

Request for Applications

Funds to purchase equipment and software to implement automated text messaging systems

Eligible Entities:

NM School Districts

and

State-Chartered Charter Schools

RFA release date: July 16, 2018

Deadline to submit application: August 10, 2018

Submit application to: Julia.anderson@state.nm.us

**INFORMATION AND PURPOSE: HB2 (118)**

Research demonstrates that families holding high expectations for students correlates with positive impacts on student achievement. Empowering families with current, student-specific information enables parents to better engage with schools and support their educational outcomes\*.

House Bill 2, adopted in the 2018 legislative session, allocates $300,000 *“to purchase equipment and software for automated text messaging systems in school districts or state-chartered charter schools statewide that notify parents of high school student absences and tests.”*

This allocation was approved in the 2018 legislative session and signed by Governor Martinez on March 7, 2018. For the full text, visit: <https://nmlegis.gov/Sessions/18%20Regular/final/HB0002.pdf>

Prospective applicants with questions should contact Julia Anderson, Deputy Director, at [julia.anderson@state.nm.us](mailto:julia.anderson@state.nm.us).

An electronic copy of this RfA can be obtained here: <http://ped.state.nm.us/ped/rfps.html.>

The completed application must contain original signatures and be submitted by mail. The application must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. Friday, August 10, 2018.

**SUBMISSION ADDRESS:**

Mail original application with required signatures to:

NM Public Education Department

Policy, Innovation and Measurement

Attn: Julia Anderson

300 Don Gaspar

Santa Fe, NM 87501

\* Catsambis, S. (1998). Expanding the Knowledge of Parental Involvement in Secondary Education: Effects on High School Academic Success.

**COVER PAGE**

**School District / State Charter Name:**

Mailing Address:

***\*\*****Please ensure two contacts are listed below.* ***The primary and secondary contacts must be two different individuals.*** *Applications without two contacts will not be considered.****\*\****

1. Superintendent / Charter Director Name:

Phone:

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Application Contact Name:

Phone:

Email:

**Total amount of funding requested for equipment and software for automated text messaging systems:**

$

As District Superintendent or Charter School Administrator, I verify the information in this application is correct. I assure the funds, if awarded, will be used as described herein.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Superintendent/Charter Director (printed name) | Phone number |
|  |  |
| Superintendent/Charter Director Signature (blue ink) | Date |

**APPLICATION**

**Please provide specific responses to each item.**

1. Please list the high school(s) in which your district plans to utilize these funds for automated text messaging and the projected enrollment at each school for SY 2018-19.
2. Describe current modes of communication with parents. What challenges currently exist with these modes? How will these funds address these challenges?
3. State how often your district plans to text parents and who will be responsible for setting up and managing the system. Describe how information will be managed at the school site to ensure timely and accurate communication regarding absences and upcoming assessments.
4. Briefly explain how your district plans to use the requested funds to implement automated text messaging systems in order to notify parents of high school students about absences and tests.
5. Describe opt-out procedures for parents declining to receive text messages.

6. On the budget form below, provide a detailed line-item budget and narrative justification for requested funding.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Description** | **Itemized Costs and Justification** | **Total Amount** |
| Equipment (list types and quantity) |  |  |
| Software (list type) |  |  |
| Total Amount Requested: $ | | |

**APPLICATION TIMELINE**

Release of Application…………………………………………………………………………….. July 16, 2018

Deadline to Submit Application………………………………………………………………. August 10, 2018

Award Notification……………………………………….………………………………………… August 24, 2018

**SCORING RUBRIC**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Criteria** | **Maximum possible** | **Points earned** |
| Specific Schools Identified | **2 points** |  |
| Clearly articulated need for improved parent communication | **10 points** |  |
| Clear plan for managing automated text messaging system and flow of information regarding tests and absences | **10 points** |  |
| Allowable use of funds | **10 points** |  |
| Budget items sufficient to implement automated system | **5 points** |  |
| Clear opt-out provisions and procedures | **3 points** |  |
|  |  | **/40 possible points** |

