



HIGH PLAINS REC #3 SOLE SOURCE REQUEST AND DETERMINATION FORM

A sole source *determination* is not effective until the *sole source request for determination* has been posted for thirty (30) calendar days without challenge, and subsequently approved in writing by the State Purchasing Agent or, for Professional Services Agreements, the Secretary of the Department of Finance and Administration. The foregoing requirement is regardless of whether the *sole source request for determination* has been signed by the Agency and/or the Contractor.

I. Name of Agency: **High Plains Regional Education Cooperative #3**

Agency Chief Procurement Officer: **Brandon Hightree**

Telephone Number: **(575) 445-7090**

Agency Contact for this request: **Brandon Hightree**

Telephone Number & Email Address: **(575) 445-7090; bhightree@hprec.com**

II. Name of prospective Contractor: **Dr. Joseph Goins**

Address of prospective Contractor:

200 E Broadway Street, Suite 215, Maryville, TN 37804

Contact Name, Telephone Number and Email Address:

Dr. Joseph Goins

865-414-0033

Joseph.goins@p2c.org

Amount of prospective contract before tax: **\$3,260,177**

Term of prospective contract: **8 Months**

Note: For terms longer than one year, Request for Policy Exemption from DFA MUST be included.

III. *Agency is required to state purpose/need of purchase and thoroughly list the services (scope of work), construction or items of tangible personal property of the prospective contract (if this is an amendment request to an existing contract, include current contract number issued by SPD):*

PURPOSE:

PED was awarded a grant from the US Department of Education Disability Innovation Fund (DIF), with the absolute priority to make career-connected learning (CCL) more accessible to students with disabilities. The New Mexico Public Education Department offers an innovative model designed to cater to the needs of, over 27,000 students with

disabilities across all districts in New Mexico. This groundbreaking initiative aims to support an underserved Hispanic population.

What sets the model apart is its approach to career connected learning. Specifically tailored to help students with disabilities transition into programs and competitive integrated employment (CIE) it establishes a partnership network that shares a common vision ensuring coordinated support services and delivery models.

The projects objectives encompass providing career focused learning experiences enriching career exploration opportunities strengthening math skills for employment readiness and promoting self-awareness and advocacy among students. Additionally, it emphasizes teacher training with an emphasis on career connected learning and fosters partnerships that facilitate resource coordination for transitions after school.

The unique nature of this project justifies its sole source designation due to its ability to measure both outcomes such as growth in math proficiency well as qualitative outcomes, like improved career awareness and meaningful stakeholder engagement.

These initiatives are groundbreaking as they connect the progress of students directly to advancements, in career awareness which's a pioneering approach in the education field.

Additionally, the Career Connected Learning in New Mexico (CCLinNM) project aims to classify growth measures based on types and levels of disabilities. By establishing success benchmarks through data collection and analysis involving all partners this program offers a level of specificity. Targeted support that cannot be replicated by any other initiative. Hence it justifies the grant as a requirement for bridging the vocational gap, in New Mexico.

These services are per an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA #24-924-00257) between the New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) College and Career Readiness Bureau (CCRB) and the Agency for Fiscal Year 2023-2024, with the termination date of September 30, 2024.

SCOPE OF WORK:

1. Content Development:

- a. Develop lesson plans for grades 4-7 math. Each lesson shall present required math skills from New Mexico standards in the context of various careers. Each lesson shall be written at a Lexile level accessible to typical students within the targeted grade level (i.e., 5th grade math shall be written at a 5th grade reading level)).
 1. At least 50 lessons per grade level for grades 5-7 math.
 2. At least 25 lessons for grade 4 math.
- b. Develop a teacher's edition with side-by-side content presentation for all grades 4-7 lessons.
- c. Create accommodations and adaptations to existing Pathway2Careers® (P2C) content:

1. Text to audio and speech to text capabilities through all existing resources on the P2C learning platform, including P2C math, career exploration tools and lessons and My Career Pages.
 2. Reduced reading level of P2C math content. Adapt at least half of all Application lessons within all existing P2C math courses to a 850-1070 Lexile level.
 - d. Develop online Employability Skills course, targeted for use among students with disabilities, but accessible to all New Mexico students. Course shall include at least three lessons for each of the nine skills identified by the US Department of Education’s Employability Skills framework.
 - e. Career Story Videos: Develop at least one hundred 5–10-minute videos showcasing the successful career journeys of individuals with disabilities. Contractor is responsible for identifying professionals, recording and editing the videos in accordance with an approval process established by PED, and making the videos accessible online.
2. **Content Delivery:**
- a. Make all new content available via a virtual learning platform that includes free statewide access.
 - b. Maintain and provide access and technical support to the virtual learning platform.
3. **Program Support:**
- a. Create, provide, and distribute marketing materials (mailers, samples, flyers, & digital imagery) specific to the content developed.
 - b. Develop and manage an advertising campaign to create awareness of the resources available statewide.
 - c. Perform direct outreach to all district and school administrators, as well as Centers for Independent Living to offer information and technical support.
 - d. Recruit and develop a contract with a project administrator to provide support for career-connected learning made available in partnership with New Mexico’s Centers for Independent Living.
 - e. Recruit and develop a contract with an independent evaluator who will work with the PED to meet evaluation and reporting requirements.
 - f. Complete all reporting materials required by the DIF and make sure reports available for review and submission by PED no more than 10 calendar days prior to their federal due date.
4. **Professional Learning:**
- a. Develop, plan, and deliver in-person professional learning in June or July 2024. Target audience is teachers of students with disabilities to onboard them with the platform and resources available.
 - b. Provide ongoing support and consultation as needed for all educators in developing best practices for career connected learning.
- IV. Provide a detailed explanation of the criteria developed and specified by the agency as necessary to perform and/or fulfill the contract and upon which the state agency reviewed available sources. (Do not use “technical jargon;” use plain English. Do not tailor the

