



**Request for Applications (RFA)
Indigenous Education Initiative
Continuous from FY20-22**

RFA # 22-92400-00010

RFA Issue Date: *April 8, 2022*
Final Date to Submit RFA: May 6, 2022, by 4:00 p.m.
***RFAs received after final date will not be considered for
funding.***

Contact Information:

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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 one year. The above amount represents annual funding.

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.

LENGTH OF FUNDING

The resulting contract shall begin upon execution of an award and is intended to continue through the proposed project period, but not longer than through June 30, 2023. PED reserves the right to terminate any award that does not meet the requirements as defined by the guidelines governing the program or that are otherwise provided for the award. Annual funding is dependent upon sufficient annual legislative appropriations.

ELIGIBLE ENTITIES

Eligible applicants must be one of the below New Mexico public school districts or charter schools that are currently funded:

- Bernalillo Public School District
- Cuba Independent School District
- Santa Fe Public Schools
- Taos Municipal Schools - Vista Grande High School

FUNDED STRATEGIES/PROGRAMS

Proposed programs under this grant will **continue to** 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 participated in a three-year process **and have an opportunity to apply for an extended one-year grant that will continue to include** community engagement, professional development, and technical assistance, with the end goal *of strengthening their schools* that are designed to build on community strengths and meet community needs for Indigenous Education as follows:

Year Four (4)

- **Create academic experiences** and spaces that reflect the languages and culture of indigenous communities.
- **Culturally & Linguistically Responsive Curriculum:** Engage with stakeholders to identify areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment, such as embedding Indigenous literacy resources and aligning Indigenous knowledge with New Mexico Content Standards, or implementing Tribal Curricular Content Standards
- **Community Engagement:** Solidify a sustainable community engagement strategy that effectively leverages a mix of parent navigators, community events, and the gathering of histories and assets as a way to affirm the cultural identities of students and enrich curriculum. Community engagement should center around future school design toward cultural and linguistic relevance and holistic models of education to meet the needs of students in the context of applicants' communities and aligned with their Equity Councils.
- **Human Resources:** Develop a comprehensive plan for staffing that prioritizes recruitment, hiring, training, and development of staff who share the backgrounds of the school's students and families or has specialized expertise needed to provide targeted programs. Grantees must complete a comprehensive Human Resources plan as part of their fourth-year outcomes.
- **Professional Development:** Implement a plan of action that pursues greater representation of Indigenous educators in classrooms, strengthens the cultural knowledge of existing teaching staff, or builds a recruitment and hiring strategy that explicitly identifies and incorporates

Indigenous culture and ways of knowing into selection models, job descriptions, and onboarding plans.

As part of this process, the Indian Education Division of NMPED will provide systemwide 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 or community action rubrics, 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 postsecondary 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’ engagement in deeper, enriched academic learning that is integrated with social-emotional learning and that is culturally and linguistically responsive (exploring empathy, reflection, cooperation, interpersonal skills, and communication), focused on constructive academic behaviors (attendance, academic purpose, self-guided learning, and participation), and an appropriate academic mindset (belonging, belief in oneself and value in work, and meaningful learning). These are critical success factors to improving academic and life outcomes.

Culture and Identity Development:

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 that incorporate student voices 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 demography, family income level, or disability status.

Finally, programs must also be aimed at:

- Increased positive student academic and social outcomes;
- Increased readiness for postsecondary education and career pathways;
- Engaged communities, tribes, and families; and
- 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 primary contact will be Rebecca Reyes, Deputy Director, Indian Education Division. For questions related to this RFA, please contact Ms. Reyes prior to the April 22, 2022, deadline for submission of questions, at Rebecca.Reyes2@state.nm.us

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. **Program Narrative:** Applicants are encouraged to provide detailed and thorough responses to the following questions (75 points):
 - Describe how your Indigenous Education Initiative (IEI) team has made improvements in establishing culturally responsive experiences for your students during the first three years of the grant. What data, narratives, or outcomes were successful at the end of year three (3), and what are your markers for success?
 - What barriers (apart from the COVID pandemic) have you encountered during the first three years of the grant and how do you plan to overcome them in this final year?
 - Which 1-2 projects or initiatives will be your biggest priorities during the final year of the grant? What will success look like? What will you need to succeed?
 - In the final year of the grant, how do you plan to ensure the sustainability of your project initiatives after this grant funding has expired (e.g., staffing allocations, budgeting, etc.)?
 - What new or existing stakeholders will you include in your efforts this year to ensure sustainability and investment from across your district or school?
 - What objectives and deliverables have you achieved and do you plan for in year four (4) to achieve and to meet your goals in the following areas:
 - What is your district’s or charter school’s professional development goals to increase the representation of Indigenous staff and/or increase the cultural and linguistic knowledge of existing staff at your district/school?
 - What is your district’s or charter school’s curriculum and instruction goals to engage stakeholders in identifying areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment to indigenize, such as embedding indigenous literacy resources and aligning indigenous knowledge with

New Mexico Content Standards, or adopting Tribal Content Standards and key learning priorities?

- What is your district's or charter school's community engagement goals to affirm and integrate the cultural identities of students, families, and communities in your school?
- What types of evaluation and accountability measures does your school, district, or community value, and how do you envision using these measures to redesign your 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

- IV. **Project Budget:** Provide a budget that details the requested funding for year four (4) 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 resources and 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).

- V. **Supporting Documents:** Provide any additional information that documents community support of the program (e.g., letters of support, community engagement activities, meeting minutes, memoranda of agreement or understanding, etc.) and that furthers NMPED's understanding of your proposal (5 points).

- VI. **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, with scores 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, as well as current school district or charter school 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 8, 2022
Deadline to submit written questions	Potential applicants	April 22, 2022
Response to questions	PED	April 29, 2022
Submission of applications	Potential applicants	May 6, 2022
Evaluation of applications	Review panel	May 9, 2022-May 13, 2022
Selection of grantees	Review panel	May 20, 2022
Finalize contractual arrangements	PED and grantees	June 1, 2022-June 30, 2022
Contract awards	PED and grantees	July 1, 2022

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 22, 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 the 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 6, 2022. Applications received after this time will not be accepted. The date and time of receipt of applications 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 20, 2022, or earlier. Feedback and final application scores 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, relative to 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 deny funding to any of the applications, if none are judged to be advantageous or do not score sufficiently.

REPORTING

Successful grantees will work together with PED to establish a reporting schedule focused on progress toward outcomes, and project budgeting aligned to milestones. Awardees shall present their project at the annual Government-to-Government meetings to share their learning and outcomes from their project. Grantees shall provide mid-year and annual review on the progress of outcomes:

- Midyear 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, 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 (not to exceed 10 pages)
- II. Project Budget
- III. Project Supporting Documents
- IV. District Assurances Page

Combine all documents into a single file and submit via email at: Indian.Education@state.nm.us.