



NEW MEXICO

Public Education Department

**Request for Applications
Indigenous Education Initiative**

RFA #20-92400-00001

**Issue Date: August 2, 2019
Deadline Date: August 30, 2019**

**Contact Information:
Kara Bobroff
Interim Secretary of Education
Kara.Bobroff@state.nm.us**

**Application Portal:
IED Grant Application**

Request for Application (RFA) on Indigenous Education Initiative Funding

PURPOSE OF THIS REQUEST FOR APPLICATION (RFA)

This RFA is issued by the New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) for Indigenous Education Initiatives to support transformational educational opportunities in New Mexico districts and schools that serve a significant number of Native American students. This RFA will provide additional resources and key supports aimed at innovation and community engagement work that promote academically excellent and culturally relevant educational opportunities. The end goal of this funding is twofold: 1) students benefit from initiatives that design schools to provide the best opportunity for academic preparation for college, career, and community leadership, for identity development, and for holistic health; and 2) funded projects act as “bright spots” for future investment by the NMPED to expand and/or replicate successful programs based on community needs and desires in Indigenous Education.

NEW MEXICO PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (NMPED) VISION

Rooted in our Strengths – Students in New Mexico are engaged in a culturally and linguistically responsive educational system that meets the social, emotional, and academic needs of ALL students.

NEW MEXICO PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (NMPED) MISSION

Equity, Excellence & Relevance – The New Mexico Public Education Department partners with educators, communities, and families to ensure that ALL students are healthy, secure in their identity, and holistically prepared for college, career, and life.

LEVEL OF FUNDING

For fiscal year 2020, NMPED intends to award a minimum of three grants between \$150,000 and \$250,000 each. Applicants shall propose a project period of three years. The above amount represents annual funding. Continued funding for this initiative is dependent upon annual legislative appropriations and program performance.

Funds may be utilized for costs related to personnel, professional development, student support services, curriculum/resource materials and development, community engagement, transportation, lodging, stipends, and other program-related costs.

Funds made available under this grant shall be used to supplement, and not supplant, any other federal, state, or local education funds.

LENGTH OF FUNDING

The resulting contract shall begin upon execution of an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) between NMPED and successful applicants and continue through the proposed project period, but not beyond June 30, 2022. NMPED reserves the right to terminate any award that does not meet the requirements as defined by the guidelines governing the program or otherwise provided in an executed IGA. Annual funding is dependent upon annual legislative appropriations.

ELIGIBLE ENTITIES

Eligible applicants must be one of the following New Mexico public school districts and/or state-chartered or school district-chartered schools:

- Aztec Public Schools
- Albuquerque Public Schools
- Bernalillo Public School District
- Bloomfield School District
- Central Consolidated School District
- Cuba Independent School District
- Dream Diné Charter School
- Dulce Independent School District
- Dził Dítł'ooí School of Empowerment, Action and Perseverance (DEAP)

- Espanola Public Schools
- Farmington Municipal School District
- Gallup McKinley County School District
- Grants/Cibola County School District
- Hozho' Academy Charter School
- Jemez Mountain Public School District
- Jemez Valley Public School District
- Los Lunas Public Schools
- Magdalena Municipal School District
- Native American Community Academy (NACA)
- Penasco Independent Schools
- Pojoaque Valley Schools
- Rio Rancho Public Schools
- Ruidoso Municipal School District
- San Diego Riverside School
- Santa Fe Public Schools
- Six Directions Indigenous School
- Taos Municipal Schools
- Tularosa Municipal Schools
- Walatowa High Charter School
- Zuni Public School District

District applicants must designate the specific school or schools that will be Indigenous Education Initiative project sites. Districts are encouraged to limit the number of schools participating to one to two schools in order to have a concentrated impact. Only one application is permitted per applicant.

FUNDED STRATEGIES/PROGRAMS

Proposed programs under this grant will inspire and empower local systems to dramatically improve and transform education and life outcomes for Native American students and will be grounded in New Mexico’s strengths of culture and place. The intent of this program is for innovation and flexibility combined with technical assistance to meet community priorities for education and respond to the changing educational landscape and identified needs of Native students in New Mexico. Funded programs will participate in a three-year process that includes community engagement, professional development, and technical assistance, with the end goal to re-launch schools that are designed to build on community strengths and meet community needs for Indigenous Education as follows:

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal school review process and assessment • Community engagement around future school design toward cultural and linguistic relevance and holistic models of education • Development of a comprehensive plan for staffing that prioritizes hiring and training staff that shares the backgrounds of the school’s students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design plan based on community-identified priorities • Curriculum development/re-development process • Waivers granted for certain requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School re-launches with new vision, based on the community-designed plan that prioritizes academic excellence and cultural relevance in education, with new accountability measures as well as support structures for sustainability

As part of this process, the Identity, Equity, and Transformation section of NMPED will provide system-wide support and technical assistance. This will include national and local best practices and assistance in “indigenizing” these practices. Further, funded programs will have access to and will participate in:

- A new Indigenous Systems Leaders Network, designed for leaders who want to build their capacity to lead transformation at the systems level in Native communities.
- Training for educators to conduct family-teacher home visits aimed at academic success.
- Accountability metrics based on school/community action cards, identifying measures of success and progress.
- A specialized talent and leadership development program to grow educators for Native American communities.

