REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Funding for Local P-16 Council Formation and Go Higher Communities

I. BACKGROUND

Over the past two years, the Council on Postsecondary Education has funded two separate initiatives: the formation of local P-16 councils to reflect and shape the state P-16 Council's agenda of creating a seamless system of education from pre-school through college and the designation of Go Higher communities to engage in grassroots efforts that raise the education level of each community, including, but not limited to, undereducated adults. The two processes are now being unified.

The Council on Postsecondary Education, on behalf of the State P-16 Council, invites public and independent colleges and universities, school districts, and civic organizations to submit proposals to do one of the following:

- Form Go Higher communities and local P-16 councils.
- Conduct assessments of local education needs to meet current and future workforce demands.
- Extend the work of existing local councils through special projects or initiatives.

The agenda of local councils should include ways to increase the number of adults in the community with high school (including GED) and postsecondary credentials and ways to meet the needs of students from early childhood through college.

Guided by educational, community, business, and labor leaders, local councils will aid the Council on Postsecondary Education in attaining its *2020 Vision* goal of "an integrated system of elementary and secondary schools and providers of adult and postsecondary education committed to meeting the needs of students and the Commonwealth."

II. PROGRAM GUIDELINES

A. Eligible Applicants

Leaders of educational institutions (such as chief academic officers of Kentucky's two- and four-year public and independent institutions, superintendents of school districts, principals of schools, and adult education providers), as well as local civic, business, and labor leaders are invited to apply for local P-16 council start-up and needs assessment funds. Local P-16 councils that received start-up funds from the CPE but have not been funded as Go Higher communities and existing Go Higher communities are eligible to apply for additional funding for specific initiatives that address the goals outlined in this RFP.

B. Activity Requirements

Proposals for new councils will identify a plan of organization for a local or regional P-16 structure, an assessment of local education needs, and an agenda for specific projects aimed at improving student achievement, from young children through adult learners. Proposals from existing councils should confirm that their councils include the representation of stakeholders identified in II.B.1 and outline an agenda of initiatives aimed at improving student achievement and workforce readiness.

The following are examples of projects that local councils may undertake:

- Review and analysis of data on student achievement or teacher assets and needs.
- Meetings of P-12 teachers, postsecondary faculty, and adult educators by discipline to communicate what students need to know and be able to do to be college-ready.
- Adoption of high school graduation requirements that are consistent with postsecondary and skilled workplace expectations (See the American Diploma Project benchmarks in English and mathematics. www.americandiplomaproject.org)
- Development of middle and high school, as well as adult education, curricula that prepare students with skills aligned with college and skilled workplace competency requirements.
- Development of transfer and dual enrollment/credit agreements between P-12 and postsecondary systems that assist both at-risk and accelerated students.
- Development of workplace education programs that assist undereducated workers in improving basic reading, mathematics, communication, and other employability skills.

If a community-wide assessment of local education needs has not recently been conducted, some portion of the funding must be directed to this assessment. The needs assessment should include the educational needs of adults (ages 16 and older) without a high school or postsecondary credential, the community's current and projected economic and workforce needs, and the capacity of the school district, adult and postsecondary education, and relevant services to meet these needs. Other issues of relevance to the community, such as minority achievement gaps, low college-going rates, or English as a Second Language needs, also may be addressed.

1. Organization of Local Councils

Council composition and leadership roles will be determined by local circumstances. Advisory guidelines for local P-16 councils provided by The Education Trust, Inc. are included with this RFP.

- Local P-16 councils should include representation from P-12 schools, two- and four-year postsecondary institutions, adult education, early childcare and education, and community members, including parents, employers, the skilled trades, and civic/local government groups.
- Local councils may be initiated by any of the stakeholders in our education system.

- "P-16" should be understood to include early childhood through adult and life-long learning.
- Local P-16 councils may vary in geographical breadth as determined by local needs. Counties may belong to more than one local council.

