

Funding Opportunity

Cohort 1 Applications Due: **Friday, April 1, 2022, at 11:59pm**

Cohort 2 Applications Due: **Monday, May 2, 2022, at 11:59pm**

Application Information Webinar: **Friday, February 25, 2022, at 2:00pm MST**

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| Rural Coaction Program |

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**Rural Coaction Program**

**Cohort 1 Applications Due: Friday, April 1, 2022, at 11:59pm**

**Cohort 2 Applications Due: Monday, May 2, 2022, at 11:59pm**

# Introduction

Rural districts, BOCES, and other local education providers (LEPs) provide students in their communities with high-quality learning experiences each and every day. To expand student pathway opportunities and career-connected learning, partnerships among and across districts and BOCES can be very valuable. Collaborative action (referred to here as coaction) allows districts and BOCES to work together in partnership to increase opportunities for students across their regions. As such, CDE is launching the Rural Coaction Program to seed the creation of new and further the development of existing partnerships and pathways for learning in our rural communities. This program will be funded through the American Rescue Plan’s Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP ESSER III) funds.

# Purpose and Program Activities

This program exists to provide funding to coalitions of LEPs and/or Board of Cooperative Services (BOCES) [designated as rural](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeedserv/cderuraldesignation2021-2022) to utilize a collaborative partnership to increase student access to and engagement with student career pathways and career-connected learning. A coalition of LEPs or group of providers (as defined below in “[Eligible Applicants and Priority Criteria](#_heading=h.tyjcwt)”) may apply for a grant.

The purpose of funding is to improve student engagement in learning—particularly for those students most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic—through increased collaborative action that results in the creation and/or expansion of student pathways/career-connected learning opportunities amongst rural Colorado school districts and/or BOCES, community partners, and Institutions of Higher Education (IHE’s) in ways that innovatively address local needs. With these funds, districts will build capacity and resources (primarily to build student career pathways and learning opportunities), be able to incentivize hard-to-fill positions, be more adequately positioned to attract quality staff, and increase opportunities for student growth and achievement, in addition to strengthening and/or maintaining relationships with industry partners and IHE’s.

A coalition of rural LEPs and/or BOCES (coaction partners) awarded a grant under the Rural Coaction Program shall use awarded funding to establish coaction partnerships to build student career pathways and career-connected learning opportunities that address the local needs of their communities. Examples of the eligible work include, but are not limited to:

* Establishing and/or expanding career-connected and other workplace learning opportunities (including Career and Technical Education) or increased student [career pathways that lead to in-demand careers](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BT7nWA5mVA3qjmR92WKUMyeoRJAF8o6T/view), including but not limited to:
  + Establishing shared infrastructure for offering students access to career-connected learning;
  + The acquisition of equipment and other capital expenditures;
  + Developing new career-connected learning pathways;
  + Strengthening student engagement/re-engagement through career-connected or workplace learning opportunities;
  + Offering transportation so students can access career-connected learning opportunities; and
  + Building the groundwork for a successful application for the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Grant (Perkins Grant).
* Programming that encourages enrichment, academic innovation and/or strengthens school climate, including but not limited to:
  + Through work-based learning opportunities in district and out of district; and
  + The creation of summer internship and career-based learning opportunities.
* Addressing educator workforce challenges, including but not limited to:
  + Supporting the hiring of educators for the student career pathways or current academics so that new pathways can be developed; and
  + Hiring staff to provide coordination across districts and build relationships with industry and other community partners.

**Coalitions can apply to one of two different cohorts**:

1. *Cohort 1: Accelerated Coaction* -- This path is intended for coalitions that have existing partnerships with neighboring LEPs, strong connections already in place with community industry partners, and/or existing career-connected learning opportunities and ready to expand the reach of their programs through partnerships. The goal of this path is to expedite funding to coalitions in order to initiate work in advance of the 2022-2023 school year.
2. *Cohort 2: Incubated Coaction* -- This cohort allows coalitions of LEPs, such as those building new programs or new collaborations across LEPs, additional time to plan their collaboration and put the systems and processes in place to ensure a successful implementation of the coaction program. Applicants awarded in this cohort will have a planning period to build out the plans and infrastructure starting on July 1, 2022, and ending no later than December 31, 2022.

As a support, CDE will make a list of potential Rural Coaction Coaches available. These individuals/organizations may provide a wide range of technical assistance to the coaction partners such as: supporting coaction partners in developing a theory of action, developing systems and processes, facilitating collaboration among coaction partners, supporting community engagement activities, other planning/coordination that supports the coaction partners in successfully implementing the proposed program including, for Cohort 2 applicants, support the efforts outlined for the planning period such as completing the Planning Period report (described in “[Evaluation and Reporting](#_heading=h.17dp8vu)” below). Rural Coaction Coaches are not required for any application. The costs of such coaches should be incorporated into the application budget. The list of potential Rural Coaches will be listed on the [Rural Coaction program webpage](http://www.cde.state.co.us/caresact/esser-ruralcoaction) when available.

# Eligible Applicants and Priority Criteria

A coalition (two or more) of LEPs (including at least one rural LEP as [defined](http://www.cde.state.co.us/sites/default/files/documents/ruraledcouncil/download/ruraldefinitionletter12813.pdf) by the Colorado Department of Education and the Commissioner’s Rural Education Council) are eligible to apply for this opportunity. An eligible LEP is:

* A School District on behalf of all or a subset of schools;
  + A non-charter school may not submit a standalone application outside of their district.
* A Charter School authorized by a School District; and
* A Charter School authorized by the Charter School Institute.

