



Continuing Education Made Easy—and Relevant—for Kentucky’s K–12 Teachers

How an on-the-job rank change program is helping Kentucky’s school districts boost teacher recruitment and retention.

In an effort to attract and retain teachers, school districts across the country are exploring new ways to offer support, advancement, and professional development to their staff. In Kentucky, one exciting approach comes in the form of the Foundations of Teaching and Learning Continuing Education Option (CEO) Plan II. Districts across the state are signing on to offer this groundbreaking alternative to typical teacher continuing education and making a name for themselves as districts of choice for the state’s top teaching talent.

In partnership with the Kentucky Educational Development Corporation (KEDC), the Western Kentucky Educational Cooperative (WKEC), and the Northern Kentucky Cooperative for Educational Services (NKCES), BloomBoard developed the Foundations of Teaching and Learning CEO Plan II program for teachers to achieve rank change. This accessible, high-quality offering enables Kentucky teachers to earn a rank change and salary increase through flexible, on-the-job courses and gives them a way to advance their careers on their own timeline and budget—all key factors in the program’s early success and growth.



Celebrating graduates in Nelson County Schools.

“Project-Based Learning at Its Finest”: Teachers Weigh In

The overwhelmingly positive participant feedback speaks for itself. In a recent survey of Kentucky educators who completed the program, 92% were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the level of learning through the program’s process. The participants also had great feedback on the program’s support services, both from their BloomBoard coach and their program mentor.

9 out of 10 participants say they’d recommend the Foundations of Teaching and Learning CEO Plan II program to a friend or colleague.

“The CEO program is project-based learning at its finest,” said Lori Steward, a certified school manager in Union County Public Schools. “Each component of the program involves specific rubrics, guidelines for success, collaboration, excellent support systems, meaningful activities, and real-world application. The knowledge from the courses will forever be beneficial to my teaching practice.”

Emma Chapman, a teacher in the Berea Independent School District, agrees. “I loved how easy it was to complete the program while teaching. Each project-based learning course I took was very relevant to my teaching—and as an elective teacher, I also appreciated that the program was suited to my content area.”

The pace and sequence of the program were especially meaningful to participants. “The best part of the program was that it was self-paced. I could complete things as I had time or as it fit into my curriculum,” says Amanda Leatherman, technology coordinator in Boone County Schools.

The fact that the program aligns to teachers’ daily classroom routine and lessons is also a plus. “I could work on it at school, and it didn’t feel like it was extra work on top of my already busy schedule,” said teacher Lisa Hurd from Lincoln County Schools.



Signing ceremony for Christian County Schools educators.

A Closer Look at the Program

The Foundations of Teaching and Learning CEO Plan II program is approved by Kentucky's Educational Professional Standards Board as a qualified rank change vehicle. Educators can complete the program in 12 months to four years, depending on the participant's pace. Teachers who successfully complete the program will earn a rank change (from Level III to II or Level II to I), and the appropriate salary advancement, that is honored in all public and private school districts across the state.

Once a teacher registers for the program, they are assigned a BloomBoard coach and a local mentor. Program support includes a kick-off orientation with the program facilitator and the other educators in their cohort, 1:1 coaching for the duration of the program, and asynchronous discussion opportunities with their cohort through the BloomBoard platform.

Participants first work through the 12 core courses of the program, which focus on topics such as classroom management, assessment literacy, and instructional strategies. After they complete those foundations, teachers select other program courses based on their professional interests and goals, with blended learning, learning recovery, social-emotional learning, and STEM among the topics.



**Marshall County Schools
signing ceremony.**

Much of the coursework is conveniently job-embedded, a feature that benefits teachers and students. Educators demonstrate mastery of the program subjects by showing what they know within the context of their own classrooms, which makes the learning relevant and immediately applicable.

The final piece of the program is a capstone project, where an educator identifies an area for improvement within their own learning environment—such as project-based learning or SEL instruction—and works to complete additional parts of the course portfolio related to addressing the issue.

A Better Future for Kentucky's Schools, Teachers, and Students

The Foundations of Teaching and Learning CEO Plan II program has proven to be so compelling that over a dozen Kentucky school districts are recruiting and paying for their teachers to complete it. In exchange for this investment, participants are committing to stay in the district for up to 10 years upon completion.

The benefit of the program can be summed up simply: when districts invest in teachers, everybody wins. Career growth opportunities are motivating, and motivated teachers have better outcomes in the classroom. By providing an authentic, accessible way for teachers to advance their careers and earn more money, Kentucky districts are ensuring their staff continues to feel motivated to grow their skills, help their students succeed, and remain in the district. Joe Henderson, Superintendent of Mayfield Independent Schools, agrees, saying “High-quality teachers are one of the most important indicators of student achievement, and we’re committed to ensuring we develop qualified educators to lead our students.”



Marshall County Schools signing ceremony.

To learn more about the Foundations of Teaching and Learning CEO Plan II program, visit

<https://bloomboard.com/program/ky-rank-change/>