



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: **NS4ed, LLC dba Pathway2Careers**

Address of prospective Contractor: **200 E Broadway, 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: **\$575,000.00**

Term of prospective contract: **1 year**

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:

The New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) is continuing its long-standing partnership with NS4ed, LLC dba Pathway2Careers ("P2C") to support the development, maintenance, and enhancement of the statewide Career Technical Education (CTE) Hub. High Plains Regional Education Cooperative #3 ("the Agency") requires a contractor to continue operating and expanding this existing platform for the 2026–2027 school year.

The CTE Hub is the statewide digital platform — operated by P2C at the New Mexico

Resource Center for CTE (careerpathways-nm.com) — that connects education and workforce data, giving students, educators, and policymakers a unified system for career-connected learning, career exploration, program planning, and labor-market alignment. This scope of work delivers four enhancements that extend the platform P2C already built and hosts. These services are per an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA #27-924-00151) between the New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) College and Career Readiness Bureau (CCRB) and the Agency for Fiscal Year 2026-2027.

SCOPE OF WORK:

Deliverable Name

- Development Interactive cluster mapping tool for pathways, integrating labor market data for on-demand customized maps and dynamic digital cluster maps based on the Kalamazoo Public School Cluster Map examples.
- Implementation of a Unique User Login System
 - 1) Extend the CTE Hub's functionality by introducing a secure, unique login system for all users.
 - 2) Develop an authentication and user account framework that enables educators, students, and other stakeholders to create individual profiles on the CTE Hub.
 - 3) With unique user logins, the platform can track user engagement and preferences, save customized settings or favorited content, and provide personalized updates or notifications.
 - 4) The feature will integrate with the broader Career Connected Learning Platform allowing seamless interaction between CTE Hub information and Pathway2Careers curricula such as Pathway2Careers Math and Pathway2Careers Exploration.
- Course Planner
 - 1) Establish a building administrator role in the Pathway2Careers platform which will allow the user to establish a course catalog.
 - 2) Course catalog will include credit attainments and allow administrators to define credit requirements for graduation.
 - 3) Reporting will be available that allow administrators to see credit attainment by student or by grade.
 - 4) Once a course catalog is available, students will be able to interact with a course planner available on the My Career Page.
 - 5) The tracker will enable students to explore course offerings, determine credit attainment and share their plans with teachers and parents/guardians.
- Hosting, Maintenance & Updates
 - 1) Continuous hosting and technical maintenance of the CTE Hub platform.
 - 2) Perform regular and periodic updates to security, content, data, and features

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 Agency developed and specified the following criteria as necessary to perform and fulfill this contract, and reviewed available sources against these criteria:

- Continuation — not replacement — of the existing statewide CTE Hub, so that current users experience no disruption to career exploration, planning, or labor-market tools;
- Ownership of, and the ability to modify, the CTE Hub codebase and its hosting environment in order to add dynamic cluster maps, a secure login system, and the course planner;
- The ability to integrate new features with P2C’s proprietary Career-Connected Learning Platform (P2C Math, P2C Career Exploration, the P2C Labor Market Navigator, and each student’s My Career Page);
- Custody of the New Mexico CTE frameworks, Career Clusters, Career Cluster Maps, Perkins performance-indicator data, and labor-market datasets already loaded in the Hub;
- Secure, statewide-scale hosting with a demonstrated record of reliability, availability, and performance for New Mexico users.

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 following reasons, qualifications, proprietary rights, and unique capabilities make NS4ed, LLC dba Pathway2Careers the one source capable of providing the required services:

P2C is the sole owner, developer, and host of the CTE Hub. The platform is operated by P2C as the New Mexico Resource Center for CTE at careerpathways-nm.com and is live today, delivering Career Clusters, Career Cluster Maps, Career Frameworks, demographic data, and Perkins Performance Indicators to educators, students, and employers across the state. The platform, its source code, its data integrations, and its hosting environment are proprietary to NS4ed, LLC dba Pathway2Careers.

Every deliverable in this contract — dynamic cluster maps, a unique user-login system, and the P2C Course Planner — must be built inside, and integrated with, this existing

proprietary platform. The login system is specified to connect users to P2C Math and P2C Career Exploration, and the course planner surfaces through the P2C-built My Career Page. These are proprietary P2C products; no third party can develop against or integrate with them.

Across more than eight (8) years of partnership with NMPED and its College and Career Readiness Bureau, P2C has assembled and continuously maintained the New Mexico labor-market datasets, CTE frameworks, and Programs-of-Study alignments that populate the Hub. This accumulated, New Mexico-specific data asset and the engineering that hosts it are held solely by P2C.

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.*

The contract is expressly a continuation of a platform that already exists and is in daily use. The four deliverables are enhancements, hosting, and maintenance of P2C's proprietary CTE Hub and its integrated proprietary tools — not a standalone product that could be sourced elsewhere. Because the work must be performed on P2C-owned code, data, and infrastructure, the required service is unique to P2C.

This uniqueness is directly related to the purpose of the contract: NMPED's objective is to strengthen and continuously improve an operating statewide system — improving alignment between Programs of Study and workforce demand, increasing platform adoption, and generating actionable policy insight. Only the owner and host of that system can add features to it, maintain it, and keep it reliable without rebuilding it.

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

Commercial career-exploration and course-planning platforms identified through market research provide comparable categories of functionality, but none can perform this contract. No third-party vendor has license to the CTE Hub codebase, may deploy to its hosting environment, or can integrate with the proprietary P2C Career-Connected Learning Platform (P2C Math, P2C Career Exploration, the P2C Labor Market Navigator, and My Career Page) that the login system and course planner are required to connect to.

Selecting another provider would mean abandoning the existing New Mexico CTE Hub and rebuilding an equivalent platform — re-loading the state's CTE frameworks, Career Cluster Maps, Perkins data, and labor-market datasets, and re-establishing statewide hosting — at substantially greater cost and risk, while stranding current users and the state's multi-year investment in the platform. That outcome is contrary to the stated purpose of continuing and enhancing the Hub.

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.

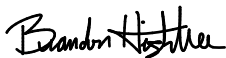
In determining the basis for this procurement, the Agency conducted a review of available sources. This review included internet research; review of career-and-technical-education and college-and-career-readiness trade publications and industry newsletters; examination of the New Mexico State Purchasing Division's Statewide Price Agreements for comparable services; and identification of commercial providers of career-readiness, advising, and platform services active in the market.

That review confirmed that, while several providers offer overlapping categories of service, the required work is the continuation, maintenance, and enhancement of statewide platforms, datasets, and community relationships that are owned, built, and hosted by NS4ed, LLC dba Pathway2Careers and that reflect more than eight (8) years of partnership with NMPED. No other business identified can lawfully or practically perform the contract, because no other business holds rights to the Contractor's proprietary platforms and integrated tools or possesses the New Mexico-specific historical data and relationships on which the deliverables depend.

The Contractor's continued delivery is publicly evidenced by the platform it currently operates for this initiative, which is live and in active statewide use:

New Mexico Resource Center for CTE — careerpathways-nm.com.

Certified by:



Agency Chief Procurement Officer

Date: 07/31/2026

Agency Approval by:

Jill Fernandez

2020 Sole Source Form

Agency or Entity Head or Designee

Date: 08/03/2026

Sole Source Justification - CTE Hub 2026-2027

Final Audit Report

2026-08-03

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