



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: **WestEd (SCALE Science/K-12 Alliance)**

Address of prospective Contractor:

730 Harrison Street

San Francisco, California 94107

Contact Name, Telephone Number and Email Address:

Lauren Wrotniak

415-565-3000

www.wested.org

Amount of prospective contract before tax: **\$594,842.60**

Term of prospective contract: **12 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: As the PED works on continuing to support local educational agencies (LEAs)—public school districts and state-chartered charter schools—with the implementation of the NM STEM Ready! Science Standards, LEAs are concerned that they do not have experts to provide continuous support of science educators in their locality. The New Mexico Public Education Department (PED), in partnership with WestEd, developed a course that prepared LEA leaders for capacity-building, equitable

science teaching and learning practices centered around the NM STEM Ready! Science Standards. This unique professional learning (PL) program allowed participating science leaders to experience leadership and science-centered professional learning in cycles: 1) as a “student learner,” 2) analyze then translate what they learned to customize and facilitate PL back at their LEA, 3) collect evidence of its impact, and 4) make responsive adjustments to attend to the needs in their context. This PL program focused on meeting the needs of LEAs, aligned with their NM DASH plans and the PED Comprehensive Strategic Plan to articulate K–12 vertical alignment in science teaching and learning.

SCOPE OF WORK: This workstream is a continuation of WestEd’s support in building a second phase of a year-long professional learning initiative for additional, enhanced learning opportunities for Building Science Leaders Network participants. This phase of science-centered professional learning will include:

- **Educator Ecosystems** - Building capacity in NM STEM Ready! Science and the Three-Dimensional Framework within the educational ecosystems (District Leadership/C&Is/Administrators/Instructional Coaches/Science Educators) that provides instructional and leadership benefits across all content areas (ELA and Math) -everyone is receiving the same science message K-12
 - Community of Practice and professional mentorship opportunities to collaboratively solve common educational barriers within the system (BSLN Year 1, BSLN Year 2, and BSLN Year 3)
 - BSLN collective action items working groups
 - Same-size districts/charters paired together
 - Districts with common HQIM adoption paired together
 - Regionally
- **District-Wide Vision for Science** -Creating and Implementing a Five-Year Strategic Plan for Science within the NM DASH Plans framework of evidence-based planning, implementation, and monitoring processes for schools to steer educational outcomes
 - Diving into more chapters of the Instructional Leader’s Guide to Implementing Science Practices
 - Focus on best practices to support science equity, making the learning relevant with immediate application of skills and practices for educators and students to achieve equitable, student-centered science.
 - Develop an equitable professional learning matrix detailing features, actions, and practices needed to achieve the New Mexico Science Vision.
 - Supporting teams in ongoing vision work of PL facilitation for equitable professional learning focused on equitable high-quality instruction, assessment, and effective HQIM use.
- **Supporting the implementation of HQIM Science Implementation**
 - Identifying barriers and proposing solutions to sustainably implement, aligned with the HQIM SCIENCE Implementation Tool,
 - Understanding the shifts in instruction and assessment

- Recognizing and responding to evidence of students' NGSS three-dimensional thinking to improve student learning, and
 - Observing and providing feedback to teachers to support them in developing their three-dimensional instructional teaching practices.
- **Whole Student & Culturally Responsive Education with Student Supports & Opportunities-** Student-centered science instruction with focused applications of the NGSS three-dimensional framework, cross-curricular integration, Multi-Layered System of Supports (MLSS), and Universal Design for Learning (UDL)
 - Increased student engagement with asset-based science instruction and assessment that ultimately impacts and increases attendance rates.
 - **Year Three Facilitator Academy-** Building capacity and creating sustainable professional learning structures:
 - Build capacity amongst selected veteran participants through a rigorous and intensive train-the-trainer model to prepare those selected participants to facilitate some of the Year 1 professional learning modules.
- 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.)

Since 2016, WestEd has been a longstanding collaborator with PED. WestEd understands the local context within our New Mexico educational ecosystem and embodies the values of the PED. The Building Science Leaders Network was co-designed through this collaboration to identify the needs of LEAs and science education. Since the pandemic, there has been a growing divide in knowledge about the NM STEM Ready! Science Standards and three-dimensional teaching and learning practice; so the structure behind the initiative was to reach as many LEA leaders, educators, and ultimately New Mexico students as possible.

