

Innovative Education Pilot Program

2026-2027 Application Cover Page

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Applications proposing an innovative education pilot program must be submitted by the board of education of a school district, the governing board of an educational service center, or the administrative authority of a chartered nonpublic school.

IRN: _____ County: _____

Entity Name: _____

Entity Address: _____

Superintendent/Building Leader: _____

Who should the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce contact with questions regarding the application? This person also will receive the official decision notice.

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Did the district, school, or educational service center apply for the Innovative Education Pilot Program in SY 2025-2026? _____
2. Did the district, school, or educational service center receive a waiver? _____
3. Did the district, school, or educational service center submit an end-of-year report for its most recent Innovative Education Pilot Program initiative or waiver? (This may be attached to this application)
4. For applications submitted by the board of education of a school district, is this a districtwide request?
 - If not districtwide, please provide the building name(s) and IRN below.
 - Building Name(s): _____
 - Building IRN(s): _____
5. Does the district, /school, or educational service center employ teachers under a collective bargaining agreement? _____
 - If yes, please provide the written consent of the teachers' employee representative.

PROJECT SUMMARY REQUIREMENTS

The project summary must include, but is not limited to, the following:

1. A detailed description of the proposed Innovative Education Pilot Program, including how the program meets the Department's definition of innovation. "Innovation" means a new, experimental or disruptive educational approach that is developed based on an identified need and seeks continuous improvement in student achievement or student growth. An innovative educational approach is not expected to be evidence-based; however, it should be workable, and it must be tested and evaluated over time to gauge effectiveness.
2. A description of the measurable outcomes, performance indicators, and method of evaluation of the Innovative Education Pilot Program.
3. A description of the anticipated cost or savings associated with the Innovative Education Pilot Program, if any.
4. A description of the specific timelines for planning, implementation, and evaluation of the Innovative Education Pilot Program.
5. A list of the specific statutory provisions and/or rules for which an exemption request is made.
6. The specific rationale for each exemption request.
7. The specific period of time for which each exemption is requested.
8. The potential impact of the proposed Innovative Education Pilot Program on data reporting, student assessments, student learning, graduation requirements, compliance with federal law and/or any other areas that may be impacted.
9. A description of what will happen if the proposed pilot program fails.
10. A disclosure of whether the applicant currently is subject to any corrective action plan by the Department or State Board of Education.
11. A description of the high-quality professional development activities, as defined by standards for professional development adopted by the State Board of Education, which are available on the Department's website, if the application requests an exemption in order to provide professional development for educators.
12. A description of any professional development or training activities that staff will engage in to best ensure that the exemption is delivered with fidelity.

Application Process

A. Timeline

Application Materials Posted	September 15, 2025
Application Deadline	November 1, 2025, at 5:00 p.m.
Evaluation of Applications	November 1 – December 1, 2025
Notice of Exemption Approved/Not Approved	Early 2026

B. Application Requirements

The Department requires the following be included with the application:

- Completed Cover Page;
- Project Summary (should be no longer than five pages);
- Written consent of the teachers' employee representative (if applicable).

Incomplete or missing information may result in disapproval of the application.

C. Submission Instructions

Applicants must submit the Innovative Education Pilot Program application as a single PDF document containing all required application materials. Application materials must be submitted by email to IEPP@education.ohio.gov no later than 5:00 p.m. on November 1st, 2025.

D. Review Process

The review process consists of two levels: Preliminary Legal Review and Content Expert Evaluation. The Preliminary Legal Review consists of reviewing the application against the criteria outlined in the Primary Legal Review section of the Evaluation Rubric. If the application does not meet all the requirements in the Preliminary Legal Review, the application will not proceed to the Content Expert Evaluation.

All complete and timely submissions that proceed to Content Expert Evaluation will be evaluated by Department employees. The Content Expert Evaluation consists of reviewing the application against the criteria outlined in the Evaluation Rubric using the scoring categories. Each question must receive a minimum rating of Adequately Developed, or two points, to be considered for exemption approval. If Question 11 is determined not applicable to the application, there is no requirement for the question to receive a minimum rating to be considered for exemption approval.

After the review is completed, the Director of Education and Workforce will approve or disapprove the application in accordance with standards for approval adopted by the Department.

E. Notification of Exemption

The Department will notify applicants by email if their application is approved or disapproved. The contact person listed on the cover page of the application will receive notification by December 31, 2025.

F. Annual Report

Each entity receiving an exemption is required to submit to the Department an annual report containing such information as may reasonably be necessary to evaluate whether the objectives of the pilot program are being met in accordance with the Ohio Administrative Code 3301-46-01(G). The deadline to submit an innovation report for the 2026-2027 school year is May 14, 2028, to IEPP@education.ohio.gov.

Applications to continue previously approved innovative education pilot programs will not be considered complete unless an evaluation report is completed and attached to the application.