**Notes:**

* A BOCES is an eligible applicant so long as the BOCES application represents two or more districts and so long as only students enrolled in rural districts are served by these funds.
* An application submitted by a BOCES on behalf of member districts should indicate which districts are participating in the proposed program. Districts participating in a BOCES application cannot participate in a second application.
* A non-rural district can be part of an application for this program so long as only students enrolled in rural districts are served by these funds.
* A charter school is identified as rural if the school operates within the boundaries of a district identified as rural.
* Strong partnerships with institutions of higher education and industry/commercial partners (e.g., local business, local government, community-based and/or nonprofit organizations) are critical (and is included as an evaluative component of the rubric) to competitive applications. However, to be eligible for consideration, a coalition must also include at least two LEPs as defined above.
* An LEP can only be part of one coalition application.

# Priority Considerations

This program is designed to support rural LEPs in collaboratively building the capacity to provide and/or expand career-connected learning opportunities for students in their districts. Available grant funding will be distributed to eligible coaction programs based on the application rubric described below in “[Application Scoring](#_heading=h.3as4poj)”. Priority will be given to applications meeting the following priority considerations:

* Applications that involve at least one small rural district as [defined](http://www.cde.state.co.us/sites/default/files/documents/ruraledcouncil/download/ruraldefinitionletter12813.pdf) by the Colorado Department of Education and the Commissioner’s Rural Education Council.
* Applications that focus on engagement of those most impacted by the pandemic including low-income families, children with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and/or foster care youth.
* Applications that prioritize the expansion of career-connected learning opportunities within the educator workforce.
* Applications that include a plan for integrating multiple funding sources (e.g., the Carl Perkins Act, the Career Development Incentive Program) and/or program opportunities (e.g., the Innovative Learning Opportunities Pilot Program, the Pathways in Technology Early College High School Programs).

# Available Funds

The Colorado Department of Education will be making $15 million of ARP ESSER III funding available for this program. Applicants are invited to submit applications that meet the needs of their program with a maximum of $2 million available per applicant. Please note that proposed budgets should align with the scope of the work proposed in the application and budgets need not be at the maximum.

Approximately $6 million of funding will be made available for Cohort 1 – Accelerated Coaction with the remaining funds (approximately $9 million) made available for the Cohort 2 – Incubated Coaction. Eligible but unfunded applicants from Cohort 1 will be considered for funding should funding from Cohort 2 remain after all eligible Cohort 2 applications have been funded.

However, there is no guarantee that submitting an application will result in funding or funding at the requested level.

# Allowable Use of Funds

Funds must be expended in a way that aligns with the plans submitted through the application and align with the [allowable uses](https://www.cde.state.co.us/caresact/crf-allowableexpenditures) as defined through [ARP ESSER III](https://www.cde.state.co.us/caresact/esser3) including, but not limited to:

* Teachers, coordinators, and other personnel expenses;
* Certification and/or professional learning costs for district faculty and staff;
* Contracts for services provided including the provision of technical assistance;
* Curricula and instructional resources;
* Capital expenditures including equipment, machinery, or real property; and
* Technology to support distance and hybrid learning.

These funds are specific to this program, Rural Coaction Program, and uses of funds for any other purpose are not allowed. Please review the [ESSER Allowable Uses](https://www.cde.state.co.us/caresact/crf-allowableexpenditures) document for further clarity. If you have any questions regarding allowable expenses, please reach out to Matt Freeman ([Freeman\_M@cde.state.co.us](mailto:Freeman_M@cde.state.co.us)) for confirmation.

# Duration of Grant

The timeline and duration of grants differs based on the cohort to which a coalition applies.

*Accelerated Coaction*: Grants will be awarded beginning on June 1, 2022, with an end date of no later than September 30, 2024. Grantees within this cohort will be expected to begin implementation of the coaction’s program for the 2022-2023 school year. Funding for the 2023-2024 fiscal year will be dependent on the implementation of the program and adequate progress towards the student goals as outlined in the application.

*Incubated Coaction*: Grants will be awarded beginning on July 1, 2022, with an end date of no later than September 30, 2024. Applicants awarded funding under this cohort will be allowed a planning period starting on July 1, 2022, through no later than December 31, 2022. Funding for the remainder of the fiscal year will be dependent on making adequate progress towards meeting the goals outlined in the application for the planning period. Funding for the 2023-2024 fiscal year will be dependent on the implementation of the program and adequate progress towards the student goals as outlined in the application.

# Evaluation and Reporting

Each coalition of LEPs and/or BOCES that receives funding through the Rural Coaction Program is required to report, at a minimum, the following information to the Department on or before May 31 of each school year for which an LEP has received funding:

* A description of the status of planned activities (e.g., completed, in progress);
* Any adjustments made to the LEP’s program plan and the reason adjustments were made;
* How program funds were used by the LEP and a summary of other resources used, if any, to implement the planned coalition plan;
* The staff and positions recruited, re-assigned, hired, or provided professional development to support the program;
* A description of the measurable student outcomes (including academic, social and/or emotional outcomes), disaggregated by student groups, and whether the expected result of the activities described in the plan were met;
* How the progress to date has impacted the sustainability plan submitted with the application and, if applicable, how the sustainability plan has changed; and
* Whether the local education provider's coalition plan will continue in the following fiscal year and, if not, the reason the program will not continue,

Additionally, coalitions receiving funding under the *Incubated Coaction* cohort will be required to submit a brief narrative report detailing progress made during the planning period of the grant with a description of what work has occurred, modifications necessary for successful implementation of the coaction plan, progress towards the goals outlined in the application for the planning period, and the final theory of action detailing how the program will drive the expected outcomes. This report will be due to CDE no later than November 30, 2022.

