Request for Application (RFA) on the New Mexico

Computer Science Professional Learning (NM CS PL) K–8 Grant Program

I. PURPOSE OF THIS REQUEST FOR APPLICATION (RFA)

This RFA is designed to promote innovation in the critical area of computer science by expanding access to high quality computer science course work for New Mexico students in grades K–8. Up to **five hundred thousand dollars ($500,000.00)** in competitive grants are available to New Mexico public school districts, local-charter or state-chartered charter schools, institutions of higher education (including community colleges), and regional educational cooperatives to:

1) Support professional learning on the conceptual foundations of computer science for K–8 public school teachers.

2) Expand existing, standards-based computer science programs in New Mexico public K–8 school districts or state-chartered charter schools, including mentoring and coaching.

3) Develop a plan to establish a new, standards-based computer science program, including mentoring and coaching.

4) Provide support for K–8 public school teachers to enroll or who are enrolled in a credentialed computer science program or course.

II. NEW MEXICO PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (PED) VISION

Provide a culturally, linguistically responsive education to ALL students in New Mexico to prepare them socially, emotionally, and academically for success in college, career, and life.

III. LEVEL OF FUNDING

Funding shall not exceed five hundred thousand dollars ($500,000.00) for fiscal year 2022. Grant amounts will be determined by each entity's grant application. The full amount may be awarded to multiple applicants or a combination of applicants submitting a single application. Any funds not expended by June 30, 2022 shall be reverted to the PED and will not be permitted to carry over to subsequent years. Current and continued funding for this project is dependent upon annual legislative appropriations. **Grant requests shall not exceed $50,000.00.**

IV. ALLOWABLE USE OF FUNDS

Purpose: Support professional learning on the conceptual foundations of computer science for K–8 public school teachers.

> Funds may be used for professional learning tuition, fees, training program costs, and professional learning books and materials for the teachers receiving training.

Purpose: Expand existing, standards-based computer science programs in New Mexico public schools districts or state-chartered charter schools, including mentoring and coaching.

> Funds may be used to pay teacher stipends when attending planning meetings or professional learning sessions. Funds may be used to contract with mentors or coaches with computer science expertise to work with schools on the development of a new computer science course to offer students or to assist with expansion of current computer science course(s).

Purpose: Develop a plan to establish a new, standards-based computer science program, including mentoring and coaching.

> Funds may be used to pay teacher stipends when attending planning meetings or professional learning sessions. Funds may be used to contract with mentors or coaches with computer science expertise to work with schools on the development of a new computer science course to offer students or to assist with expansion of current computer science course(s).

Purpose: Provide support for K–8 teachers to enroll in or who are enrolled in a credentialed computer science program or course.

> Funds may be used for professional learning tuition, fees, and/or training program costs, professional learning books, and materials for the teachers to enroll or who are enrolled in a credentialed computer science program or course.

V. UNALLOWABLE USE OF FUNDS

Funds may not be used to purchase hardware, software, or equipment to outfit a classroom for computer science. Indirect costs are not allowable.

VI. LENGTH OF FUNDING

The resulting contract shall be entered into following the issuance of an award memo(s) to selected applicants and continue through June 30, 2022. The PED reserves the right to terminate any award that does not meet the requirements as defined by the guidelines governing the program or that does not demonstrate substantial progress toward meeting the objectives set forth in its approved application.

VII.   ELIGIBLE ENTITIES

Eligible entities are New Mexico public school districts, state-chartered charter schools, or local charter schools that serve students K–8; New Mexico institutions of higher education, including community colleges; and New Mexico regional educational cooperatives serving K–8 students and teachers.

Applications will not be accepted from individual schools (unless they are local or state charter schools), but must be authorized and submitted through their public school district.

All eligible entities awarded grant funding must go through a process for creating a district or charter school wide K–12 computer science education implementation plan for their students. This plan must be in place before awarded entities can access grant funds. The PED will provide the training on developing a K–12 computer science education implementation plan and ensure substitute or stipends are available. If a district or charter school has a plan developed, please attach it as an appendix to the application.

