

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: Gary Gabriele

Telephone Number: 575-445-7090

II. Name of prospective Contractor:

NS4Ed, LLC.
Joseph Goins, CEO

Address of prospective Contractor:

200 E Broadway, Suite 305
Maryville, TN. 37804

Amount of prospective contract: \$224,000.00

Term of prospective contract:

1 year

III. Please thoroughly list the services (scope of work), construction or items of tangible personal property of the prospective contract:

This confirms that NS4Ed, LLC. is the sole source provider; Sole publisher, sole ASP hosting source, and sole distributor of research protocols and ancillary programs attached in the SOW. NS4Ed, LLC conducts research utilizing the best available resources and will build a construct to the specs mentioned below

Regional Meetings: Plan and host regional business meetings for ECHS leaders. Each regional meeting will be hosted at an ECHS on a topic selected with input from ECHS leaders and in coordination with the Lead.

Technical Support: ECHS sites are required by NMAC 6.30.13 to apply for formal designation. CONTRACTOR shall provide support to Lead in scoring applications. Applications that do not meet the minimum criteria for recognition require a remediation plan. CONTRACTOR shall provide support and guidance to Lead in developing the plan and delivering it to the ECHS, including coaching ECHS principals as necessary.

On-Line Leadership Meetings: Plan and host four online business meetings for ECHS leaders. The webinar meetings will be recorded, and posted online. Each online meeting will be hosted at an ECHS on a topic selected with input from ECHS leaders and in coordination with the Lead.

Workforce Podcast: CONTRACTOR shall create a 24 Workforce Readiness podcasts, two per month, with a strong emphasis on preparing students for careers. Content shall include

- Reauthorization of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act.
- Education and workforce alignment that focuses on equipping students with information about in-demand occupations.
- How to act to address the challenge in preparing students for careers that employers, educators, and youth tend to operate in separate silos with little interaction.
- The workforce podcast will focus on intersections between education and employment by targeting key business leaders that can share and discuss topics relevant to education.

Quarterly Business Report: CONTRACTOR shall create 16 quarterly business analyst reports, one per workforce region per quarter. A quarterly call and quarterly reports will be provided for all four workforce regions.

ECHS Resource Center: CONTRACTOR shall identify new material and provide updates to the ECHS online resource center to keep it current and relevant for 2018-2019. Links to the new resources will be emailed to ECHS leaders once per month.

Career Pathway Mapping Website: CONTRACTOR shall update the Career Pathway New Mexico website to keep it current and relevant, to include data, news, and relevant material. To support the use of the website, CONTRACTOR shall create an online training program and professional development materials for educators within New Mexico. CONTRACTOR shall transfer the website to NM Department of Workforce Solutions by June 30, 2019.

- IV. Provide an 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 agency desires to conduct research and facilitate required meetings related to Early College High Schools and to present the findings from that research throughout the school year, 2018-2019. The research/business meetings is to include ECHS Policy requirements, updates on condition status vs. exemplary status. Research into national associations and practices that improve access to postsecondary education through ECHS’s will be made available to New Mexico’s ECHS and the associations that support it.

The agency also desires to conduct research and around the changing requirements for workforce, this will be developed and delivered via a podcast series developed by NS4ed. NS4ed will conduct the research necessary to produce such a podcast, edit the podcast, and produce the podcast across the State of New Mexico.

The State of New Mexico also requires a statewide Policy Tool for school districts to understand career readiness as defined by their local labor shed. NS4ed, is the sole provider of a system, Pathway 2 Careers (P2C) that provides basic intelligence on the characteristics and dynamics of the labor market in which a local School District is located. It seeks to provide perspective on the realities of the local job market. The report and system organize regional labor market information by career clusters to clearly communicate the highest-value clusters in terms of demand and earning potential. Within each cluster, specific organizations are highlighted, with particular emphases on the demand, earning potential, requisite education, and career pathways. This practical approach serves to make clear the path for local students into the region’s highest-value careers.

This confirms that NS4ed, LLC is the sole source provider, sole publisher, sole ASP hosting source, and sole distributor of Pathway2Careers (P2C) career identification and readiness platform. P2C is federally trademarked, and 100% of its properties and systems are solely and wholly owned by NS4ed. NS4ed has not reassigned any rights to any other entities to sell or host these programs.

System Overview. P2C utilizes national, state, and labor-shed occupational data in conjunction with NS4ed expertise and guidance to evaluate and interconnect available occupations and the personal interests of students. P2C provides guided occupational analysis to align the interests, skills, and academic priorities of students and education leaders. P2C and its systems serve as the foundation for both education leaders’ and students’ continuing career readiness assessments and promote the attainment of career and college ready skills and training.

Unique Capabilities. P2C is a bridge between education and industry to help educators connect with the realities of their local job market.

- a. P2C is a flexible framework that allows educators to explore labor market information and access innovative methods for preparing students for careers.
 - b. The P2C platform provides a labor market exploration system to identify high-value career destinations for students.
 - c. P2C provides specifically crafted career readiness resources to ensure student users become career ready.
 - d. NS4ed exclusively utilizes its extensive labor market analysis, delivering the most high-value career options in local communities to users.
 - i. NS4ed utilizes numerous datasets, dependent upon the individual needs of each client or user, to create personalized analysis to connect clients to data specific to their concerns, needs, and location.
- 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.”)

