



**Request for Application (RFA)
Indigenous Education Initiative (IEI)**

RFA#22-92400-00011

RFA Issue Date: *April 11, 2022*
Final Date to Submit RFA: May 9, 2022, by 4:00 p.m.
***RFAs received after final date will not be considered for
funding.***

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Request for Application (RFA) Indigenous Education Initiative Funding

PURPOSE OF THIS REQUEST FOR APPLICATION

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, consistent with the purposes of the Indian Education Act, Sections 22-23A-1 through 22-23A-11 NMSA 1978. 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 MISSION & VISION

Equity, Excellence, and Relevance

The New Mexico Public Education Department (PED) 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.

Rooted in 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

FUNDING

For fiscal year 2023, NMPED intends to award a minimum of four grants (one-year grant extension of prior funded projects) in the amount of \$200,000 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 and 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.

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
- Bloomfield School District
- Central Consolidated School District
- Dream Diné Charter School
- Dulce Independent School District
- Dził Dít'ooi 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
- Six Directions Indigenous School
- 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 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 Indian Education Division within 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 (Profiles and Pathways):

Increase students' successful completion of high school with research-based, relevant, applied, and experiential learning opportunities that support all students to become college- and career-ready and contribute as productive members of their communities. 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), entering the workforce, and competing in the labor market, and aligning interests to the career of the student's choice and living fulfilling lives.

Whole Child and Culturally Responsive Education:

Increase student learning and development by supporting schools and classrooms to engage in deeper, enriched academic learning that is integrated with social emotional learning and that is culturally and linguistically responsive. (Empathy, reflection, cooperation, interpersonal skills, communication), academic behaviors (attendance, academic purpose, self-guided learning, participation), and an academic mindset (belonging, belief in oneself, and value in work, 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, and 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.

Programs: Asset-Based Supports and opportunities

Provide equitable access to asset-based support and learning opportunities that enable all students to thrive in their educational settings regardless of their demographic, family income level, or disability status.

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

PED will manage the progress of the projects or programs; the program contact is listed below:

Rebecca Reyes, Deputy Director Indian Education Division Rebecca.Reyes2@state.nm.us

For questions related to this RFA, contact Rebecca Reyes Rebecca.Reyes2@state.nm.us prior to the deadline to submit questions April 25, 2022

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 districts or schools' 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. **Program Measurement Plan:** Performance measurement improves the overall program management and effectiveness. By focusing on project outcomes, one can define success, and more easily measure and demonstrate results. Applicants should focus on using qualitative and/or quantitative data to measure success of their proposed program.

Provide the intended short-term and long-term outcomes of the program, measurable objectives, numbers of students served under the proposed program, and a plan to measure the success of the program.

- III. **Program Outcomes:** The outcomes are the ultimate changes or results to be achieved after the successful completion of the program. Outcomes are specific, measurable, and meaningful. Outcomes are not activity-based, such as “conduct five training workshops” or “develop a new testing protocol.” These are outputs, and do not reflect results achieved. Outcomes may be short- or long-term, or both.

Applicants should have at least two outcomes that can be pulled from PED, for example:

- Increase student attendance
- Increased graduation rates
- Increased student achievement
 - a. Math
 - b. Reading
 - c. Science
- Increased dual enrollment

- III. **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. Otherline 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).

- IV. **Supporting 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).

- V. **District Assurances:** Provide a signed agreement with the assurances included within the onlinemanagement 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 describe the proposed costs and submit only materials relevant to reviewer consideration accurately and concisely.

TIMELINE

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

Action	Responsible Party	Due Date
Issue RFA	PED	April 11, 2022
Deadline to submit written questions	Potential applicants	April 25, 2022
Response to questions	PED	May 2, 2022
Submission of applications	Potential applicants	May 9, 2022
Evaluation of applications	Review panel	May 16, 2022-May 20, 2022
Selection of grantees	Review panel	May 27, 2022
Finalize contractual arrangements	PED/grantees	June 1, 2022-June 30, 2022
Contract awards	PED/grantees	July 1, 2022

EXPLANATION OF EVENTS

1. Issuance of RFA: This RFA is being issued on behalf of the PED on the date specified in the above timeline.
2. Deadline to Submit Questions: Potential grantees may submit questions to Rebecca Reyes at Rebecca.Reyes2@state.nm.us regarding the intent or clarity of the RFA until 4:00pm MST on April 25, 2022 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.
3. Response to Questions: Responses to questions will be distributed as indicated in the timeline above and according to order in which the questions were received.
4. Submission of Application: All applications must be received for review and evaluation by 4:00pm MST on May 9, 2022, 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.
5. 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.
6. Selection of Grantees: The Evaluation Committee will notify all applicants of the decision on their application by May 27, 2022, 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 to arrive at final scores for each component. For more detail on the scoring guidelines, see “Scoring Guidelines” section above.
7. Finalize Contractual Agreements: During the window of time stipulated in the timeline above, PED will work directly with successful grantees to establish contract terms leading to execution of an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) or award letter.
8. 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 to not 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 PED 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 learning and outcomes from their project. Grantees will need to provide mid-year and annual review on the progress of outcomes.

- Mid-year report, due February 15, 2023, and

- End-of-year report, due July 14, 2023

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, 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, should not exceed 10 pages
- II. Project Budget
- III. Project Support Documents
- IV. District Assurances Page

Combine all documents into a single file and submit online at: [IED Grant Application](#) Please submit the FY 2023 application using the online application on the IED grant management system