by including overall strengths and weaknesses. These comments are used on feedback forms to applicants.*

Strengths:
(1)_____

(2)_____

Weaknesses:
(1)_____

(2)_____

Recommendations:

| Recommended _____ | Not Recommended ____ |

Signature of Reviewer_____ **Date**_____

School Readiness Assessment System
Evaluation Rubric

The review process consists of a three level review. Any assessment that does not meet all of the criteria specified in the Level 1 review minimum requirements will not be considered for inclusion on the Colorado School Readiness Assessment Menu.

Level 1 Review – Minimum Requirements		
Criteria	**Yes**	**No**
The assessment tool has strong psychometric properties. There is strong evidence to show that the assessment is valid and reliable. Study methodology is sound.		
The assessment tool provides information about the "whole child." The assessment addresses developmental as well as academic domains (i.e., physical well-being and motor development, social and emotional development, language and comprehension development, and cognition and general knowledge).		
The assessment tool is research based. The academic and developmental content assessed is based on child development and education research.		
The assessment tool promotes methods appropriate for young children. The assessment: • Is an appropriate combination of observational, authentic, and age-appropriate tasks. • Is completed by familiar adults. • Occurs in children's everyday routines, activities and places. • Provides ongoing information to teachers.		

Level 2 Review – Quality Indicators				
Criteria	**0** Inadequate	**1** Minimal	**2** Adequate	**3** High
The assessment is aligned. The assessment aligns with widely held expectations for learners. There is evidence of, or a potential for, alignment to the Colorado Academic Standards. The assessment aligns with Colorado's Early Learning and Development Guidelines.				
The assessment increases opportunities to learn. It is formative and ongoing. Reliable and valid use of the assessment informs instruction and intervention. It provides useful information for families. It yields information that can be used to inform continuous quality program improvement planning.				
The assessment rating system is clear. Assessment items and rating criteria are clear and coherent. There is readily available guidance to help teachers make accurate rating decisions.				
The assessment allows for authentic based assessment strategies. The use of performance based strategies is an integral element of the system, such as the use of portfolios, work sampling and digital documentation of child knowledge and skills. The assessment permits the convergence of information from classroom team members, family members and other adults in the children's lives in order to inform rating decisions.				

The assessment system has features that make broad participation likely. The assessment is affordable and easily accessible to any interested school or early childhood program. The assessment system is easy to learn. It is feasible for administrators and teachers to sustain functional and reliable use.				

Level 3 Review – Additional Desired Attributes				
Criteria	0 Inadequate	1 Minimal	2 Adequate	3 High
The assessment system includes a method for ensuring quality use. There are adequate opportunities for informal and formal access to professional development resources. Reliable use of the assessment can readily be gauged and quality use issues identified and addressed. The assessment system provides administrators with methods for monitoring completion and other indicators of quality use.				
The assessment has online functionality. The assessment system has a secure high quality online system for recording electronic portfolio as well as entering assessment results. The online system has the capacity to produce real time readily accessible reports of assessment results that can be used by teachers and administrators.				
The system has the capability to build on assessment practices in use in Colorado preschool programs.				