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Application for Inclusion in Performance Assessment for Competency Education PACE 2015-2016

The New Hampshire Department of Education has received approval from the US Department of Education to run a two-year pilot for accountability, entitled Performance Assessment for Competency Education (PACE). The PACE option balances local control with statewide accountability and comparability. In PACE, student performance assessment systems build on the local competency work and become one component of the New Hampshire student assessment system.

School districts accepted for pilot year two (2015-2016) will represent the diversity of the state's schools/districts. Teams from selected districts will engage with others in highly interactive activities with these goals:

- Build district expertise in how to design, administer, and reliably score high quality performance assessments, aligned with state curriculum frameworks, a new set of state competencies, and the district's required competencies;
- Access and implement tools and resources that will enable educators and administrators to establish a shared understanding and district-wide culture of K-12 quality performance assessments to measure student proficiency of competencies;
- Expand school and district capacity to create and sustain a system of valid and reliable K-12 performance assessment tasks in which student-centered learning is embedded; and
- Participate in the development and testing of several cross-district common performance assessment tasks in core disciplines such as mathematics, English language arts, science, and the arts, in grades 3 – 11.

District teams will engage with educators and school leaders (curriculum directors, department chairs, instructional coaches, principals, etc.) from PACE schools around the state for the purpose of examining sample performance assessments in the core disciplines, and learning the tools and processes that lead to the development of high quality performance assessments to be adopted in their schools. District teams will add to the body of knowledge and practice through local development of performance assessment tasks and processes which will then be shared with the wider group, and will also engage in state level meetings to discuss and establish policy for the on-going PACE initiative.

Rolling Cohorts:

Due to the intensity and high-stakes nature of this accountability initiative, districts will be selected for participation in one of three cohorts based on their application to the NH Department of Education, which includes a readiness survey. This process will allow districts to enter the initiative at their current degree of preparation and will also help to identify the professional development support necessary to become fully implementing PACE districts. New Hampshire Department of Education application readers will evaluate the readiness information districts submit as part of the acceptance criteria for entry into one of the three PACE Tiers. The PACE Option is currently a two-year pilot and participation is voluntary.

Tier Definitions:

Tier 3 Districts: Tier 3 districts are those that have reported no or few local active competency based learning environments, do not implement the competencies at the classroom level with students, though they may or may not have written competencies, and have no background experience with performance assessment of competencies. Tier 3 districts accepted for PACE participation will have access to school-level coaching from state-contracted Expert Consultants on the topics of developing and implementing competencies and working with the state model competencies. In addition, they will be assisted in planning activities with other Tier 3 districts to prepare for greater involvement in performance assessment district-wide. This coaching will prepare them for professional development in performance assessment as available.

Tier 2 Districts: Tier 2 districts are those that have reported to have course level and school-wide competencies in place and have at least some implementation of competencies in classroom settings. Competency-based learning environments may be evidenced in some places in the district. Experience with task-based Performance Assessment for competency attainment may be limited to extended learning opportunities or may not have been attempted in any systemic way. These districts will enter a cohort for intense Quality Performance Assessment (QPA) training in preparation for readiness to administer performance assessments in a competency-based learning environment. Tier 2 districts accepted for PACE participation will benefit from a coherent system of professional development from state and national experts on performance assessment, beginning levels of performance task development, Depth of Knowledge, looking at student work, reliable scoring, and local structures, such as PLC, to support the work.

Tier 1 Districts: Tier 1 Districts are selected based on their ability to enter the PACE work and both gain and share expertise in competency-based learning and performance assessment with others in the Tier 1 cohort. Districts selected to participate in PACE Tier 1 cohorts will have reported implementation of local competencies in school-wide and classroom settings, and some experience with performance assessment in a competency-based learning environment. Additionally, they will have evidenced a commitment to transitioning to implementing performance assessment of competencies for accountability purposes district-wide (K-12), and they will have articulated at least a beginning plan of how to best accomplish that transition in their community. Once accepted for Tier 1 participation, the PACE district team will have the opportunity to meet frequently on the local level to develop the processes needed to implement a new accountability system in the district schools. The district Superintendent and PACE team leader will have the opportunity to meet monthly with PACE state-level leadership

for policy and project management discussions. In addition, the district team leader will have monthly support in the form of a meeting with all other PACE team leaders for guidance, Q&A, and solution-building. Workshop days throughout the year will be facilitated by experts, consultants, and coaches allowing cross-school learning of performance assessments within specific content areas and across grade-spans, and will support curriculum-imbedded competency-based task design for the purposes of both formative and summative assessment, scoring, and calibration. Tier 1 districts will have the opportunity to participate, with coaching and guidance, in the development and implementation of common performance assessment tasks for accountability purposes in school year 2015-2016, based on readiness.

Applications may be submitted at any time throughout the year. Districts will be contacted within 21 days of submission to the New Hampshire Department of Education regarding their application.

For further information, please contact Paul Leather, Paul.Leather@doe.nh.gov, 603-271-3801.

Please submit applications to:

Paul K. Leather, Deputy Commissioner
NH Department of Education
101 Pleasant St
Concord, NH 03301

APPLICATION PACE 2015-2016

Please keep a copy of the Application for your records and submit one to the NH DOE.

District: _____

School(s): *(list all; use additional space if needed)*

Address: _____

Grades: _____

Student enrollment: _____

% FRL students: _____

% Non-Caucasian: _____

% SWD: _____

% ELL: _____

Size of Faculty: _____

Lead Contact: _____ **Position:** _____

Phone: _____ **Email:** _____

District Team members:

Please submit your district team list, including names, specific roles, and email addresses.

Depending on your district's configuration, teams should be comprised of the following people/ positions.

- *Superintendent or designee*
- *Building administrators*
- *A person/people working across grade levels such as Curriculum Director, Literacy Coach, Dean of Faculty*
- *Department heads or chairs*
- *For Middle and High Schools, Lead teachers in ELA, mathematics, science, and the Arts*
- *Several lead elementary educators*

APPLICATION PACE 2015-2016

Statement of Commitment:

In joining the PACE pilot initiative, our district commits to working in partnership with the New Hampshire Department of Education and other PACE districts to develop a local accountability plan, supported by the local board of education, that encompasses multiple measures and that includes the following:

- Clear and measurable goals for the system
- A clear and visible commitment towards improving the achievement of students who have historically been under-served
- Curriculum that is aligned with the state competencies in ELA, math, science, and the Arts, and that embeds the NH Work-Study Practices
- An instructional system designed to support students attaining proficiency of competencies
- A performance assessment system through which students demonstrate proficiency of competencies
- Coherence with the local educator evaluation system
- High quality measurement indicators to evaluate progress towards the goals
- Yearly reports on student and school performance that inform the community and state about the district's progress of multiple measures, with performance assessments as a central component
- Commitment of resources necessary to ensure the plan's success
- Leadership and educator capacity to design, implement, support, and sustain the new accountability system

The district will participate in all PACE activities, including the following:

- Use of common (cross-district) performance tasks from the state and national open source performance task banks
- Leadership sessions on building a performance-based local accountability system
- Workshop days on development, review, and administration of performance tasks, scoring, calibration, and data analysis
- District peer review

Superintendent

District

Date