

## CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

**Q: When will we know what programs are eligible to be considered as a Center of Excellence?**

**A:** Worknet Pinellas is currently in the process of commissioning an independent study to more accurately identify local workforce needs. The office of workforce education and WorkNet will develop a preliminary list for distribution. The Center of Excellence Certification Committee will determine a final list driven by the results of the WorkNet independent study when that information is available.

**Q: What process will be used to develop Centers of Excellence at schools?**

**A:** Criteria, timelines and procedures are currently being developed and will be distributed to schools as soon as they are formalized.

**Q: Who will approve a school's initial program request to pursue a Center of Excellence?**

**A:** The office of workforce education will work in concert with the superintendent's office and WorkNet Pinellas to evaluate schools' initial applications to make sure that the program submitted has the potential to meet all criteria required to eventually become a Center of Excellence.

**Q: Who has final approval of Center of Excellence designation?**

**A:** An independent committee comprised of industry-specific experts and employers will make the recommendation to the superintendent for a program to be designated as a Center of Excellence.

**Q: Am I required to have a Center of Excellence for my school next year?**

**A:** No. However, a plan for developing a Center of Excellence for your school must be in your 2007-08 School Improvement Plan. The office of secondary and workforce education will provide additional information regarding this at the school improvement work sessions later this summer. You and your school community should begin to work with the office of workforce education to identify potential programs that might eventually meet the criteria for a Center of Excellence.

**Q: What about my current programs?**

**A:** Schools that have identified a program and have had the program initially approved by the office of workforce education, the superintendent's office and WorkNet Pinellas can be designated as a Pre-Center of Excellence while the school and the program work toward official Center of Excellence designation.

**Q: When will the first Centers of Excellence be approved?**

**A:** It is anticipated that some schools have existing programs that, with some enhancements and additional support to meet the Center of Excellence criteria, will be able to request initial designation as a Center of Excellence on or about January 2008.

**Q: What support and resources will be available to schools?**

**A:** The office of workforce education will provide technical assistance, financial support for teacher certification training and testing, and curriculum and program support to assist schools in achieving Center of Excellence designation. The office of workforce education and WorkNet Pinellas will work with school teams to support their development and implementation of a Center of Excellence. Additionally, the Certification Committee will work to enlist local and regional business support for individual Center of Excellence programs. Data from an independent study commissioned by WorkNet Pinellas will serve as a source of information to schools when available.

**Q: What type of training will be required of teachers in a Center of Excellence?**

**A:** In order for a program to be designated a Center of Excellence, teachers will be required to obtain appropriate industry certification and/or credentialing in addition to the regular requirements to maintain their teaching certificate. The office of workforce education will provide resources and assist teachers in identifying appropriate certifications and in working to achieve those certifications.

**Q: Does a career technical program first have to be a career academy to be considered as a Center of Excellence?**

**A:** No. As part of a comprehensive career technical program delivery system, we anticipate continuing to have career technical programs, career academies and Centers of Excellence. Career academies are eligible to apply for Center of Excellence designation if they have the ability to meet the criteria.

**Q: What is the deadline for having a Center of Excellence in my school?**

**A:** The superintendent has set 2010-2011 school year as the year in which all schools will have a program that has achieved Center of Excellence designation. However, a school must include language relating to a planned Center of Excellence in its 2007-08 School Improvement Plan.

**Q: Where may schools get more information?**

**A:** You may contact:

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