2. **Funding**
   - Up to $20,000 is available for forming local councils (or advancing the agenda of existing councils) and conducting an education needs assessment. Grant awards are not guaranteed and may be reduced or eliminated based on availability of funds.
   - Proposals should provide a timeframe and a strategic plan for sustaining local councils beyond the period of CPE support.
3. **Evaluation**
   - All proposals for P-16 council formation, local needs assessment, and special initiatives should state specific criteria for evaluating the success of the work undertaken.
   - All grantees will provide an interim report on the work funded by the grant within six months of receiving the award as well as a final report upon expenditure of the funds.

III. PROPOSAL FORMAT

The proposal must adhere to the following format (parts A-F not to exceed 10 double-spaced pages)

A. Proposal narrative

1. **Local Council Formation**—Describe the process for forming and sustaining the local P-16 council over the long term. State the council's mission and explain how projects and activities will be determined according to local priorities. What are these priorities, and how will they be established?
2. **Needs Assessment**—Provide a detailed explanation of issues that will be examined by the education needs assessment, as well as the process that will be used to conduct the study, and who will be conducting it, whether an outside contractor or a local resource. The following may serve as useful sources or methods for collecting data on your community:
   - Secondary sources, such as the US Census, the Kentucky State Data Center, the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, the Kentucky Adult Literacy Survey county data, and adult education program enrollment statistics.
   - Inventories of programs/services/resources for community residents.
   - Surveys, questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, etc.
3. **Special Initiatives**—Describe how the proposed agenda (such as projects enumerated in II.B.) address the community's needs.

B. Timeline

Provide projected dates for completing each phase of the project. Funds will be provided upon execution of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). An interim report within six months of the commencement of the project and a final report upon expenditure of the grant are required.

C. Composition of Council and Project Staff

List all the members of the local P-16 council and the project staff responsible for conducting the needs assessments and/or special initiatives. Describe their qualifications and relevant experiences.

D. Assessment Plan

Describe how project effectiveness will be assessed both in the short and long term. Indicators such as increased ACT participation, GED attainment, college going, and reduced drop-out rates are among several possible measures of local council effectiveness.

E. Fiscal agent

Provide the name and address of the entity that will serve as the fiscal agent for the contract or MOA. Possibilities include a postsecondary institution, the local board of education, or a non-profit community based organization.

F. Evidence of Sustainability

Outline how partner resources will be reallocated to sustain the work of the local council beyond the duration of the grant.

G. Letters of Commitment

Include signed letters that demonstrate institutional and individual commitment to the council's agenda.

H. Budget

Prepare a budget detailing how the funds will be spent. Then, in a brief narrative, justify why the proposed expenditures are necessary for the execution of the project. Budgets shall not exceed $20,000. Indirect costs are not allowed.

IV. EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

All proposals will be reviewed by the staff of the Council on Postsecondary Education (including Kentucky Adult Education), in consultation with the Kentucky Department of Education and Education Professional Standards Board. The following evaluation criteria will be used to rate proposals:

- Proposal is well written, easily understood, concise, well conceived, and focused on improving Kentuckians' learning and achievement.
- Proposal for local P-16 council includes representatives from all key stakeholders in the P-16 education system.
- Proposal includes a plan for long-term sustainability of a Go Higher community.
- Proposal contains a timeline that is appropriate and reasonable for pursuing efforts.
- Proposal contains evidence of institutional commitment on the part of all key stakeholders, including the appropriate allocation of resources and staff time to sustain a Go Higher community beyond the period initiated by the seed funding.
- Budget is reasonable and justified.

V. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

Please submit five (5) complete typed copies of the proposal, each stapled in the upper left corner, to:

Thomas D. Layzell, President
Council on Postsecondary Education
1024 Capital Center Drive, Suite 320
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601

Questions about the RFP should be addressed to Dianne M. Bazell or Jevonda Keith at the Council on Postsecondary Education (502/573-1555).