criteria simply to exclude other contractors if it is not rationally related to the purpose of the contract.)

The Department of Public Education, in New Mexico has outlined criteria that're necessary for the successful execution of the Career Connected Learning in New Mexico (CCLinNM) grant. These criteria have been carefully developed after an examination of resources and are crucial for achieving the grants objectives. The criteria include;

1. Demonstrated Expertise in Career Connected Learning (CCL); The organization must have a track record in designing and implementing CCL programs. Pathway2careers is particularly well suited for this grant as it has actively engaged in CCL through two state grants over the four years.

2. Experience with Targeted Student Population; The agency requires a source with knowledge and prior experience working with student groups in New Mexico including those with disabilities students from rural areas and a predominantly Hispanic demographic.

3. Statewide Network Capacity; The organization must demonstrate its ability to establish and maintain a partnership network that spans across the state, which is essential, for effectively implementing the CCL model statewide.

4. The ability to cater to the needs of students, with disabilities and successfully integrate them into programs and inclusive education is crucial. It is important for the chosen entity to have a track record of adapting Comprehensive Career Learning (CCL) models for this purpose.

5. In addition providing training opportunities for educators and partners at all levels starting from education and extending up to career readiness is essential. The selected source should have a history of offering support and guidance in the field of CCL.

6. An important aspect of this undertaking is the development and execution of a data collection and analysis protocol. This protocol should be specifically designed to assess the impact of CCL on students with disabilities focusing on areas such as proficiency growth and increased career awareness.

7. Furthermore scalability is paramount. The chosen source must possess the capability to expand existing CCL programs to cover grade levels while also being able to adapt its scope of work to meet objectives outlined in the new grant.

Pathway2careers fulfills these criteria exclusively. Its proven track record with state grants commitment in the field of CCL and ability to scale its initiatives for a wider range of students. The organizations infrastructure, expertise and successful implementation of endeavors within our state further solidify their unique qualifications. Expanding their work towards grade levels while building upon their existing framework aligns perfectly, with their established foundation.

This particular feature is not typically found in sources, which supports the reasoning,

behind the source justification, for the CCLinNM grant.

- V. Provide a detailed, sufficient explanation of the reasons, qualifications, proprietary rights or unique capabilities of the prospective contractor that makes the prospective contractor ***the one source*** capable of providing the required professional service, service, construction or item(s) of tangible personal property. (Please do not state the source is the “best” source or the “least costly” source. Those factors do not justify a “sole source.”)

Pathway2Careers (P2C), by NS4ed LLC stands out as the exclusive provider for the New Mexico Public Education Department. This is because P2C offers a comprehensive range of products and services specifically tailored to connect K 12 education with the demands of the workforce. P2Cs suite of tools including the P2C Career Explorer, P2C Labor Market Navigator and P2C Math are intricately designed to engage students by linking their lessons to future careers and aspirations. This approach holds significance for New Mexico, where it's crucial to integrate educational content with practical workforce applications in order to adequately prepare students for further education and successful careers.

The P2C Labor Market Navigator is especially relevant and beneficial for addressing New Mexico’s requirements. It empowers district and school leaders with user access to labor market data, which enables them to strengthen Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs establish community partnerships and create personalized pathways for students to explore career opportunities that align with local market demands. This service plays a role in New Mexico’s landscape by bridging the gap, between educational offerings and real workplace requirements while making informed decisions based on regional needs. Addressing the inequality gap, in education by making informed decisions based on data is a priority for our state. P2C offers the tools to accomplish this.

Research strongly supports P2Cs emphasis on career-oriented learning indicating that when students understand how their education relates to real world careers they become more engaged and motivated. For instance the P2C Math curriculum adopts this approach by presenting math concepts within job market scenarios. This approach fosters student interest and involvement. Additionally, the supplementary math curriculum offers support and challenges tailored to each students needs ensuring that all students can benefit regardless of their proficiency level.

Furthermore, P2C goes beyond providing curriculum and data tools; they also offer coaching and consultation services, professional development opportunities and workforce development initiatives. These offerings are designed to assist educators in adapting to the changing world of work and effectively implementing programs that prepare students for careers.