Programs must prioritize authentic stakeholder and community engagement and partnership, and must be aligned with the [Indian Education Act](#). Applicants are encouraged to thoughtfully engage stakeholders throughout this application process and once funded to ensure the program and services meet the needs of their local communities, students, families, and schools. NMPED priority areas for school improvement and community engagement include:

College, Career and Life Readiness: K-12 public education prepares students to have the necessary knowledge and skills to participate in a rapidly-changing, democratic society by successfully transitioning to a post-secondary institution (without needing remedial coursework) and/or entering the workforce and competing in the labor market, as well as aligning interests to the career of the student's choice and living fulfilling lives.

Culturally and Linguistically Relevant Education and Social and Emotional Learning: Social and emotional learning provides the foundation for students to develop social skills (empathy, reflection, cooperation, interpersonal skills, communication), academic behaviors (attendance, academic purpose, self-guided learning, participation), and an academic mindset (belonging, belief in one self, value in work, and meaningful learning). These are critical success factors to improving academic and life outcomes.

Culture and Identity Development: Programs that provide opportunities for students to participate in activities that reflect their unique cultural and linguistic heritages, that are centered on student strengths and needs, and incorporate student voice into the design of curriculum. Programs must be grounded in the context of the student's community, language, and culture.

Increasing Access to Indigenous Language Programs: Programs that provide access to Indigenous languages within the community or school that are accessible to students on a regular basis, grounded in the context of the community, and approved by the tribe which the program represents. Indigenous Language programs should set goals for students that are aligned with the LEA, Charter, and Tribes' overall Indigenous Language Program goals.

Finally, programs must also be aimed at:

- Increased positive student academic and social outcomes
- Increased readiness for post-secondary education and career pathways
- Engaged communities, tribes, and families
- Identification of best practices to serve as "bright spots" for replication in other areas of the state

Applicants are required to build a budget that prioritizes and sufficiently funds capacity for participation in the project, curriculum design and development, community engagement, and strategic planning. Applicants must budget for at least one full-time position to be dedicated to this work at a Level II or Level III educator's salary.

PROGRAM OVERSIGHT AND MANAGEMENT

NMPED will manage the progress of the projects/programs. The program contact is listed below:

Kara Bobroff, Interim Secretary of Education
Kara.Bobroff@state.nm.us

For questions related to this RFA, contact Kara Bobroff, Kara.Bobroff@state.nm.us by the submission deadline for questions (deadline to submit questions is August 16, 2019).

SCORING GUIDELINES

Each application will be scored across four (4) application sections. Within each section, provide data and information explaining the need of your school:

- I. **Project Narrative:** Applicants are encouraged to provide detailed and thorough responses to the following questions (75 points):
 - Describe your community, including its resources and strengths, as well as challenges faced in providing a strong and effective education that is culturally relevant and prepares all students for success in college, career, and life.
 - Provide data that documents your district's or school's need to participate in the Indigenous Education Initiative. This data may be quantitative (e.g., test scores) or qualitative (e.g., family feedback, staffing or infrastructure challenges), or both.
 - Describe the extent to which the district or school serves Native American students, including demographic data, and the unique needs faced by these students. Indicate whether the program will serve low-income students, students with disabilities, and English language learners as applicable, using demographic data.
 - Describe your district's or school's current efforts to engage the community in the educational process. What has been successful and where do you face challenges?
 - Why does your school or district wish to participate in the Indigenous Education Initiative? What do you hope to gain from participation?
 - How do you envision engaging the broader community in educational design and development to ensure the participating school(s) aligns with local cultural values and priorities?
 - If a district, identify which one to two schools will participate in the work over the next three years. Why were these schools selected?
 - Identify key staff that will contribute to the district or school's participation in the Indigenous Education Initiative. This should include district staff (if appropriate), as well as school staff.
 - A requirement of selection is that your school or district dedicates 1.0 FTE specifically to the proposed work. Provide a statement agreeing with this requirement. Identify whether this person is already hired and will move to this new role, or if you will hire for the position. If already hired, provide a summary of the individual's qualifications. If the position is to be hired, provide a summary of desired qualifications and skillsets and a timeline for hiring.
 - What types of evaluation and accountability measures does your school/district/community value, and how do you envision using these measures to re-design the current educational process?
- II. **Project Budget:** Provide a budget that details the requested funding for the first year of the program. Applicants must budget for at least 1.0 FTE at a Level II or III educator's salary. Other line items can include additional staffing, professional development costs, curriculum/resource materials, curricular development costs, community engagement expenses, transportation, lodging and per diem, and contractual expenses. Use the online form included in the IED grant management platform (15 points).
- III. **Support Documents:** Provide any additional information that documents community support of the program (e.g., letters of support, community engagement activities, meeting minutes, etc.) and that furthers NMPED's understanding of your proposal (5 points).
- IV. **District Assurances:** Provide a signed agreement with the assurances included within the online management system (5 points).

