Request for Information

Applications Due: **April 6, 2017**

School Readiness Assessment Systems 2017-2018

Pursuant to Section 22-7-1004 C.R.S.

For Program Questions:
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Introduction and 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 Colorado 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 and to review the assessments by July 1, 2017 and every six years thereafter. Local education providers are required to ensure all children in publicly-funded kindergarten receive an individual school readiness plan. Plans are informed by a State Board approved school readiness assessment required to be completed in the first 60 calendar days of the school year. 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 statutorily required 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

In support of the process to regularly review the list of approved school readiness assessments, the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) is initiating this request for information (RFI) to solicit school readiness assessment systems for review. Upon review and approval by the State Board of Education, the assessments will be added to the state's approved list of school readiness assessments. Kindergarten entry assessments and ongoing yearlong assessments can be reviewed for inclusion on the approved school readiness assessment menu. Assessment systems currently on the approved list are only required to submit if there have been changes to their assessment system since the previous review and approval. If this is the case please submit only those changes. 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 recommended to 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: www.cde.state.co.us/schoolreadiness/assessment.

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 reviewed updated every six years based on the adequacy of the assessments to provide information to meet the requirements of CAP4K, as well as the capability of the assessments to meet and maintain the criteria on the evaluation rubric. When the review process is initiated, there will be an opportunity for 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. This RFI will not evaluate vendors for legal compliance,

privacy compliance, or security processes or policies. However, all vendors are required to comply with all applicable Colorado or federal laws, regulations, and rules, and applicable district or school policies.

Eligible Applicants

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 minimum criteria:

1. **The assessment tool has strong psychometric properties.** There is strong evidence to show that the assessment is valid and reliable as required by statute. Study methodology is sound.
2. **The assessment tool assesses all of the statutorily required domains supporting the whole child.** The assessment addresses the areas of physical well-being and motor development, social and emotional development, language and comprehension development, and cognition and general knowledge.
3. **The assessment tool enables districts to meet Colorado's Kindergarten School Readiness Data Reporting Requirements .**The assessment provides the number of students who demonstrate readiness characteristics of entering kindergartners in the required domains. The assessment can provide reports in aggregate for the district as a whole, and disaggregated by school, free or reduced lunch eligibility status, race and ethnicity, and gender.
4. **The assessment tool is research-based.** The academic and developmental content assessed is based on child development and education research as required by statute.
5. **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.
6. **The system fully meets all applicable federal and state data privacy and security laws.** The assessment system meets Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), Uninterrupted Scholars Act Guidance, and Colorado's student data transparency and security statute (Colorado Revised Statutes 22-16-101 et. al.).

Technical Assistance

An application training webinar will be held on **Friday, March 10, 2017, at 2:30 pm – 3:30 pm**. Register for this technical assistance via Eventbrite at https://sras2017.eventbrite.com. If you have questions or issues regarding registration, please email CompetitiveGrants@cde.state.co.us.

If interested in submitting an assessment for review, please submit the Letter of Intent (see **Attachment A**) via SurveyMonkey at https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/sras2017 by **Thursday, March 30, 2017**.

Review Process and Timeline

Applications will be reviewed by peer review teams comprised of state and local stakeholders including kindergarten teachers and administrators. Applicants will be notified of final approval status no later than **May 5, 2017**. Applicants that do not meet the qualifications may reapply for future opportunities.

2/23/17	Request for Information available on the CDE website.
4/6/17	Proposal must be received.
4/7-4/28	Proposal review conducted.
5/1-5/8	Vendors notified of review process outcomes.
5/10/17 or 5/11/17	Anticipated presentation of recommendation to the Colorado State Board of Education on additions to the school readiness assessment menu.
5/10/17 or 5/11/17	The Colorado State Board of Education will vote to adopt school readiness assessments.
5/11/17	The Colorado Department of Education will post to their website the State Board menu of approved school readiness assessments.

