**Section 1.423 Competency-Based High School Graduation Requirements Pilot Program**

Section 20 of the Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness Act authorizes a pilot program for school districts to provide career-oriented education through competency-based instruction. This Section sets forth the process to apply for approval to participate in the Competency-Based High School Graduation Requirements Pilot Program and the reporting requirements and conditions for removal from the Program.

a) Definitions

"Act" means the Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness Act [110 ILCS 48].

*"Adaptive Competencies" means foundational skills needed for success in college, careers and life, such as, but not limited to, work ethic, professionalism, communication, collaboration and interpersonal skills, and problem-solving.*

*"Community College" means a public community college organized under the Public Community College Act* [110 ILCS 805]*.* (Section 10 of the Act)

"Program" means the Competency-Based High School Graduation Requirements Pilot Program.

"School Code" means 105 ILCS 5.

b) Eligible Applicants

School districts participating in the Program may select the year and course graduation requirement it wishes to replace with a competency-based learning system. A school district with a student population of fewer than 500,000 may participate in the pilot program for some or all of its schools. Those with more than 500,000 students may select only six schools to participate in the project. (See Section 25(g) of the Act.)

c) A school district wishing to participate in the Program shall submit an application to the State Board of Education that addresses each of the components listed in Section 20 of the Act and subsection (d) of this Section. If a school district withdraws its application, the State Board will consider additional school districts. Two or more school districts may collaborate and apply in one application as specified in Section 25(g) of the Act.

d) In addition to addressing each of the components in Section 20 of the Act, each application shall include:

1) Cover Packet

A) School district contact information, including the name, email, and telephone number of the Program Director;

B) Year the Program will be implemented;

C) List of schools participating in the Program;

D) Graduation requirements from Section 27-22 of the School Code the Program will replace;

E) The name of each teacher participating in the Program and the subject/grade he or she teaches for each participating school;

F) A description of how teachers have been engaged throughout the application process;

G) A description of how the local community college and an institution of higher education have been involved in the application process;

H) A description of the school district's prior professional development and stakeholder engagement efforts during the application process, including any prior implementation of professional development for major district instructional initiatives;

I) Identification of community partners and how they will support the Program;

J) Name, position, and signature of all standing Planning and Implementation Committee members;

K) Any waivers of the School Code or administrative rules in accordance with Section 2-3.25(g) of the School Code; and

L) For each participating school district, signatures of the district superintendent; school board president; exclusive bargaining unit president, if there is one, or, if there is no bargaining unit president, a representative selected by the district educators; community college representative; and institution of higher education representative.

2) Proposal Narrative

Provide a general description of the district's plan for implementing the Program. Include a description of the Program's vision and goals as well as innovative features for student success that will be addressed, indicate the intended impact of the flexibility requested in the plan, provide activities and a timeline for meeting the goals, and describe the expected outcome for students. The narrative should address all of the following elements:

A) How students will demonstrate mastery of all required competencies to earn credit;

B) How students will demonstrate mastery of adaptive competencies, defined by the school district, in addition to academic competencies;

C) How students will advance once they have demonstrated mastery. If needed, how students shall receive more time and personalized instruction to demonstrate mastery;

D) How students will have the ability to attain advanced postsecondary education and career-related competencies beyond those needed for graduation;

E) How students will be assessed using multiple measures to determine mastery, usually requiring application of knowledge; and

F) How students will be able to earn credit toward graduation requirements in ways other than traditional coursework, including learning opportunities outside the traditional classroom setting, such as Supervised Career Development Experiences.

3) Evaluation and Sustainability

Describe how the Program will be monitored and evaluated and how the results will be reported. Indicate how the impact on increasing student success and/or other stated goals and objectives will be shared within the district and beyond (parents, community, etc.).

e) Criteria for Review and Approval of Proposals

The school districts selected to participate in the Program will be evaluated on the following criteria (also see Appendix B):

1) Strength of Local Commitment (20 points)

A) List of participating schools, including signatures of school principals.

B) List of teachers participating in the Program.

C) List of the Planning and Implementation Committee members, including their signatures.

D) Inclusion in the plan of strategies for involvement by the local community college and an institution of higher education.

2) Prior Professional Development (10 points)

A) Description of how teachers have been engaged throughout the application process.

B) Description of district's prior professional development and stakeholder engagement efforts to support successful development of the application and implementation of the plan.

3) Stakeholder Engagement (10 points)

A) Description of how the local community college and a higher education institution have been actively engaged throughout the application process.

B) Description of community partners that will support the system's implementation.

4) Quality of Proposed Plan (50 points)

A) Project Goals (10 points)

i) The proposal identifies clear, realistic, measurable goals.

ii) The goals clearly specify how student achievement will be impacted.

B) Project Narrative (25 points)

i) The proposal relates to innovative practices based upon research, previously collected district data, best practices, or additional information.

ii) The proposed activities are likely to produce measurable results and improve student achievement.

iii) The proposal provides a description of how it will meet all elements required to be included in the Program.

iv) The proposal provides a description of the district's plan for engaging the high schools with their feeder elementary schools in the establishment and administration of the Program.

C) Evaluation (15 points)

i) The proposal includes a description of the process for evaluating the project, including a preliminary timeline for the collection of data.

ii) The data from the proposed evaluation plan will be evaluated to determine if progress toward attaining the project goals is being made.

iii) The proposal provides a plan that provides multiple opportunities to share the results of the project with all stakeholders.

5) Diversity (10 points)

A) School District Type

B) School District Size

C) Geographical Location

D) Plan Approach (multiple subjects vs. one subject, type of subject, etc.).

f) The State Superintendent of Education will notify school districts approved for participation in the Pilot Program no later than 45 days following the close of the application period.

g) The standing Planning and Implementation Committee shall submit reports assessing the district's plan or implementation of the Program. Reports shall also include any recommendations for modifications or improvements for the Program. Reports shall be included in the initial application and the Program plan and thereafter shall be submitted annually to the State Board. Reports shall be submitted by mail to the State Board of Education Springfield Office (100 N. First Street, Springfield IL 62777) or via email at competencypilot@isbe.net. Annual reports must be submitted no later than July 1 after implementation.

h) Removal from the Program

Pursuant to Section 25(d) of the Act, the State Superintendent may remove a school district from the Program for failing to submit a full plan that meets the specifications in subsection (d)(3) of this Section. The Superintendent will consider the school district's failure to abide by the conditions submitted in its application when deciding to remove a school district from the Program.

(Source: Amended at 43 Ill. Reg. 10213, effective August 30, 2019)