VIII.   COMPETITIVE PRIORITIES

The PED will prioritize distribution of available grant funding based on:

- alignment to developed/proposed computer science implementation plan K–12;
- proposals planning expansion of current existing computer science program;
- proposals planning establishment of a new computer science program;
- impact in terms of number of students or potential students it will directly impact;
- impact in terms of number of teachers it will directly serve;
- school districts, local-charters, or state-chartered charter schools that are working with providers of high-quality professional learning for kindergarten through grade eight computer science;
- proposals from rural or urban areas with a low concentration of kindergarten through grade eight computer science offerings, including local education agencies that partner with local regional educational cooperative to form a cluster of implementation.

IX. PED PROGRAM OVERSIGHT

The PED has assigned the following individuals to oversee and manage the progress of the projects/programs, listed below:

Yanira Vazquez, Director, Math and Science Bureau
Yanira.Vazquez@state.nm.us

Shafiq Chaudhary, Math and Science Specialist, Math and Science Bureau
Shafiq.Chaudhary@state.nm.us

Amery Martinez, K–8 Computer Science Specialist, Math and Science Bureau
Amery.Martinez@state.nm.us

X. SCORING GUIDELINES
Each application will be scored across four (4) application sections. A total of 35 points are possible:

I.   Project Narrative (Detailed narrative illustrating intended goals, scope, partners, timeline, and any evidence-based justification) (20 points)
II.   Project Budget (Budget overview detailing the requested funding by category through June 30, 2022) (5 points)
III.   Project Timeline (Timeline detailing expected program progress through at least June 30, 2021) (5 points)
IV.   Sustainability of Project (Clear, well-conceived plan detailing how the project will continue past June 30, 2022 and is/will be in alignment with the K–12 computer science education implementation plan) (5 points)

Either a score of '0' or 'no submission' of any of the components of the application will result in a disqualification of the application.

XI. TIMELINE

Program managers will make every effort to adhere to the following schedule:

Action	Responsible Party	Due Dates
Discuss RFA with interested stakeholders	PED	July 7, 2021
Issue RFA	PED	July 7, 2021
Deadline to submit Intent to Apply	Potential applicants	July 16, 2021
Deadline to submit questions	Potential applicants	July 26, 2021
Response to questions	PED	July 30, 2021
Submission of applications	*Potential applicants*	*August 16, 2021*
Evaluation of applications	Review Panel	August 17–25, 2021
Selection of grantees	Review Panel	August 26–27, 2021
Finalize award memo(s)	PED/Grantee(s)	August 30 – September 16, 2021
Training Attendance	Awarded applicants	August 30 – September 16, 2021
Award Memo(s) Transmission	PED/Grantee(s)	September 17, 2021

XII. EXPLANATION OF EVENTS

A. Discuss RFA

Pursuant to the issuance of the RFA, officials from PED will host a virtual webinar to discuss the intention of the RFA and go over the guidelines as stipulated in this document with interested stakeholders on Wednesday, July 7, 2021 from 11:00am–12:00 pm MST. Please register for this webinar through the registration link. If you have questions or issues regarding registration, please email Shafiq.Chaudhary@state.nm.us.

B. Issuance of RFA

This RFA is being issued on behalf of the PED on the date specified in the above timeline.

C. Deadline to Submit Intent to Apply

Potential applicant must submit the Intent to Apply via SurveyMonkey at https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FY22CSRFA by Friday, July 16, 2021, 11:59 pm MST. Completing the Intent to Apply Form does not obligate the eligible entities in any way, but will provide useful information to the PED in preparing for the grant review process. Returning the Intent to Apply Form will place you on an email distribution list for any grant-related updates. Entities may continue to apply even if they miss the deadline to submit the Intent to Apply.

D. Deadline to Submit Questions

Potential applicants may submit questions to Amery Martinez (Amery.Martinez@state.nm.us) to the intent or clarity of the RFA until 4:00 pm MST on Monday, July 26, 2021 as indicated in the timeline above. Questions shall be clearly labeled and shall cite the relevant sections of the RFA or any other attending document.

