



**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: Jobs for America’s Graduates-NM, Inc.

Address of prospective Contractor:

Mailing:

PO Box 21555

Albuquerque, NM 87151

Physical:

724 Ranchitos Rd.

Corrales, NM 87048

Contact Name, Telephone Number and Email Address:

Kaity Parent

(505) 261-7708

kaity@jagnm.org

Amount of prospective contract before tax: **\$300,925.91**

Term of prospective contract: **End of 6/30/2024**

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):

These services are per two Intergovernmental Agreements (IGA #24-924-00187 and IGA #24-924-00211) between the New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) Identity, Equity, and Transformation (IET) Division – At-Risk Intervention Response (AIR) Team and the Agency for Fiscal Year 2023-2024, with the termination date of June 30, 2024. For documentation purposes, there will be three contracts, one per item below, as a result of this procurement. The breakdown per IGA is as follows:

IGA No./Agency ID	IGA Line Item	Budget
#24-924-00187 (AIR)	A;1-1 (High School Re-engagement)	\$69,444.44
#24-924-00187 (AIR)	B;2-1 (High School Dropout Prevention)	\$92,592.59
#24-924-00211 (AIR-APS)	A;1-1 (APS-Re-engagement)	\$138,888.88
	Total	\$300,925.91

The NMPED AIR (At-Risk Intervention Response) team programs are designed to provide research-based, behavioral, and academic interventions to at-risk student groups and student groups identified by the Martinez/Yazzie findings which include Native American students, Hispanic students, Black students, economically disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, and English language learners.

Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) is a dropout prevention and school re-engagement program with a long track record of results in New Mexico and throughout the nation. We help academically vulnerable, underserved students to show up, reconnect and graduate from high school, ready for further education, career, and life. The JAG Model Program is designed to support the critical needs of high school students who are "off track" to graduation. In NM, only 76% of students graduate from high school in four years, far below the national average of 86% (NM Public Education Department; America's Promise Alliance). The graduation rate for JAG-NM participants in the Class of 2022 is 100%. (JAG Force).

The purpose of this request is for Jobs for America’s Graduates-NM, Inc. to provide the JAG Model Program to LEAs and schools who want to implement the Program. JAG is an evidenced-based, proven model that demonstrates that better-than-equal outcomes can be achieved by youth who are traditionally underserved.

New Mexico children face many challenges that create barriers to learning. According to NM Kids Count (2022), 24% of NM children live in poverty; 35% of NM families with children lack secure parental employment; and 9% of NM teenagers are not in school and not working. JAG high school students face an average of six barriers upon entry to our program, the top three being 80% eligible for free and reduced lunch; 30% low academic performance; and 28% chronically absent (JAGForce).

JAG makes a difference for the teenagers and young adults in our state. To

address these needs, JAG uses an evidence-based, education-based, participant-centered approach to get students on track to graduation and support their post-high school success. The graduation strategy is built upon the “early warning system” research of the Everyone Graduates Center. Under this model, students are selected to participate in JAG based on poor attendance, failing grades, behavioral challenges, and other school-determined risk factors. Once in the program, they receive targeted academic and wraparound support. The JAG-NM program provides a comprehensive set of services designed to keep young people in school through high school graduation and helps improve their success rates in post-secondary education and career.

JAG-NM has been a state affiliate of the National Jobs for America’s Graduates organization since 2006. JAG-NM, a non-profit organization since 2019, is the sponsor of the JAG Model Program in New Mexico. If school districts want to implement the JAG Model, they must partner with JAG-NM, without the non-profit the JAG Model Program wouldn’t be available in New Mexico. JAG-NM serves the most vulnerable high school students through graduation, and then one year of follow-up to support participants as they transition into post-secondary education and training pathways.

Students served during the 2022-23 school year identified as 54% Hispanic, 36% Native American, 5% White/Caucasian, 3% Multi-Racial, and 2% Black/African American. The most frequent selection criteria indicate that 96% of JAG participants were economically disadvantaged, 81% had low academic performance, and 43% of JAG participants reporting were from the bottom quartile in class standing. Additionally, JAG participants are identified as students with disabilities and English language learners. JAG-NM is serving the populations identified in the Martinez/Yazzie case with documented success for the students.

Jobs for America’s Graduates-NM Inc. will:

- Provide and implement the Jobs for America’s Graduates Model Program, an evidence-based school re-engagement, dropout prevention program, in partnership with LEA’s and schools.
- Connect and develop working relationships with local school districts and New Mexico industry and employers to provide JAG participants exposure to career pathways, employability opportunities, and, to the extent possible, industry recognized credentials for leadership programs that are recognized by postsecondary institutions and/or industry.
- Provide technical assistance, training, and coaching to school administrators and other identified key local education agency staff of participating schools to implement the JAG Model Program with fidelity.
- Provide access to curriculum resources, software platforms, student leadership and career development experiences, student membership in the JAG National Career Association, and a data management system

- **(JAGForce) to ensure fidelity to the JAG Model.**
- **Conduct periodical school visits and site program reviews to ensure conformity with the model program performance standards.**
- **Organize and host an annual State Leadership Conference and a Career Development Conference, utilizing input from students, specialists, employers, industry, postsecondary partners, and community organizations.**
- **Engage students after they graduate, connecting them to resources to support their post-high school success. This “follow-up” approach has been studied by Drexel University, which found that JAG graduates had higher employment rates than non-JAG graduates.**

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.)