In order to properly conduct the research identified above and to disseminate and implement the findings, a contractor must have experience in both educational theory and administration, in addition to sophisticated capabilities in labor market and economic analysis. The relevance of the state’s Career Technical Education and Work Based Learning strategies to the realities of regional career opportunities is a theme throughout the Workforce Readiness statement of work. Experience in state-level implementations of workforce readiness credentials is essential. Translating the needs of employers, who do not speak the language of educators and curriculum developers, into learning objectives and work-based learning standards requires a perspective borne of experience in private industry, educational administration, curriculum development, the federal workforce development system and regional career readiness initiatives. NS4Ed, LLC. as directed by Dr. Joseph Goins and the team he has assembled possess this broad-based set of skills and experiences.

NS4Ed, LLC. has unique capabilities around the research being proposed by PED through its assembled staff with expertise in each area being proposed in Early College High School and Workforce Readiness. The staff at NS4Ed is comprised of several aspects that range from policy, practice, process, and technical. First, from the policy standpoint, Dr. Goins represents 27 years in public education. Dr. Goins has worked in various states to develop career infused programs, Dr. Goins has help establish statewide career systems in Alabama, West Virginia, Indiana, New York, Mississippi, Kentucky, Louisiana, Oregon, and Texas. His policy work has been directly related to workplace readiness and k12 policy around career readiness in high schools. He has his Ed.D from Vanderbilt University where he

focused his research on Individual Career Programs and defining Career and College Readiness.

Additional staff includes Trevor Stokes, an economic and workplace specialist. Trevor Stokes directs workforce programs for the Arizona Commerce Authority. He also regularly serves as a subject matter expert in labor market analysis to support career-driven curriculum development, regional economic research and growth planning, industry sector partnerships, educational product development and public policy recommendations. Personal experience in secondary education, adult technical training and workforce development have contributed to a practical and digestible approach to interpreting and applying labor market data. An in-demand public speaker, he has addressed a range of audiences both national and local, ranging from the federal Economic Development Administration Conference to the Arizona Association of School Boards. Before joining the ACA, Trevor provided leadership to some of the country's most innovative and successful career-driven education and workforce development initiatives, including GoBuild Alabama, Work Ready Austin, and the Kentucky Career and College Readiness Transformation. His writing and research have contributed to successful efforts to secure Race to the Top, AMJIAC, Workforce Innovation Fund and Ready to Work federal grants.

Dealing with practice, NS4Ed works with Dr. Danielle J. Tallent. NS4ed's Chief Academic Officer, Dr. Tallent specializes in bringing clean, yet creative, curricula designs to life pushing forward NS4ed's objective of purpose-driven learning. Utilizing her PhD in Philosophy and MA in Developmental Psychology (University of Denver, 2009 & 2006, respectively), Dr. Tallent tells stories with data that are engaging and relatable. She embraces the challenge of identifying essential ideas within a subject area and presenting that information clearly and effectively, making the most difficult information accessible.

- 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.***

NS4Ed has the exclusive capacity to not only develop the research from the best personnel available but to also utilize the technical capability to accomplish the following:

- Establish accountability for development of programs leading to career opportunities in high-growth, high-wage occupations.
- Facilitate conversation between education, workforce and economic development.
- Ensure career counselors have access to relevant regional labor market information and career pathways supporting employment opportunities.
- Benchmark workforce literacies for demand occupations.
- Promote systems integration and transformation using common data analysis and information.
- Develop a state portal to disseminate information constructed through research and delivered around best practices.

- Facilitate a state wide conference on Early College High School and Workforce Readiness
- Utilize Resources from various states to inform best practices for the state of New Mexico.

The desires of the agency do not fit into the qualifications of an educational research professional, or a workforce development practitioner or a curriculum developer or labor market analyst; indeed, the package of skills, experience and connections required by the state to execute this concept are rare to the point of disqualifying all contractors except one, NS4Ed, LLC.

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

No other contractor in this space currently offers professional experience in public education, workforce development, curriculum development, employer engagement and private industry.

- 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; reviewing telephone books and other advertisements; contacting similar service providers; and reviewing the State Purchasing Agent's vendor list. 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 did an extensive search on the internet, as well as the GSD Price Agreements, and found no contractor that can offer professional experience in public education, workforce development, curriculum development, employer engagement and private industry.

In addition, the Executive Director of HPREC has done extensive research around early College High Schools as well as Workforce Readiness. 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 multiple states over the past several years developing credibility across the nation's service centers.

Certified by:

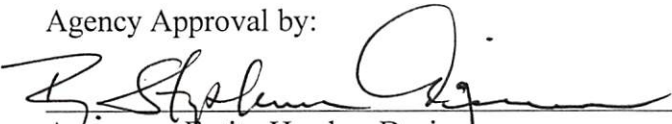
Date: 8-9-18



Agency Chief Procurement Officer

Agency Approval by:

Date: 08-09-18



Agency or Entity Head or Designee