Submission Process and Deadline

An electronic copy of the application (in PDF format) must be submitted to CompetitiveGrants@cde.state.co.us by April 6, 2017. The electronic version should include all required components of the application as one document. Faxes will not be accepted. Incomplete or late applications will not be considered. If you do not receive an email confirmation of receipt of your application within 24 hours of the deadline, please email CompetitiveGrants@cde.state.co.us.

In addition, 2 hard copies of the complete assessment materials must be postmarked by April 6, 2017.

Application materials are available for download on the CDE website at www.cde.state.co.us/schoolreadiness/assessment.

> Submit the electronic copy of the entire application by
> **April 6, 2017** to:
> **CompetitiveGrants@cde.state.co.us**
>
> The electronic version should include all required components as one document. **Incomplete or late applications will not be considered.** If you do not receive an email confirmation of receipt of your application within 24 hours of the deadline, please email **CompetitiveGrants@cde.state.co.us.**
>
> ***AND***
>
> **Postmark 2 hard copies** (via mail)
> by **April 6, 2017** to:
>
> **Colorado Department of Education**
> **Office of Early Learning and School Readiness**
> **201 East Colfax Ave. Room 105**
> **Denver, CO 80203**

Application Format

- Please see below for the required elements of the application.
- All pages must be standard letter size, 8-1/2" x 11" using 12-point font and single-spaced with 1-inch margins and numbered pages.

Required Elements

The format outlined below must be followed in order to assure consistent application of the evaluation criteria. See evaluation rubric for specific selection criteria needed in Part II. Incomplete proposals will not be reviewed.

Part I: **Application Introduction (not scored):**
Part IA: Cover Page – Applicant Information
Basic business information and business qualifications demonstrating:
- The organization's capacity and personnel resources, including organizational chart for department or division overseeing assessment
- Evidence of financial stability
- State and national customer metrics
- References from other states using the assessment in kindergarten

Technology information if applicable:
- Technology management and development process
- Technical assistance availability and structure
- Operating system requirements
- Operating system capabilities

Data management information applicable:
- Database structure and server capabilities
- System performance reports
- Process for integration link with student information systems

Part II: Required Application Materials and Documentation

Assessment Materials:
- Assessment tool and assessment scoring criteria
    - Full Student Assessment Materials
    - Full Teacher Administration Materials

- Access to online system and app if applicable
    - Technical Adequacy Reports

- List of languages teacher, student and family materials are available in

Please include any additional information to support the evaluation criteria and review process.

Part IA: Cover Page – Applicant Information

Applicant Information	
Entity Name:	
Mailing Address:	
Website:	

Application Contact Information		
Name of Contact:		
Telephone:	**E-mail Address:**	
Signature:		

Assessment Domains
Indicate below all major areas of assessment.

☐ Physical and Motor Development

☐ Social and Emotional Development

☐ English Language Development

☐ Language and Comprehension Development

☐ Literacy Knowledge and Skills

☐ Cognition

☐ Mathematics Knowledge and Skills

☐ Science Knowledge and Skills

☐ Social Studies Knowledge and Skills

☐ Creative Arts

☐ Approaches to Learning

☐ Other (Please Explain) Click here to enter text.

Please indicate how the assessment being submitted is designed to be used:

☐ Entry Assessment

☐ Ongoing Assessment

☐ Both

☐ Other (Please Explain) Click here to enter text.

Please check the components that are being submitted in addition to the complete assessment, administration materials, and technical adequacy report:

☐ Supplemental Materials

☐ Other (Please Explain) Click here to enter text.

Application Scoring

CDE Use Only

Part I: **Application Introduction**   No Points

Part II: **Application Materials and Documentation**

      Section A: Minimum Requirements   ☐ Pass   ☐ Fail

      Section B: Quality Indicators

      Section C: Additional Preferred Attributes

GENERAL COMMENTS: Please indicate support for scoring by including overall strengths and weaknesses. These comments will be provided to applicants with their final scores.

Strengths:
-
-

Weaknesses:
-
-

RECOMMENDATION: Recommended _____   Not Recommended _____

Selection Criteria and Evaluation Rubric

Part I: Application Introduction

Cover Pages

Complete applicant information and include as the first pages of the application.