E. Response to Questions

Responses to questions will be distributed as indicated in the timeline above and according to the order in which the questions were received.

F. Submission of Application

All applications must be received for review and evaluation by Yanira Vazquez (Yanira.Vazquez@state.nm.us) no later than **4:00 pm MST on Monday, August 16, 2021.** Applications received after this time will not be accepted. The date and time of receipt of application will be noted on the application itself.

G. Evaluation of Applications

The Evaluation Committee will perform the evaluation of applications. The process will take place as indicated in the timeline above depending on the number of applications received. During this time, Yanira Vazquez or Shafiq Chaudhary may initiate discussions with Applicants for the purpose of clarifying aspects of the proposals. However, proposals may be accepted and evaluated without such discussion. Discussions may not be initiated by Applicants.

H. Selection of Grantees

The Evaluation Committee will notify all Applicants of the decision on their application by August 30, 2021 or earlier. Feedback and final application score will be distributed to Applicants not selected for funding. Each application will be scored by the panelists individually and then discussed at a meeting of the entire panel in order to arrive at final scores and committee feedback for each component. For more detail on the scoring guidelines, see the "X. Scoring Guidelines" section above.

I. Training Attendance

Applications selected must participate through a process for district or charter school wide K–12 computer science education implementation plan for their students. This plan must be in place before awarded entities access their finalized award memo(s). Districts/charter schools with a K–12 computer science education implementation plan in place will not need to attend this training. The PED will provide the training and ensure substitute or stipends are available.

J. Finalize Awards

During the window of time stipulated in the timeline above, the NMPED will work directly with successful grantees to establish assurances terms leading to the awarding/execution of award memo(s).

K. *Contract Awards*

After review of the Evaluation Committee Report and the signed contractual agreement, the Agency Procurement Office will award as per the schedule in the timeline above. This date is subject to change at the discretion of the State Purchasing Division or relevant Agency Procurement Office. The award memo(s) shall be awarded to the Applicants whose proposals are most advantageous to the State of New Mexico and the PED, taking into consideration the evaluation factors set forth in this RFA. The award is subject to appropriate Department and State approval, and both entities reserve the right to not fund any of the applications, if none are judged to be advantageous and/or do not score sufficiently.

L. REPORTING

Each successful grantee awarded funding through the NM Computer Science K–8 Grant Program is required to report, at a minimum, the following information to the New Mexico Public Education Department on or before **July 7, 2022** through this SurveyMonkey link (https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FY22EOYCSRFA):

For entities that planned to establish or expand a CS program:
1. a summary of what planning occurred leading to next steps entity will take;
2. a timeline of program implementation;
3. agendas from all planning meetings with attendance marked;
4. the number of teachers and/or administrator who attended each planning meeting;
5. name of stakeholders, coaches, and/or mentors who assisted with planning;
6. if the grant funds impacted middle school(s): the number of students who are interested in enrolling in the course(s) based on:
    a. survey results given to students,
    b. attendance at informational meetings regarding possible computer science course offerings; and
    c. the number of students who participated in computer science courses;
7. if the grant funds impacted elementary school(s): the number of students who will be served by the course(s)

For entities that provided professional learning or who credentialed teachers:
1. the number of teachers who completed the program of professional learning;
2. the number of students who participated in computer science classes;
3. the gender, racial, and socioeconomic diversity of those students;
4. the number of teachers that started implementing computer science in middle school versus the number of prepared teachers that attended professional learning;
5. agendas from trainings or events with attendance marked;
6. a summary of which schools were represented at trainings or events; and
7. course of study for teachers in a credentialed program;

M. EVALUATION COMMITTEE COMPOSITION

The committee tasked with the evaluation of applications will have a broad level of experience with professional learning programs and computer science collectively, representing a variety of perspectives and experience in the field. Members are highly familiar with the professional learning and computer science landscapes in New Mexico.