LEPs receiving funding will also be required to submit an Annual Financial Report. Details and format for this report will be provided upon award and as part of the budget workbook and/or grant award letter (GAL).

# Data Privacy

CDE takes seriously its obligation to protect the privacy of student and educator Personally Identifiable Information (PII) collected, used, shared, and stored. PII will not be collected through the Rural Coaction grant program. All program evaluation data will be collected in the aggregate and will be used, shared, and stored in compliance with CDE’s privacy and security policies and procedures.

**Note**: Documents submitted to CDE must not contain any personally identifiable student or educator information including names, identification numbers, or anything that could identify an individual. All data should be referenced/included in the aggregate and the aggregate counts should be redacted to remove small numbers under n=16 for students or n=5 for educators.

# Application Assistance

An application information webinar will be held on **Friday, February 25, 2022, at 2:00pm MST** the link to which will be available on the [Rural Coaction program webpage](http://www.cde.state.co.us/caresact/esser-ruralcoaction). This optional session will discuss the technical aspects of applying for the Rural Coaction program, explain the goals, and answer questions about the process.

Additionally, CDE will be hosting optional opportunities to learn about different models of career-connected learning--particularly through the lens of rural district collaboration. These will be shared via the [Rural Coaction program webpage](http://www.cde.state.co.us/caresact/esser-ruralcoaction).

# Review Process and Timeline

Applications will be reviewed by CDE staff and peer reviewers to ensure they contain all required components. Applicants for Cohort 1 (Accelerated Coaction) will be notified of final award status no later than **Monday, May 2, 2022.** Applicants for Cohort 2 (Incubated Coaction) will be notified of final award status no later than **Friday, June 3, 2022.**

**Note:** This is a competitive process – applicants must score at least 70 points out of the 100 possible points to be approved for funding. Additional points are awarded for applications meeting the priority considerations as outlined above in “[Priority Considerations](#_heading=h.3dy6vkm)”. Applications that score below 70 points may be asked to submit revisions that would bring the application up to a fundable level. There is no guarantee that submitting an application will result in funding or funding at the requested level. All award decisions are final. Applicants that do not meet the qualifications may reapply for future grant opportunities.

# Submission Process and Deadline

Applications must be completed (including all elements outlined below) and submitted through the [**online application**](http://www.cde.state.co.us/ruralcoactionprogramapplication) on the CDE Website by **Friday, April 1, 2022, at 11:59pm** for Cohort 1 and by **Monday, May 2, 2022, at 11:59pm** for Cohort 2. The Excel Budget Workbook and Program Assurances Form must also be uploaded to the online application form at the time of submission.

Application resources and required documents to include in the submission are available on CDE’s [Rural Coaction program webpage](http://www.cde.state.co.us/caresact/esser-ruralcoaction). Incomplete or late applications will not be considered. Applicants should receive an automated confirmation email from the online system upon submission. If you do not, please email [CompetitiveGrants@cde.state.co.us](mailto:CompetitiveGrants@cde.state.co.us).

# Required Elements

The Rural Coaction Program [**online application**](http://www.cde.state.co.us/ruralcoactionprogramapplication)form includes the following elements, all of which must be completed.

**Part I: Applicant Information**

**Part II: Application Narrative**

**Budget** **Workbook** (can be downloaded from CDE’s [Rural Coaction program webpage](http://www.cde.state.co.us/caresact/esser-ruralcoaction))

Upload the completedBudget Workbook (Excel) within the online application.

**Part III: Program Assurances Form**

Upload the Program Assurances Form (PDF or Word file) within the [**online application**](http://www.cde.state.co.us/ruralcoactionprogramapplication)form. Funding will not be awarded until all signatures are in place. Applications may be submitted without signatures; however, please attempt to obtain all signatures before submitting the application.

**Rural Coaction Program**

**Cohort 1 Applications Due: Friday, April 1, 2022, at 11:59pm**

**Cohort 2 Applications Due: Monday, May 2, 2022, at 11:59pm**

**\*\*Please provide the following within the** [**online application form**](http://www.cde.state.co.us/ruralcoactionprogramapplication)**\*\***

The application form does not save works in progress, so applicants may find it useful to complete the application in the tables below and paste the responses into the online application.