Part II: Application Materials and Documentation

The following criteria will be used by reviewers to evaluate the application as a whole. In order for the application to be reviewed all minimum requirements in Section A must be addressed. An application that receives a score of No on any indicators in Section A will not be recommended.

Section A: Minimum Requirements	Yes	No
1) **The assessment tool has strong psychometric properties.** There is strong evidence to show that the assessment is valid and reliable as required by statute. Study methodology is sound.		
2) **The assessment tool assesses all of the statutorily required domains.** The assessment the areas of physical well-being and motor development, social and emotional development, language and comprehension development, and cognition and general knowledge.		
3) **The assessment tool enables districts to meet Colorado's Kindergarten School Readiness Data Reporting Requirements.** The assessment can provide the number of students who demonstrate readiness characteristics of entering kindergartners in the required domains. The assessment can provide reports in aggregate for the district as a whole, and disaggregated by school, by free or reduced lunch eligibility status, race and ethnicity, and gender to meet Colorado's Kindergarten School Readiness Data Reporting Requirements.		
4) **The assessment tool is research-based.** The academic and developmental content assessed is based on child development and education research as required by statute.		
5) **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; and • Provides ongoing information to teachers to inform instruction.		
6) **The system fully meets all applicable federal and state data privacy and security laws.** The assessment system meets Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), Uninterrupted Scholars Act Guidance, and Colorado's student data transparency and security statute (Colorado Revised Statutes 22-16-101 et. al.).		
Reviewer Comments:		
	☐ Pass ☐ Fail	

Section B: Quality Indicators	Inadequate Not Addressed or Met No Criteria (information not provided)	Minimal Met One Criterion (response requires additional clarification)	Adequate Met Most Criteria (complete response, many need some additional clarification)	High Met All Criteria (concise and thoroughly developed, high quality response)
1) **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 and Colorado's Early Learning and Development Guidelines. There is evidence of or a potential for, alignment to the Colorado READ Act approved assessments.				
2) **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 teachers and families. It yields information that can be used to inform continuous quality program improvement planning.				
3) **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.				
4) **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 samples to document children's 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.				
5) **The assessment system has features that make broad participation likely.** The assessment is affordable and easily accessible to any interested school. The assessment system is easy to learn and use. There is readily available guidance to support assessment system users. The system offers time saving features for teachers. It is feasible for administrators and teachers to sustain functional and reliable use.				
Reviewer Comments:				

Section C: Additional Preferred Attributes	Inadequate Not Addressed or Met No Criteria (information not provided)	Minimal Met One Criterion (response requires additional clarification)	Adequate Met Most Criteria (complete response, many need some additional clarification)	High Met All Criteria (concise and thoroughly developed, high quality response)
1) **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.				
2) **The system has the capability to build on assessment practices in use in Colorado preschool programs.**				
3) **The assessment increases opportunities for supporting alignment of assessment and instruction within the preschool through 3rd grade continuum.**				
4) ***For assessments with 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 to inform instruction and communicate with families. Technical support is available to users.				
Reviewer Comments:				

Letter of Intent

The Letter of Intent to apply for School Readiness Assessment Systems is due by **Thursday, March 30, 2017**. Submit online via SurveyMonkey at https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/sras2017.

Below is a screenshot of the information requested in the Letter of Intent.

School Readiness & Results Matter Assessment Systems - Letter of Intent

1. Please complete the information requested below to indicate your intention to submit assessment materials for review.

   Entity Name:

   Name of Contact for the Proposal:

   Contact Telephone Number:

   Contact E-mail Address:

2. Please indicate which application you will be submitting materials for:

   ○ School Readiness Assessment Systems   ○ Both

   ○ Results Matter Early Childhood Assessment Systems

3. I affirm that I am the authorized representative from the entity, or that the authorized representative is aware and has approved of the intent to submit School Readiness and/or Results Matter Assessment Systems for review.

   ○ Yes   ○ No

   Done