



LEA Comprehensive Support and Improvement Competitive Grants Application Cover Sheet

LEA Information		
LEA/State Charter Name: Rio Rancho Public Schools		LEA NCES ID #: 083
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LEA will Apply for the Following Eligible School(s)		
Name of School	School NCES ID #	Proposed Intervention Model
Independence High School	083013	Check & Connect

CSI RFA Application

Proposal Requirements

1. The proposal narrative should **not exceed 50 pages** (not including required charts, forms, and requested artifacts submitted as appendices).
2. It should be typed, single-spaced, with LEAs addressing each of the subsections by entering text where indicated.
3. Font may NOT be less than 12 pt. Times New Roman.
4. Charts and forms do not require 12 pt. Times New Roman font.
5. The complete LEA application including budgets, charts, and forms will be posted on the PED ESSA webpage.

LEA Comprehensive Support and Improvement Competitive Grants Application

LEA Name:	Rio Rancho Public Schools
Submitting on Behalf of (name of school):	Independence High School
Number of Students Served:	189
Number of Certified Licensed Staff:	16 including administrators, teachers, counselor and social worker

I. LEA Organizational Culture

A. LEA Overview

Describe the comprehensive needs assessment process that was used to identify needs and performance challenges in the district, to determine root causes, and set priorities for future action.

In recent years the district has undertaken several comprehensive needs analysis processes. In SY15-16, the Darden/Curry Partnership for Leaders in Education (PLE) from the University of Virginia conducted interviews and focus groups with representative district administrators, members of the Board of Education, principals, and teachers in order to determine the district’s preparedness to successfully execute and sustain a successful continuous improvement initiative. This needs analysis focused on leadership, differentiated support and accountability, talent management, and effective instructional infrastructure. Although the PLE team found that “RRPS is primed to begin a successful transformation initiative”, the district ultimately decided to address the identified gaps without formally joining Cohort 13.

The district also undertook a comprehensive strategic planning process in SY15-16. Based on focus groups with students, parents, business community members, teachers, and administrators, a profile of a graduate was developed. This profile enumerates the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that students should possess in order to be successful after high school. The district then refined its mission, vision, overarching goals, and targeted outcomes in order to help students graduate as responsible, ethical, and productive citizens equipped with a solid foundation for individual success. The strategic plan focuses on ensuring a guaranteed and viable curriculum within a technology rich environment; increasing and maintaining the capacity of the district to meet the social and emotional needs of students; recruiting, inducting, and retaining quality employees; engaging with all stakeholders; and improving processes in order to improve communication and increase efficiency through fact-based decision making, process management, and planning.

Since SY15-16 the district has been diligently working to address identified gaps and achieve the prioritized goals.

Describe the results of a systematic review of existing LEA capacity, strengths, and needs related to curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

Performance Challenges

The PLE team from the University of Virginia found that the components of an effective curriculum are in place, that collaboration time and foundational structures have been developed, that the district has an effective common interim assessment, and the district has demonstrated the capacity to create rigorous and aligned assessments. The report stated, “the district has created a rigorous and aligned curriculum and has provided teachers with the training and professional development required to implement it effectively”. However, the team recommended that the district more clearly articulate expectations for planning instruction and developing a system for monitoring implementation. Furthermore, the team recommended improving the district’s data management system and providing data literacy training.

Root Causes:

The district has identified three primary Root Causes from this analysis:

- There is a need for whole-district focus and urgency on school improvement;
- Common Core curriculum needs to be consistently implemented and requires continual maintenance; and
- Schools do not have ready-access to data or the knowledge and skills to use data for continuous improvement.

Priorities for Action:

As a result of this needs analysis, the district has been focusing on the following for the past two years:

- District leadership organization that is focused on school improvement;
- Consistently implemented high-quality Common Core curriculum;
- Easily accessible data for school improvement; and
- Capacity-building in the use of data for continuous improvement.

RRPS has undertaken a comprehensive process to restructure supports provided to schools in order to ensure comprehensive improvement. This includes the creation of a cabinet position focused on school improvement, the creation of a position dedicated to data use for continuous improvement, and the assembly of a team of district and school leaders to provide comprehensive service provision and capacity-building toward a singular end: supporting schools in the changing of adult behavior to bolster improved outcomes for students.

RRPS has transitioned from the prior data and assessment system to the Illuminate data management system to provide on-demand data access to all instructional staff. Through this system, teachers are able to access comprehensive information about student performance on formative, interim and summative student performance with a few clicks of the mouse. This on-

demand access allows teachers to engage in instruction-focused planning that is geared toward closing gaps in student performance.

RRPS recognizes that having data is only the first step in continuous improvement—school leaders and teachers must have processes to analyze those data and implement instructional changes. Therefore, RRPS created a position specifically geared toward working with school staffs to build capacity around:

- Analyzing data to determine areas of focus, and student strengths and weaknesses;
- Setting ambitious and attainable growth targets;
- Articulating action steps;
- Establishing progress indicators; and
- Determining challenges and success.