Evaluation Rubric

Preliminary Legal Review

- The applicant is a school district, governing board of an educational service center, or administrative authority of a chartered nonpublic school.
- If the applicant employs teachers under a collective bargaining agreement, the written consent of the teachers' employee representative is included with the application in accordance with Ohio Revised Code 3302.07(A).
- The proposed program requires a waiver from a statutory provision or rule and that statutory provision or rule is specified in the application.
- The requested exemption is limited to a requirement in Title XXXIII of the Ohio Revised Code or a rule adopted thereunder, and the requested exemption is not for a requirement in or a rule adopted pursuant to Chapters 3307, 3309, 3323, or sections 3302.41, 3302.42, 3319.07 to 3319.21 of the Ohio Revised Code.
- The requested exemption is not for any Operating Standard adopted under (B)(2) or (D) of section 3301.07 of the Ohio Revised Code.
- The application includes the following in accordance with Ohio Administrative Code 3301-46-01(C) and (D):
 - A detailed description of the proposed innovative pilot program, including how the program meets the Department's definition of innovation;
 - Measurable outcomes, performance indicators, and method of evaluation;
 - Anticipated costs or savings associated with the program, if any;
 - Specific timelines for planning, implementation, and evaluation;
 - Identification of the specific statutory provisions and/or rules for which an exemption request is made;
 - Rationale for each exemption request;
 - Specific period of time for which each exemption is requested;
 - The potential impact of the proposed innovative pilot program on data reporting, student assessments, student learning, graduation requirements, compliance with federal law, and/or any other areas that may be impacted;
 - A description of what will happen if the proposed pilot program fails;
 - A disclosure of whether the applicant currently is subject to any corrective action plan by the department or the state board of education; and, if applicable,
 - A description of the high-quality professional development activities, as defined by standards for professional development adopted by the State Board of Education, which are available on the Department's website, if the application requests an exemption in order to provide professional development for educators.
- The application was timely submitted in accordance with the Department's established application deadline.
- If the application is a continuation application, the school district, educational service center, or chartered nonpublic school seeking continuation of a previously granted exemption timely

submitted a completed annual report to the Department in accordance with Ohio Administrative Code 3301-46-01(G) and attached the report to the application.

Notes: _____

Reviewed by: _____ Date: _____

To be approved, the application must meet all the requirements in the Preliminary Legal Review. Applications that meet all Preliminary Legal Review requirements will proceed to the Content Expert Evaluation.

Approved Not Approved

Name: _____ Title: _____

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Content Expert Evaluation

The Content Expert Evaluation uses the following scoring categories to evaluate the completeness and strength of an application across multiple requirements. Each element will be scored according to the following categories:

Not Applicable (N/A) – Only questions 3 and 11 can be considered “not applicable.” Questions 1 through 10 shall be rated on a scale of 0 to 4, as outlined below.

Not Addressed/0 points – The response lacks the required information.

Poorly Developed/1 point – The response is significantly incomplete, missing required information, or otherwise raises substantial concerns about the viability of the plan or the applicant’s capacity to execute it.

Adequately Developed/2 points – The response meets the requirements of the criteria but contains substantial gaps.

Well Developed/3 points – The response meets the established criteria, but it requires additional information, explanation, or detail.

Fully Developed/4 points – The response demonstrates the applicant’s thorough understanding of key issues via specific and accurate information. The response presents a clear, realistic picture of how the applicant expects to operate using the requested waiver and inspires confidence in the applicant’s capacity to execute the plan effectively.

#	Criteria	Score					
		N/A	0	1	2	3	4
1	A detailed description of the proposed innovative pilot program, including how the program meets the Department’s definition of innovation. OAC 3301-46-01(C)(1).						
2	Measurable outcomes, performance indicators, and method of evaluation. OAC 3301-46-01(C)(2).						
3	Anticipated costs or savings associated with the program, if any. OAC 3301-46-01(C)(3).						
4	Specific timelines for planning, implementation, and evaluation. OAC 3301-46-01(C)(4)						
5	Identification of the specific statutory provisions and/or rules for which an exemption request is made. OAC 3301-46-01(C)(5)						

6	Rationale for each exemption request. OAC 3301-46-01(C)(6).						
7	Specific period of time for which each exemption is requested. OAC 3301-46-01(C)(7).						
8	The potential impact of the proposed innovative pilot program on data reporting, student assessments, student learning, graduation requirements, compliance with federal law, and/or any other areas that may be impacted. OAC 3301-46-01(C)(8)						
9	A description of what will happen if the proposed pilot program fails. OAC 3301-46-01(C)(9).						
10	A disclosure of whether the applicant is currently subject to any corrective action plan by the Department (or, prior to October 3, 2023, State Board of Education). OAC 3301-46-01(C)(10).						
11	<p>If an application requests an exemption to provide professional development for educators, the application must contain high quality professional development activities as defined by standards for professional development adopted by the State Board of Education, which are available on the Department's website. OAC 3301-46-01(D).</p> <p>a. <input type="checkbox"/> Learning Communities: Professional learning occurs within learning communities committed to continuous improvement, collective responsibility, and goal alignment.</p> <p>b. <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership: Professional learning demonstrates skilled teacher leaders and administrators who develop capacity and advocate and create support systems for professional learning.</p> <p>c. <input type="checkbox"/> Resources: Professional learning demonstrates prioritizing, monitoring, and coordinating resources for educator learning.</p> <p>d. <input type="checkbox"/> Data: Professional learning demonstrates the use of a variety of sources and types of student, educator, and system data to plan, assess, and evaluate professional learning</p> <p>e. <input type="checkbox"/> Learning Designs: Professional learning integrates theories, research, and models of human learning to achieve its intended</p>						

	<p>outcomes.</p> <p>f. <input type="checkbox"/> Implementation: Professional learning applies research on change and sustains support for implementation of professional learning.</p> <p>g. <input type="checkbox"/> Outcomes: Professional learning aligns outcomes with educator performance and student curriculum standards.</p>						
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Reviewer Signature: _____ Date: _____

Reviewer Signature: _____ Date: _____

Reviewer Signature: _____ Date: _____

Notes/Requests for Supplemental Information:

Each question must receive a minimum rating of Adequately Developed, or two points, to be considered for exemption approval. If Question 3 or Question 11 is determined not applicable to the application, there is no requirement for the question to receive a minimum rating to be considered for exemption approval.

- Approved
- Not Approved