**EXAMPLE COVER PAGE**

**School District / State Charter Name:** Example District

Mailing Address: 300 Don Gaspar Ave. Santa Fe, NM 87505

***\*\*****Please ensure two contacts are listed below.* ***The primary and secondary contacts must be two different individuals.*** *Applications without two contacts will not be considered.****\*\****

1. Superintendent / Charter Director Name: Superintendent Gary Chalmers

Phone: 505-555-1234

Email: gary@ilovebooks.edu

1. Application Contact Name: Principal Seymour Skinner

Phone: 505-555-5678

Email: seymour@schools.net

**Total amount of funding requested for equipment and software for automated text messaging systems:**

$ 8,356.35

As District Superintendent or Charter School Administrator, I verify the information in this application is correct. I assure the funds, if awarded, will be used as described herein.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Superintendent/Charter Director (printed name) | Phone number |
|  |  |
| Superintendent/Charter Director Signature (blue ink) | Date |

**APPLICATION**

**Please provide specific responses to each item.**

1. Please list the high school(s) in which your district plans to utilize these funds for automated text messaging and the projected enrollment at each school for SY 2018-19.

Love of Learning High – 300 students

Books are the Best High – 380 students

Bookworm High – 410 students

1. Describe current modes of communication with parents. What challenges currently exist with these modes? How will these funds address these challenges?

Currently, our high school teachers use varied and inconsistent ways of communicating about tests and absences to parents. Some teachers call, others email. A few teachers are able to text. Some teachers lack time to communicate regularly with parents about assessments and absences.

Current challenges include varied and inconsistent means of communication and teachers lacking time to communicate with parents.

These funds will allow our district to purchase software and equipment that will lead to much more uniformity and clear, consistent communication between high school staff and parents of high school students. By automating communication methods, teachers and district staff will save time and communicate with parents more regularly.

1. State how often your district plans to text parents and who will be responsible for setting up and managing the system. Describe how information will be managed at the school site to ensure timely and accurate communication regarding absences and upcoming assessments.

Upcoming standardized tests – one month before then again one week before test

Classroom tests – at teacher’s discretion, district will recommend one week before test

Absences - daily when students are marked absent

Attendance data and standardized test messages will be managed by the SIS coordinator at each high school. The software we plan to use can link to the SIS database and send attendance messages automatically. The SIS coordinator will also work with the test coordinator to automate reminders about standardized tests by linking back to student grade level in the SIS.

1. Briefly explain how your district plans to use the requested funds to implement automated text messaging systems in order to notify parents of high school students about absences and tests.

We plan to subscribe to Sir Text-a-Lot SMS services. The monthly subscription will include unlimited automated messages for up to 1200 phone numbers.

We also plan to purchase smart phones for SIS coordinators and teachers at each high school. These phones will allow them to access and use the texting services.

By providing teachers and district staff the opportunity to easily communicate with parents about student assessments and attendance, we will better engage parents, and, in turn, positively impact outcomes for our students. We anticipate positive outcomes in both student attendance and assessment results.

1. Describe opt-out procedures for parents declining to receive text messages.

The software our district plans to purchase with these funds includes an opt-out feature; parents simply reply “STOP” and are automatically added to an account-wide “do not text” list.

District staff also has the option to add parents to the list manually.

6. On the budget form below, provide a detailed line item-budget and narrative justification for requested funding.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Description** | **Itemized Costs and Justification** | **Total Amount** |
| Equipment (list types and quantity)  Texty brand smart phones  3 for SIS coordinators  70 for teachers | 73 phones for district staff (SIS coordinators and teachers) to access and use automated texting software.  $79.95 per Texty brand phone x 73 | $5,836.35 |
| Software (list type)  Sir Text-a-Lot SMS Subscription x 12 months | We plan to purchase a monthly subscription plan for unlimited texting to up to 1200 phone numbers. $210 per month x 12 months | $2,520.00 |
| Total Amount Requested: $ 8,356.35 | | |