# Part I-A: Applicant Information

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| **Lead Local Education Provider (LEP)/BOCES Information** | | | | | | | | |
| **LEAD LEP/BOCES Name:** | |  | | | | | **LEAD LEP/BOCES Code:** |  |
| **DUNS/Unique Sam.gov Identifier:** | | | |  | | | | |
| **DUNS Expiration Date:** | | |  | | | | | |
| **Mailing Address:** | |  | | | | | | |
| **Requested Funding:** | | $ | | | | | | |
| **Type of Education Provider**  [choose the one check box below that best describes your organization or authorizer] | | | | | | | | |
| ☐ School District ☐ BOCES ☐ Charter School Institute ☐ Charter School | | | | | | | | |
| **Region**  [choose the one check box below that best indicates the region of Colorado this program will directly impact] | | | | | | | | |
| ☐ Metro ☐ Pikes Peak ☐ North Central ☐ Northwest  ☐ West Central ☐ Southwest ☐ Southeast ☐ Northeast | | | | | | | | |
| **Authorized Representative Information** | | | | | | | | |
| **Name:** |  | | | | **Title:** |  | | |
| **Telephone:** |  | | | | **E-mail:** |  | | |
| **Program Contact Information** | | | | | | | | |
| **Name:** |  | | | | **Title:** |  | | |
| **Telephone:** |  | | | | **E-mail:** |  | | |
| **Fiscal Manager Information** | | | | | | | | |
| **Name:** |  | | | | | | | |
| **Telephone:** |  | | | | **E-mail:** |  | | |

# Part I-B: Participating LEPs Information

Complete for each participating school.

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| **Recipient LEP Information #1** | | | | | | |
| **LEP Name:** | |  | | | **LEP Code:** |  |
| **Mailing Address:** | |  | | | **Charter School:** | ☐ Yes ☐ No |
| **Program Contact Information** | | | | | | |
| **Name:** |  | | | | | |
| **Telephone:** |  | | **E-mail:** |  | | |
| Has the LEP received a Response, Innovation, and Student Equity (RISE) Grant? | ☐ Yes ☐ No | | **Does the LEP plan to submit for Career and Technical Education program approval through the Carl D. Perkins education grant?** | ☐ Yes ☐ No | | |

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| **Recipient LEP Information #2** | | | | | | |
| **LEP Name:** | |  | | | **LEP Code:** |  |
| **Mailing Address:** | |  | | | **Charter School:** | ☐ Yes ☐ No |
| **Program Contact Information** | | | | | | |
| **Name:** |  | | | | | |
| **Telephone:** |  | | **E-mail:** |  | | |
| Has the LEP received a Response, Innovation, and Student Equity (RISE) Grant? | ☐ Yes ☐ No | | **Does the LEP plan to submit for Career and Technical Education program approval through the Carl D. Perkins education grant?** | ☐ Yes ☐ No | | |

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| **Recipient LEP Information #3** | | | | | | |
| **LEP Name:** | |  | | | **LEP Code:** |  |
| **Mailing Address:** | |  | | | **Charter School:** | ☐ Yes ☐ No |
| **Program Contact Information** | | | | | | |
| **Name:** |  | | | | | |
| **Telephone:** |  | | **E-mail:** |  | | |
| Has the LEP received a Response, Innovation, and Student Equity (RISE) Grant? | ☐ Yes ☐ No | | **Does the LEP plan to submit for Career and Technical Education program approval through the Carl D. Perkins education grant?** | ☐ Yes ☐ No | | |

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| **Recipient LEP Information #4** | | | | | | |
| **LEP Name:** | |  | | | **LEP Code:** |  |
| **Mailing Address:** | |  | | | **Charter School:** | ☐ Yes ☐ No |
| **Program Contact Information** | | | | | | |
| **Name:** |  | | | | | |
| **Telephone:** |  | | **E-mail:** |  | | |
| Has the LEP received a Response, Innovation, and Student Equity (RISE) Grant? | ☐ Yes ☐ No | | **Does the LEP plan to submit for Career and Technical Education program approval through the Carl D. Perkins education grant?** | ☐ Yes ☐ No | | |

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| **Recipient LEP Information #5** | | | | | | |
| **LEP Name:** | |  | | | **LEP Code:** |  |
| **Mailing Address:** | |  | | | **Charter School:** | ☐ Yes ☐ No |
| **Program Contact Information** | | | | | | |
| **Name:** |  | | | | | |
| **Telephone:** |  | | **E-mail:** |  | | |
| Has the LEP received a Response, Innovation, and Student Equity (RISE) Grant? | ☐ Yes ☐ No | | **Does the LEP plan to submit for Career and Technical Education program approval through the Carl D. Perkins education grant?** | ☐ Yes ☐ No | | |

# Part II: Cohort 1--Accelerated Coaction Application Narrative

Applicants will be asked to complete the following questions in the Rural Coaction [**online application**](http://www.cde.state.co.us/ruralcoactionprogramapplication). The application form does not save works in progress, so applicants may find it useful to complete the application in the tables below and paste the responses into the online application.

A plan detailing how coaction partners will expend the allocated funds to address local needs by accelerating learning opportunities and increasing student engagement and access (i.e., development of pathways, apprenticeships and internship programs, industry certifications, staff sharing, etc.):

* 1. The measurable student outcomes the partners expect students to achieve as a result of the activities described in the plan (including, but not limited to, measures of student engagement, student achievement, and school climate) and the theory of action for how the program will drive towards those results. (no more than 750 words)

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* 1. A detailed description of the coaction partners’ plan for building and/or expanding student career pathways and/or career-connected learning opportunities including timeline for implementation and a description of the evidence-base by which the partners believe this program will strengthen student engagement—particularly for students most impacted by the pandemic. (no more than 1000 words)

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* 1. Information concerning the key personnel (current and yet-to-be-hired) who will be responsible for the activities described in the plan, the credentials necessary for executing the program, and strategies/timelines for recruitment of required personnel. (no more than 500 words)

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* 1. The barriers to successfully building and/or expanding student career pathways and/or career-connected learning opportunities in the coaction partner’s communities and how they plan to overcome those barriers. (no more than 500 words)

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* 1. The current state of the coaction partners’ engagement and collaboration with one another and the partners’ plan to effectively collaborate through this program. (no more than 500 words)

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* 1. The current state of the coaction partners’ engagement and collaboration with community stakeholders (including industry partners and institutions of higher education) and the partners’ plan to expand upon that engagement through this program. (no more than 500 words)

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* 1. A description (including the role to be played) of the key stakeholders (including Rural Coaction Coach, institutions of higher education, and industry partners) engaged in the development and implementation of the proposed programs.