B. Instructional Infrastructure

Instructional Materials: Describe the process used to ensure that grade level scopes and sequences align with the Common Core State Standards for ELA/Reading and math.

The PLE from UVA stated in 2015, “The district has done a great job creating effective curriculum aligned to the Common Core standards. Most districts across the country have not adjusted as quickly and comprehensively as Rio Rancho to more rigorous standards... There are frameworks in place for mathematics and reading at the secondary level and the team is working to create them for the elementary schools. The interviewees also referenced the great work of the transition teams and praised the district for its intentional efforts to prepare for the new state curriculum implementation.”

Since 2015 the district has continued to work with instructional leaders and teacher teams to ensure that staff members understand the CCSS standards and instructional shifts. Curriculum and Instruction staff partnered with the University of Texas Dana Center to build RRPS’s scope and sequence for all grade levels in Math and ELA. This process resulted in comprehensive alignment to CCSS and adoption of high quality curriculum and instructional materials. This led the district to use Eureka for K-12 Tier 1 mathematics and ReadyGen, My Perspectives, and Springboard ELA for Tier 1 ELA to ensure that classroom instruction is aligned to the rigor of the standards and the PARCC accountability assessment.

Professional development is provided yearly to ensure that teachers understand the scope and sequence of these curricula, and teachers engage in on-going examinations of student work during collaborative time to ensure that students are making progress toward the grade-level expectations of the CCSS in ELA and Mathematics.

Instruction: Describe the system of support and accountability for teachers and leaders in implementing rigorous standards-aligned instruction.

System of Support:

RRPS's Curriculum and Instruction Department supports the implementation of rigorous standards-aligned instruction via a multi-pronged approach:

- Whole-group professional development: training for teachers and principals on the implementation of curriculum is offered multiple times per year ensuring that all teachers receive comprehensive training in adopted curriculum.
- Small-group, school-based training: C & I coaches provide targeted, needs-based professional development to schools and/or grade level teams in the implementation of curriculum on an as-needed basis.
- School-based coaching: the district has four district-based coaches dedicated to providing site-based professional development and coaching to schools in ELA, Math, and Science, four district-based coaches to provide professional development and coaching in ELA and Math in elementary schools, and two district-based coaches to provide support in meeting the students with diverse needs in both elementary and secondary schools.
- Convening of grading practices workshops: at the secondary level, senior C & I staff work with teachers to ensure that course grades are reflective of Common Core grade-level expectations.

RRPS's Research, Assessment, Data, and Accountability (RADA) Department ensures that teachers have real-time access to formative and interim assessment data through vehicles such as the Illuminate Data Dashboard System, as well as on-demand capacity building help in the implementation of continuous improvement through the NM DASH.

Accountability:

RRPS has traditionally performed reasonably well on measures of student achievement. However, not content with current performance, the district created the position of Chief School Improvement Officer in 2016 to lead accountability and improvement efforts district-wide. The Chief School Improvement Officer (Evan Grasser) provides direct supervision to school principals, and oversees the implementation of the NM DASH process; school visits are gradually being tailored to address the following components:

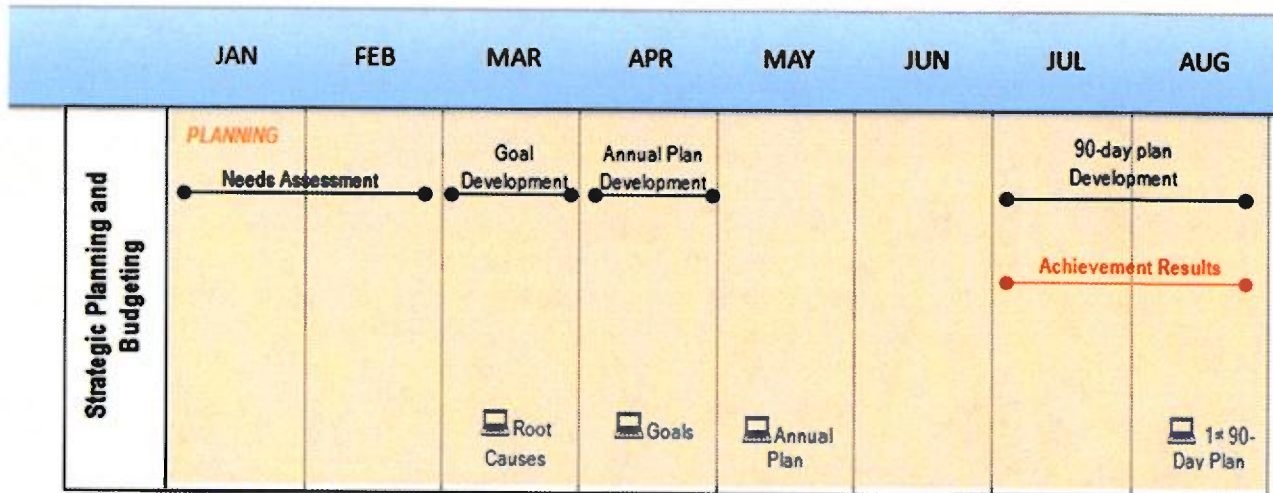
- How has the school implemented its NM DASH action steps?
- What successes and challenges is the school experiencing?
- How is the school using data to improve instruction?
- How can district resources be better mobilized to support these school-based improvement efforts?
- What assistance do school leaders need in supporting improved teaching?