- **Are there other in-school programs that provide the same behavioral and academic interventions to at-risk student groups and student groups identified by the Martinez/Yazzie findings for schools and disengaged students?**
- **Are there other programs that have data that demonstrates successful outcomes for at-risk student groups and student groups identified by the Martinez/Yazzie findings?**

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.”)

The goal of the JAG Model Program is to help students at greatest risk of dropping out to show up, reconnect, and graduate from high school, ready for further education, career, and life. JAG places a caring adult (JAG Specialist) in the lives of disengaged, disaffected youth whose academic career is often characterized at time of entry into the program by high absenteeism, low grades, and problems in school. Our highly trained JAG Specialists are full-time classroom teachers who provide academic support, mentoring, and professional coaching to JAG students to help them take charge of their own education so they can get back on track toward graduation. JAG is meeting a critical need in New Mexico.

Services are delivered to the most vulnerable of New Mexico’s youth in partner high schools through a Memorandum of Understanding, to place a JAG specialist, who is responsible for implementing the JAG model, in the JAG classroom. The Specialists are licensed teachers who are employed directly by participating school districts through funding streams to which they have access.

In contrasting JAG to other programs serving adolescents and young adults, it's important to note that JAG is not an out-of-school time program. Rather, JAG draws its impact from the work of highly trained specialists who provide engaging, experiential classroom-based instruction and other forms of advice and support both inside and outside the classroom. These specialists are deeply embedded in the schools in which they work, helping to mediate students' day-to-day interactions within that school environment.

The job is not done once a JAG participant graduates from high school. JAG Specialists support their participants for one full year after high school graduation to ensure they continue to thrive and make good choices in their transition to post-secondary education, the military, or full-time employment.

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.*

- **JAG-NM programming is provided as an in-school, for-credit (elective) class during the school day. Classes integrate project-based learning and employer engagement through hands-on, realistic learning experiences where students master up to 87 competencies translatable to the workforce. JAG Specialists incorporate trauma-informed practices in the classroom.**
- **JAG specialists, hired by the school district, are highly trained certified teachers. Specialists assume various roles to benefit students. This includes Teacher, Counselor, Career Association Advisor, Advocate, and Coach. Additional duties include monthly participant follow-up after graduation, parent engagement, data collection and reporting, connections to employers and community partners, and locating resources for students and their families.**
- **All JAG participants are members of the JAG National Career Association. The Career Association provides leadership development experiences through extracurricular activities which include student-led planning and engagement for career development, public service, civic awareness, and social awareness projects and activities in addition to participation in State and National JAG conferences throughout the school year.**
- **When students graduate from high school, JAG remains a steady support providing individualized services that lead to increased employment, wages, postsecondary attainment, and other positive outcomes.**
- **JAGForce, the JAG internal data management system, provides tracking of students served, services delivered, and outcomes achieved. Statewide and school performance outcomes are used in JAG's National Accreditation Process. JAG State Organizations and JAG local affiliates must receive standard accreditation to remain an affiliate in good standing. The formal Accreditation visit may be at the end of the first year and again in the third year of operation before performance goals are achieved.**

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

Similar programs for at-risk students don't have all the Model Components of the JAG Model Program. Jobs for America's Graduates-NM, Inc. is a state affiliate of the National JAG Organization. JAG-NM, Inc. is the sponsor of the JAG Model, the only way partner schools get the JAG Model is through JAG-NM. Model Components include:

- **Student selection is based on early warning indicators. JAG is an intervention program proven to work in NM.**
- **National Career Association (leadership experiences)**
- **Competency-driven curriculum and skills development**
- **Employer Engagement**
- **Follow-up for a year after graduation**
- **Data Management System**

The JAG Model Program is a comprehensive set of the above services delivered by the JAG Specialist in a class for elective credit during the school day.

JAG is preparing young people to graduate and enter the workforce ready for advancement opportunities and upward career mobility. In combining project-based learning, trauma-informed practices, and employer engagement, JAG creates the advantage young people deserve and need to succeed in today's changing environment.

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.

The following avenues were explored to determine the basis for procurement:

- **Researching the internet - no other providers offer the full set of model components.**
- **Discussions with community organizations and service providers in NM and throughout the country**
- **Research provided by the JAG National Organization**
Presentations from other service providers in NM

Certified by:

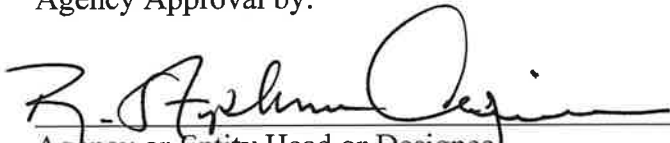
Date: 2/8/2024



Agency Chief Procurement Officer

Agency Approval by:

Date: 02/08/2024



Agency or Entity Head or Designee