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* 1. A description of the coaction partners’ sustainability plan for the created/expanded student career pathways and/or career-connected learning opportunities including, but not limited to, a theory of action that demonstrates long-term continuity of the program, how coaction partners will leverage other ongoing funding sources, and whether the partners anticipate applying for a pathway under the Perkins Act. (no more than 500 words)

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* 1. A description of how the coaction partners’ plan addresses any of the other priority considerations not discussed in earlier sections. (no more than 500 words)

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The number of rural students the coaction partners anticipate will be served annually by this coalition of LEPs/BOCES during the grant period: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Complete and upload the Excel Budget Workbook to the [**online application**](http://www.cde.state.co.us/ruralcoactionprogramapplication). Ensure that all costs included in the budget are linked to the program plan within the narrative for funding.

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# Part II: Cohort 2--Incubated Coaction Application Narrative

Applicants will be asked to complete the following questions in the Rural Coaction [**online application**](http://www.cde.state.co.us/ruralcoactionprogramapplication). The application form does not save works in progress, so applicants may find it useful to complete the application in the tables below and paste the responses into the online application.

A plan detailing how coaction partners will expend the allocated funds to address local needs by accelerating learning opportunities and increasing student engagement and access (i.e., development of pathways, apprenticeships and internship programs, industry certifications, staff sharing, etc.):

* 1. A detailed description of the coaction partners’ plan for building and/or expanding student career pathways and/or career-connected learning opportunities including a timeline for implementation and a description of the evidence-base by which the partners believe this program will strengthen student engagement—particularly for students most impacted by the pandemic. (no more than 1000 words)

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* 1. A description of how the coaction partners’ plan will leverage the allowed maximum of six months of planning time from July 1 through December 31, 2022, including what goals and milestones the partners will use to track progress during this time. (no more than 500 words)

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* 1. Information concerning the key personnel (current and yet-to-be-hired) who will be responsible for the activities described in the plan, the credentials necessary for executing the program, and strategies/timelines for recruitment of required personnel. (no more than 500 words)

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* 1. Anticipated barriers to successfully building and/or expanding student career pathways and/or career-connected learning opportunities in the coaction partner’s communities and how they plan to overcome those barriers. (no more than 500 words)

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* 1. The measurable student outcomes the partners expect students to achieve as a result of the activities described in the plan (including, but not limited to, measures of student engagement, student achievement, and school climate). (no more than 500 words)

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* 1. The current state of the coaction partners’ engagement and collaboration with one another and the partners’ plan to effectively collaborate through this program. (no more than 500 words)

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* 1. The current state of the coaction partners’ engagement and collaboration with community stakeholders (including industry partners and institutions of higher education) and the partners’ plan to expand upon that engagement through this program. (no more than 500 words)

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* 1. A description (including the role to be played) of the key stakeholders (including Rural Coaction Coach, institutions of higher education, and industry partners) engaged in the development and implementation of the proposed programs.

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* 1. A description of the coaction partners sustainability plan for the created/expanded student career pathways and/or career-connected learning opportunities including, but not limited to, how they will leverage other, ongoing funding sources and whether the partners anticipate applying for a pathway under the Perkins Act. (no more than 500 words)

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* 1. A description of how the coaction partners’ plan addresses any of the other priority considerations not discussed in earlier sections. (no more than 500 words)

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How many rural students do the coaction partners anticipate will be served annually by this coalition of LEPs/BOCES during the grant period? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Complete and upload the Excel Budget Workbook to the [**online application**](http://www.cde.state.co.us/ruralcoactionprogramapplication). Ensure that all costs included in the budget are linked to the program plan within the narrative for funding.

# Part III: Program Assurances Form

The appropriate Authorized Representatives must sign below to indicate their approval of the contents of the application **Rural Coaction Program**, and the receipt of program funds.

On \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (date), the Superintendent/President of School Board/Board President of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (district/BOCES/CSI) hereby agrees to the following assurances:

1. The grantee will ensure that the rural coaction program funded by this grant will be administered in accordance with all applicable statutes, regulations, program plans, and requirements delineated in this application.
2. The grantee will ensure that the funds awarded for this program will only be used to meet the goals of the Rural Coaction program, namely to improve student engagement in learning—particularly for those students most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic—through increased collaborative action that results in the creation and/or expansion of student pathways/career-connected learning opportunities amongst rural Colorado school districts and/or BOCES, community partners, and IHEs in ways that innovatively address local needs.
3. The grantee will ensure that the ARP - ESSER III funds will only be used for activities allowable under section 2001(d)(2)(e) of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.
4. The grantee will ensure that the ARP - ESSER III funds will not be used for 1) subsidizing or offsetting executive salaries and benefits of individuals who are not employees of the SEA or LEAs or 2) expenditures related to state or local teacher or faculty unions or associations.
5. The grantee will ensure that ARP - ESSER III funds will be used for purposes that are reasonable, necessary, and allocable under the ARP Act.
6. The grantee will, to the greatest extent practicable, continue to compensate its employees and contractors during the period of any disruptions or closures related to COVID-19 in compliance with section 2001(d)(2)(e) of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. In addition, each entity that accepts funds will continue to pay employees and contractors to the greatest extent practicable based on the unique financial circumstances of the entity. Similarly to the CARES Act and CRRSA, ARP funds generally will not be used for bonuses, merit pay, or similar expenditures, unless related to disruptions or closures resulting from COVID-19.
7. The grantee will cooperate with any examination of records with respect to such funds by making records available for inspection, production, and examination, and authorized individuals available for interview and examination, upon the request of (i) the U.S. Department of Education and/or its Inspector General; or (ii) any other federal agency, commission, or department in the lawful exercise of its jurisdiction and authority.
8. The grantee will meet the requirements of section 442 and section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA, 20 U.S.C. 1232(e) & 1228(a)) meaning that during the entire duration of time that the entity is receiving funding under ARP - ESSER III, the LEA will, where applicable:
   * Ensure that it has taken steps to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its federally-assisted programs for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs;
   * Ensure that each program will be administered in accordance with applicable statutes, regulations, program plans, and applications;
   * Ensure that control of funds and property acquired using ARP ESSER III program funds will be maintained and administered by the appropriate public agency;
   * Ensure that fiscal control and fund accounting procedures will be used to ensure proper disbursement of, and accounting for, federal funds;
   * Report to the state agency or board and to the Secretary as may be needed for the state agency or board and the Secretary to perform their duties under each program, and each grantee will maintain records (as required in Section 443 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)) and provide access to those records as the state board, state agency, or Secretary deems necessary to carry out their responsibilities;
   * Provide opportunities for the participation in, planning for, and operation of each program by teachers, parents, and other interested agencies, organizations, and individuals;
   * Ensure that applications, evaluations, plans, or reports related to each program will be made available to parents and the public;
   * The grantee has adopted effective procedures for acquiring and disseminating information and research regarding the programs and for adopting, where appropriate, promising educational practices to teachers and administrators participating in each program; and
   * Ensure that none of the funds expended under any applicable program will be used to acquire equipment if such acquisition results in a direct financial benefit to any organization representing the interests of the purchasing entity or its employees.
9. The grantee will annually provide the Colorado Department of Education the evaluation information required in the “[Evaluation and Reporting](#_heading=h.17dp8vu)” section of this application including the End-of-Year Report (**Attachment A**) of the Request for Applications.
10. The grantee ensures that it will work with and provide requested data to CDE for the Rural Coaction Program within the time frames specified and containing such information as the Secretary may reasonably require.
11. The grantee ensures that it will participate in and comply with the CDE’s monitoring process and protocols.
12. The grantee will not discriminate against anyone regarding race, gender, national origin, color, disability, or age.
13. The grantee will be in compliance with the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance) requirements in 2 CFR, including Subpart D—Post Federal Award Requirements (2 CFR §§200.300-345) and Subpart E—Cost Principles (2 CFR§§200.400-475).
14. The LEA will comply with the provisions of all applicable acts, regulations and assurances; the following provisions of Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) 34 CFR parts 76, 77, 81, 82, 84, 97, 98, and 99; the OMB Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Non procurement) in 2 CFR part 180, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3485; and the Uniform Guidance in 2 CFR part 200, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3474.
15. If any findings of misuse of these funds are discovered, project funds will be returned to CDE.
16. The grantee will maintain sole responsibility for the project even though subcontractors may be used to perform certain services.
17. The grantee ensures that it will, if applicable, comply with the maintenance of equity provisions in section 2004(c) of the ARP.
18. All organizations and staff associated with this technical assistance program shall comply with all state and federal laws relating to health, safety and anti-discrimination, including but not limited to Titles VI and VII of the federal "Civil Rights Act of 1964", pub. l. 88-352, as amended; the federal "Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990", 42 U.S.C. sec. 1201 et seq., as amended; Section 504 0f the federal "Rehabilitation Act of 1973", 29 U.S.C. sec. 794, as amended; and Title IX of the federal "Education Amendments of 1972", 20 U.S.C. secs. 1681 to 1688, as amended.

The Colorado Department of Education may terminate a grant award upon thirty days’ notice if it is deemed by CDE that the applicant is not fulfilling the requirements of the funded program as specified in the approved project application or if the program is generating less than satisfactory results.

Project modifications and changes in the approved budget must be requested in writing and be approved in writing by the CDE before modifications are made to the expenditures. Contact Matt Freeman ([Freeman\_M@cde.state.co.us](mailto:Freeman_M@cde.state.co.us) | 970-578-0844) and Christina Monaco ([Monaco\_C@cde.state.co.us](mailto:Monaco_C@cde.state.co.us) | 303-981-6513) for any modifications.

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| Name of Organization Board President  (School Board, BOCES, Charter School) |  | Signature |  | Date |
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| Name of Organization Authorized Representative  (Superintendent, Charter School Institute, BOCES Executive Director) |  | Signature |  | Date |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Name of LEP Program Contact |  | Signature |  | Date |

**Note:** Upload the Program Assurances Form within the [**online application**](http://www.cde.state.co.us/ruralcoactionprogramapplication). Funding will not be awarded until all signatures are in place. Applications may be submitted without signatures; however, please attempt to obtain all signatures before submitting the application.