Considering the nature of these products and services well as their proven effectiveness in connecting education with future careers P2C stands out as an exceptionally qualified sole source for New Mexico and extension of the grant from the US Department of Education Disability Innovation Fund (DIF. They have what it takes to equip students, with the skills and knowledge to thrive in today’s economy.

- VI. Provide a detailed, sufficient explanation of how the professional service, service, construction or item(s) of tangible personal property is/are ***unique and how this uniqueness is substantially related to the intended purpose of the contract.***

Pathway2Careers (P2C) positions itself as the entity uniquely equipped to meet the objectives outlined in the contract, with the New Mexico Public Education Department. P2Cs qualifications stem from a range of advantages it offers;

A. Creative Design of Curriculum; P2Cs math curriculum draws on actionable research and also takes a distinctive approach that sets it apart from conventional curricula. This innovative approach is crucial for addressing the needs of students including those with disabilities.

B. Continuous Integration of Research; The ongoing application of research plays a role in the development of the US Department of Education Disability Innovation Fund (DIF) grant. P2Cs established methodology ensures that students engage with up to date and effective content fostering growth.

C. Extensive Experience and Established Partnerships; With seven years working alongside the High Plains Regional Education Cooperative (HPREC) and the NM PED P2C possesses an in depth understanding of initiatives within the state. This experience allows P2C to immediately commence work, on the Scope of Work without requiring time to familiarize themselves with endeavors.

Furthermore Dr. Joseph Goins, who is the founder and CEO of P2C has developed working relationships, with individuals in New Mexico's education sector. These include HPREC, NM PED, principals, counselors and other leaders. These relationships are based on respect and trust which allows P2C to offer personalized and targeted services of quality.

P2Cs unique position as the sole provider for the intended contract is supported by a combination of its content its consistent application of research in student engagement and its established partnerships within New Mexico's educational system. This justifies the decision to exclusively collaborate with P2C and utilize its capabilities to improve outcomes for students with disabilities, in New Mexico.

- VII. Explain why other similar professional services, services, construction or item(s) of tangible personal property ***cannot*** meet the intended purpose of the contract.

The unique nature of the domains provided by Pathway2Careers (P2C) plays a role, in understanding why other similar professional services cannot fulfill the intended purpose of the contract. P2Cs domains consist of specialized curricula and tools that have been carefully crafted through research and development specifically tailored to cater to the needs of students in New Mexico's educational environment. This exclusive content is not accessible through any service providers making P2C the source capable of delivering comprehensive and personalized educational services as outlined in the Scope of Work (SOW).

Furthermore, successful completion of the SOW requires an understanding of New

Mexico's initiatives as well as comprehensive knowledge about previous work conducted by P2C. Other educational consultants who lack this intricate institutional knowledge and established relationships that P2C has developed through years of engagement with local entities like HPREC and NM PED would struggle to meet all contractual requirements, within the proposed timeframe.

The special blend of tools and, in depth specialized experience, in the realm of New Mexico's education system guarantees that other service providers won't be able to match the high quality, effectiveness and promptness of the services offered by P2C. As a result P2C is the sole provider capable of fully meeting the contract objectives to meet the Agency's standards and time constraints.

- VIII. Provide a narrative description of the agency's due diligence in determining the basis for the procurement, including procedures used by the agency to conduct a review of available sources such as researching trade publications, industry newsletters and the internet; contacting similar service providers; and reviewing the State Purchasing Divisions' Statewide Price Agreements. Include a list of businesses contacted (***do not state that no other businesses were contacted***), date of contact, method of contact (telephone, mail, e-mail, other), and documentation demonstrating an explanation of why those businesses could not or would not, under any circumstances, perform the contract; or an explanation of why the agency has determined that no businesses other than the prospective contractor can perform the contract.

HPREC initially did an extensive search on the internet, as well as the GSD Price Agreements, and found no contractor that can offer professional experience in career connected learning, public education, workforce development, regional workforce partnerships, LMI development, curriculum development, employer engagement and private industry. Since the initial research, Dr. Joseph Goins' work with the NMPED on this project, experiential knowledge, and proprietary content developed has assisted the agency in the determination that no other business can perform the SOW within this contract.

Additionally, the Executive Director of HPREC performed extensive research and found at the national level, Dr. Joseph Goins has been the content person for the Association of Education Service Agencies (AESA). His broad background makes him the expert in developing current research into practice. Dr. Goins has provided his knowledge and expertise in New Mexico and multiple other states over the past several years developing credibility across the nation's service centers.

Certified by:

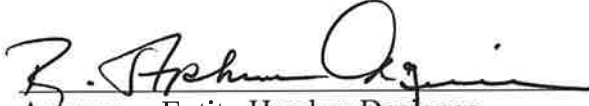
Date: 1/25/2024



Agency Chief Procurement Officer

Agency Approval by:

Date: 01/25/2024



Agency or Entity Head or Designee