Applications will be scored across five rubric areas ranging from “Complete, coherent, convincing” to “Section not included in application, or is conspicuously incomplete.” Either a score of ‘0’ or ‘no submission’ of any of the components of the application will result in a disqualification of the application. In addition, NMPED will take into consideration for award selection alignment to the agency’s strategic plan for transforming education to improve student outcomes in targeted districts and current school/district performance.

The program narrative is limited to 10 pages. There are no page limits for the project budget or support documents. However, applicants are encouraged to accurately and concisely describe the proposed costs, and submit only materials relevant to reviewer consideration.

TIMELINE

NMPED will make every effort to adhere to the following schedule:

Action	Responsible Party	Due Date
Issue RFA	NMPED	August 2, 2019
Webinar for interested applicants	NMPED	August 9, 2019
Deadline to submit written questions	Potential applicants	August 16, 2019
Deadline to submit Letter of Intent to apply	Potential applicants	August 16, 2019
Response to questions	NMPED	August 23, 2019
Submission of applications	Potential applicants	August 30, 2019
Evaluation of applications	Review panel	August 30- September 6, 2019
Selection of grantees	Review panel	September 6, 2019
Finalize contractual arrangements	NMPED/grantees	September 9-13, 2019
Contract awards	NMPED/grantees	September 20, 2019

EXPLANATION OF EVENTS

- Issuance of RFA: This RFA is being issued on behalf of the New Mexico Public Education Department on the date specified in the above timeline.
- Deadline to Submit Questions: Potential grantees may submit questions to Kara Bobroff at Kara.Bobroff@state.nm.us regarding the intent or clarity of the RFA until 5:00pm MST on August 16, 2019 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.
- Deadline to submit Letter of Intent: Potential grantees must submit a letter of intent to apply to Kara Bobroff at Kara.Bobroff@state.nm.us by 5:00pm MST on August 16, 2019.
- 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.
- Submission of Application: All applications must be received for review and evaluation by 5:00pm MST on August 30, 2019. Applications received after this time will not be accepted. The date and time of receipt of application will be time-stamped by the online system.
- 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, NMPED may initiate discussions with applicants who submit applications requiring clarification. Discussions may not be initiated by applicants.
- Selection of Grantees: The Evaluation Committee will notify all applicants of the decision on their application by September 6, 2019 or earlier. Feedback and final application score will be distributed to applicants not selected for funding if requested. 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 for each component. For more detail on the scoring guidelines, see “Scoring Guidelines” section above.

- Finalize Contractual Agreements: During the window of time stipulated in the timeline above, NMPED will work directly with successful grantees to establish contract terms leading to execution of an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA).
- 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 contract(s) shall be awarded to the applicants whose proposals are most advantageous to the State of New Mexico and the Public Education Department, 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 not to fund any of the applications, if none are judged to be advantageous and/or do not score sufficiently.

REPORTING

Successful grantees will work together with NMPED to establish a reporting schedule focused on progress to outcomes and project budgeting aligned to milestones. Awardees will need to present their project at the annual Government to Government meetings to share their learnings and outcomes from their project. Grantees will also need to submit their LEA, Charter, or Tribal Strategic Plan by October 31, 2019.

EVALUATION COMMITTEE COMPOSITION

The committee tasked with the evaluation of applications will have a broad level of experience with Native American education, charter schools, school leadership, and teaching experience representing a variety of perspectives and seniority in the field. Members will be highly familiar with New Mexico's educational system, the tribal and charter landscape, and cultural and linguistic relevance within education.

CHECKLIST FOR SUBMISSION

- I. Project Narrative
- II. Project Budget
- III. Project Support Documents
- IV. District Assurances Page

Item I. above should not exceed 10 pages.

Submit all materials online at IED Grant Application: Link will be provided to districts or charter schools who submit a letter of intent by August 16, 2019

NMPED will hold a webinar for all interested applicants on August 9, 2019 from 4:00-5:00pm and provide technical assistance as needed to ensure a smooth application process. The webinar will be recorded for those who are unable to attend. Please follow the link to join the meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/972266299>