**Rural Coaction**

**Cohort 1 Applications Due: Friday, April 1, 2022, at 11:59pm**

**Cohort 2 Applications Due: Monday, May 2, 2022, at 11:59pm**

# Application Scoring

*CDE Use Only*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Part I:** | **Application Introduction** | | Not Scored |
| **Part II:** | **Narrative** | |  |
|  | Cohort 1 | Accelerated Coaction (for Cohort 1 Applicants Only) | /90 |
|  | Cohort 2 | Incubated Coaction (for Cohort 2 Applicants Only) | /90 |
|  | Budget | Budget | /10 |
|  | Priority Points |  |  |
|  | | | **/100** |

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| **Priority Considerations**  *Applicable for both Cohort 1 and Cohort 2 Applications*  CDE will indicate whether this application met the priority criteria (see page 4 of the RFA). This application demonstrates: | | |
| **Criteria** | **Meets** | **Does Not Meet** |
| Application includes at least one LEP identified as [small rural](http://www.cde.state.co.us/node/47331). | ☐ Yes - 10 Points | ☐ No - 0 Points |
| Proposed program focuses on engagement of low-income families, children with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and/or foster care youth. | ☐ Yes - 10 Points | ☐ No - 0 Points |
| Program prioritizes expansion of career-connected learning opportunities within the educator workforce. | ☐ Yes - 10 Points | ☐ No - 0 Points |
| Applicant includes a plan for integrating multiple funding sources (e.g., the Carl Perkins Act, the Career Development Incentive Program) and/or program opportunities (e.g., the Innovative Learning Opportunities Pilot Program, the Pathways in Technology Early College High School Programs). | ☐ Yes - 5 Points | ☐ No - 0 Points |
| **Total** | |  |

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

**Strengths:**

**Weaknesses:**

**Required Changes:**

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| **RECOMMENDATION:** | Funded |  |  | Funded with Changes |  |  | Not Funded |  |

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# Selection Criteria and Evaluation Rubric

**Part I: Application Introduction** [Not Scored]

**Part II: Narrative** [100 Points]

The following criteria will be used by reviewers to evaluate the application. For the application to be recommended for funding, it must receive at least 70 out of the 100 possible points and all required elements must be addressed. An application that receives a score of zero or “Information Not Provided” on any required elements will not be funded without revisions. Applications that score below 70 points may be asked to submit revisions that would bring the application up to a fundable level.

**Scoring Definitions**

Minimally Addressed or Does Not Meet Criteria - information not provided

Met Some but Not All Identified Criteria - requires additional clarification

Addressed Criteria but Did Not Provide Thorough Detail - adequate response, but not thoroughly developed or high-quality response

Met All Criteria with High Quality - clear, concise, and well thought out response

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| **Cohort 1—Accelerated Coaction Application Narrative**  *If application is for Cohort 2, do not complete this section.* | **Minimally Addressed or Does Not Meet Criteria** | **Met Some but Not All Identified Criteria** | **Addressed Criteria but Did Not Provide Thorough Detail** | **Met All Criteria with High Quality** | **TOTAL** |
| Application identified measurable student outcomes the coaction partners expect students to achieve as a result of the proposed program. | 0 | 3 | 7 | 10 |  |
| Application provides a logical theory of action for how the proposed activities will result in the measurable outcomes. | 0 | 3 | 7 | 10 |  |
| Application provided a clear, detailed description of how coaction partners will build and/or expand student career pathways and/or career-connected learning across their districts. | 0 | 7 | 14 | 20 |  |
| Applications provided a reasonable and realistic timeline for implementing the program described. | 0 | 3 | 7 | 10 |  |
| Applicant described the evidence base by which the program described will strengthen student engagement in learning—particularly for those most impacted by the pandemic. | **Information Not Provided** | **More Information Needed** | | ***Information Provided*** | |
| ☐ | ☐ | | ☐ | |
| Application described the key personnel necessary for implementing the program activities, any credentials those staff will require, and the strategies and timeline for recruitment. | 0 | 1 | 3 | 5 |  |
| Application identified current or potential barriers to successfully implementing the proposed programs and how they plan to overcome those barriers. | 0 | 1 | 3 | 5 |  |
| Application describes the current state of the coaction partners collaboration with one another and how they will effectively collaborate through this work. | 0 | 1 | 3 | 5 |  |
| Application describes the key stakeholders (including Rural Coaction Coach, institutions of higher education, and/or industry partners) that will be engaged in the development and implementation of the proposed program and how those stakeholders meet the needs of the coaction partners that will make the program successful. | 0 | 1 | 3 | 5 |  |
| Application describes the current state of the coaction partners’ engagement and collaboration with community stakeholders and a clear plan of how they will grow that engagement (e.g., potential partners, identify meeting structure and cadence, clear goals for the partnership, jointly identifying community workforce needs). | 0 | 3 | 7 | 10 |  |
| Application described a clear plan for sustaining the program created through this funding once the funding has expired. | 0 | 3 | 7 | 10 |  |
| Applicant indicated whether the coalition partners anticipate applying for a pathway under the Perkins Act. | **Information Not Provided** | **More Information Needed** | | ***Information Provided*** | |
| ☐ | ☐ | | ☐ | |
| Applicant indicated how many students are expected to be served annually through the program. | **Information Not Provided** | **More Information Needed** | | ***Information Provided*** | |
| ☐ | ☐ | | ☐ | |
| **Reviewer Comments:** | | | | | |
| **Total** | | | | |  |