Assessment: Describe the LEA's cycle of data-driven instruction. Identify the interim assessments being used.

RRPS is in the process of building capacity for and implementing a comprehensive system of data-driven instruction, utilizing the NM DASH process. This process includes:

1. Establishment of a school-level Core Team that has full representation of instructional leaders from grade levels and the community.
2. Establishment of ambitious, SMART improvement goals on summative assessments in ELA and Math (PARCC); as well as interim goals based on interim assessments like Istation and NWEA Measures of Academic Progress as well as curriculum-based (Ready Gen, Springboard and Eureka) interim assessments that are tightly aligned to summative goals.
3. Selection of highest-leverage focus areas that are directly derived from deep quantitative and qualitative data analysis and engage all instructional staff.
4. Implementation of Root Cause analysis that establishes a clear hypothesis for each focus area, and have been generated via examination of instruction, thoughtful data analysis and are supported by quantitative and qualitative data.
5. Creation of outcomes that are focused on changes in adult behavior that are specifically designed to improve academic achievement for students. Outcomes are paired with action steps that are connected to underlying root causes, have a task leader, and a clear identification of timelines and resources necessary to complete them.
6. Establishment of both process and outcome progress indicators that allow school teams and central office to review progress every 30, 60 and 90 days, make potential adjustments and monitor implementation and timelines.

RRPS is aligning its work to the timeline established by NM PED in the implementation of this process:



Source: NMPED.

All schools are engaged in the NM DASH process and have implemented that process as a primary method of continuous improvement. All schools have a designated NM DASH Core

Team and Professional Learning Community (PLC) time to examine data and revise instruction to meet student needs. In addition, the district has expanded the capacity of schools to examine formative, interim and summative assessments through the expanded use of the Illuminate data dashboard system.

As illustrated above, this cycle begins at the end of the spring semester. During this time, school leadership teams meet to discuss End-of-Year interim assessment data, ascertain which components of the previous year's plan were successful, which should be amended for the following year, re-set focus areas and instructional priorities for the annual NM DASH plan for the following school year. In August, teams reconvene to amend plans based on PARCC outcomes. Teams meet monthly to review action steps, and conduct a plus/delta analysis of which instructional amendments are improving student learning, and which need revisions. At the end of the fall semester, schools undertake a deep examination of the first half of the year, and make any necessary amendments.

RRPS utilizes curriculum-based formative assessments in ELA and Math provided by Eureka, Springboard, My Perspectives, and Ready Gen. Formative assessments are provided with each curriculum module.

RRPS utilizes NWEA Measures of Academic Progress as an interim assessment in ELA and Math in grades K-8 as well as the Istation interim assessment for reading foundational skills in grades K-3. In high school, departments utilize a variety of measures including PARCC released items and district-created end-of-semester exams to determine student progress toward proficiency. Interim assessments are conducted three times per year.

Describe the process used to ensure that interim assessments align with the Common Core State Standards and each grade level's scope and sequence.

When the CCSS were adopted, NWEA tasked a team of content experts to analyze existing items in their item bank and cull those that were not fully aligned to the CCSS. They identified gaps in the item bank and commissioned that new items be developed that were written specifically for the CCSS. Reports provide data in the following reporting categories for students in grades K-2: Foundational Skills, Language and Writing, Literature and Informational Text, Vocabulary Use and Functions, Operations and Algebraic Thinking, Numbers and Operations, Measurement and Data and Geometry. Reports provide data in the following reporting categories for students in grades 3-8: Literary Text: Key Ideas and Details, Literary Text: Language, Craft, and Structure, Informational Text: Key Ideas and Details, Informational Text: Language, Craft, and Structure, Vocabulary: Acquisition and Use, Operations and Algebraic Thinking, Number and Operations, Measurement and Data, and Geometry. In addition to these reporting categories, teachers can drill down to specific standards and the skills that underpin these standards.

NWEA has conducted linking studies that connect a student's score on the MAP assessment with the probability of being proficient on the PARCC assessment. The reports predict the probable distribution of performance levels on PARCC based on the fall, winter, or spring NWEA score (if the district does not accelerate its instruction). The district has found in prior years that the predicted distribution and the actual distribution are closely correlated.