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| **Cohort 2—Incubated Coaction Application Narrative**  *If application is for Cohort 1, do not complete this section.* | **Minimally Addressed or Does Not Meet Criteria** | **Met Some but Not All Identified Criteria** | **Addressed Criteria but Did Not Provide Thorough Detail** | **Met All Criteria with High Quality** | **TOTAL** |
| Application provided a clear, detailed description of how coaction partners will build and/or expand student career pathways and/or career-connected learning across their districts. | 0 | 7 | 14 | 20 |  |
| Applications provided a reasonable and realistic timeline for implementing the program described. | 0 | 3 | 7 | 10 |  |
| Applicant described the evidence base by which the program described will strengthen student engagement in learning—particularly for those most impacted by the pandemic. | **Information Not Provided** | **More Information Needed** | | ***Information Provided*** | |
| ☐ | ☐ | | ☐ | |
| Application provided a clear, detailed description of how the coaction partners’ plan will leverage the allowed six months planning time (including goals and milestones). | 0 | 3 | 7 | 10 |  |
| Application described the key personnel necessary for implementing the program activities, any credentials those staff will require, and the strategies and timeline for recruitment. | 0 | 1 | 3 | 5 |  |
| Application identified current or potential barriers to successfully implementing the proposed programs and how they plan to overcome those barriers. | 0 | 1 | 3 | 5 |  |
| Application identified measurable student outcomes the coaction partners expect students to achieve as a result of the proposed program. | 0 | 1 | 3 | 5 |  |
| Application describes the key stakeholders (including Rural Coaction Coach, institutions of higher education, and/or industry partners) that will be engaged in the development and implementation of the proposed program and how those stakeholders meet the needs of the coaction partners that will make the program successful. | 0 | 1 | 3 | 5 |  |
| Application describes the current state of the coaction partners collaboration with one another and how they will effectively collaborate through this work. | 0 | 3 | 7 | 10 |  |
| Application describes the current state of the coaction partners’ engagement and collaboration with community stakeholders and a clear plan of how they will grow that engagement (e.g., potential partners, identify meeting structure and cadence, clear goals for the partnership, jointly identifying community workforce needs). | 0 | 3 | 7 | 10 |  |
| Application described a clear plan for sustaining the program created through this funding once the funding has expired. | 0 | 3 | 7 | 10 |  |
| Applicant indicated whether the coalition partners anticipate applying for a pathway under the Perkins Act. | **Information Not Provided** | **More Information Needed** | | ***Information Provided*** | |
| ☐ | ☐ | | ☐ | |
| Applicant indicated how many students are expected to be served annually through the program. | **Information Not Provided** | **More Information Needed** | | ***Information Provided*** | |
| ☐ | ☐ | | ☐ | |
| **Reviewer Comments:** | | | | | |
| **Total** | | | | |  |

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| **Budget**  *Applicable for both Cohort 1 and Cohort 2.* | **Minimally Addressed or Does Not Meet Criteria** | **Met Some but Not All Identified Criteria** | **Addressed Criteria but Did Not Provide Thorough Detail** | | **Met All Criteria with High Quality** | **TOTAL** |
| Applicant addressed how Rural Coaction grant funding will be used and the proposed use of funds are in alignment with the allowable uses listed above under Allowable Use of Funds. | 0 | 3 | 7 | | 10 |  |
| Applicant submitted an electronic budget in the required format. | **Information Not Provided or More Information Needed** | | | ***Information Provided*** | | |
| ☐ | | | ☐ | | |
| **Reviewer Comments:** | | | | | | |
| **Total** | | | | | |  |

# Attachment A: End-of-Year Evaluation Reporting Guidelines

Each coalition of LEPs and/or BOCES that receives funding through the Rural Coaction Program is required to report, at a minimum, the following information to the Department on or before May 31 of each school year for which an LEP has received funding:

* A description of the status of planned activities (e.g., completed, in progress);
* Any adjustments made to the LEP’s program plan and the reason adjustments were made;
* How program funds were used by the LEP and a summary of other resources used, if any, to implement the planned coalition plan;
* The staff and positions recruited, re-assigned, hired, or provided professional development to support the program;
* A description of the measurable student outcomes (including academic, social and/or emotional outcomes), disaggregated by student groups, and whether the expected result of the activities described in the plan were met;
* How the progress to date has impacted the sustainability plan submitted with the application and, if applicable, how the sustainability plan has changed; and
* Whether the local education provider's coalition plan will continue in the following fiscal year and, if not, the reason the program will not continue,

Additionally, coalitions receiving funding under the *Incubated Coaction* cohort will be required to submit a brief narrative report detailing progress made during the planning period of the grant with a description of what work has occurred, modifications necessary for successful implementation of the coaction plan, progress towards the goals outlined in the application for the planning period, and the final theory of action detailing how the program will drive the expected outcomes. This report will be due to CDE no later than November 30, 2022.

LEPs receiving funding will also be required to submit an Annual Financial Report. Details and format for this report will be provided upon award and as part of the budget workbook and/or grant award letter (GAL).