Through WestEd's facilitation and professional guidance, participants of the Building Science Leaders Network implement:

- A sequence of professional learning opportunities (whole staff PL, PLC, department meetings, and community engagement nights),
- Collect valuable data to evaluate and steer educational outcomes,
- Community of Practice and opportunities for professional mentorship,
- Collaboratively solve common educational barriers within the system, and
- Collectively utilize the network as a foundational support system

Targeted outcomes of this learning series are:

- Foster an outcome to build local capacity at the district or charter school,
- Ensure vertical alignment for K-12 science implementation and best practices,
- Create structures and opportunities for teachers to work on their practice,

- Shift science pedagogical instruction and assessment practices that align with the New Mexico Instructional Scope and the NM STEM Ready! Science Standards, and
- Build a sustained, scalable, and equitable impact for science educators and their students here in New Mexico.

WestEd engages participants in a year-long professional learning sequence, involving in-person, virtual asynchronous, and virtual synchronous elements designed for district teams consisting of district-level coordinators, site administrators (principal/instructional leader), site-based instruction coaches, science coordinators, and/or teacher leaders.

- 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.”)

As stated previously, the Building Science Leaders Network model was co-designed through a collaborative partnership between the PED and WestEd. The structure behind this initiative was to reach as many LEA leaders, educators, and ultimately students as possible. With a long-serving collaborative partnership with WestEd since 2016, they know the New Mexico local context, as well as the unique challenges New Mexico educational ecosystems face locally and regionally across our state. WestEd’s experience within our state fosters a pragmatic approach that is not only culturally aware of our LEA participants but also strives to bring relevant, applicable pedagogical science practices to the local context.

From the beginning of this initiative, the PED and WestEd collaboratively designed pre- and post-participant evaluations to collect informative data based on the needs of the LEAs and their local education communities. The Building Science Leaders Network provided us valuable data that directed the learning of the initiative in real time and ultimately helped educators and students with the necessary supports in science. Recognizing the crucial role of leadership, they focused on empowering leaders through the Building Science Leaders (BSLN) framework. This framework is strategically designed to support and sustain leaders as they drive change in science education, zeroing in on how school and district leaders propel large-scale instructional improvement.

WestEd is the one source capable of leading this work because they developed the previous iteration of the science learning network in NM. Additionally, WestEd authored and published reports on their proprietary research that serves as the foundation for scaled science leadership improvement in practice-based cycles:

1. **Learn.** The first step is to get the teams of leaders up to speed in acquiring foundational, discipline-specific knowledge, such as the standards and their influence on curriculum, instructional approaches, and assessment. In addition, leaders develop expertise in the design and implementation of effective and ongoing science professional learning (PL), using local data to design and monitor the progress of a PL plan.

2. **Do.** Building on this foundation, leaders customize PL modules to suit their specific local context, with the aim of transforming science teaching and learning. They collect data on the PL on the intended groups—teachers, leaders, and/or students—and report back to the BSL group for reflection and adjustment.
3. **Repeat.** Starting with data from the PL implementation, the BSL community reflects on their PL plans, goals, and steps for improvement..

- 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.***

With a collaborative partnership, the PED and WestED developed a professional learning sequence for the Building Science Leaders Network participants centered around:

1. An understanding of the science standards and the ways in which they demand shifts in instruction and assessment,
2. The ability to support teachers in learning to recognize and respond to evidence of students' NGSS three-dimensional thinking,
3. Building leadership capacity in observing and providing feedback to teachers to support them in developing their three-dimensional instructional teaching practices.

To meet these goals, WestEd developed and facilitated six training modules.

Year 1 Module 1: Develop ideas about how 3D instruction is different from typical instruction and reflect on shifts that would need to happen at teams' sites.

Year 1 Module 2: Learn how artifacts of students' thinking and student discourse can provide a window into students' ideas and resources

Year 1 Module 3: Use data from artifacts and discourse to recognize and respond to trends in students' 3D learning

Year 2 Module 1: Instructional Shifts That Advance Students' 3D Thinking

Year 2 Module 2: PLCs Focused on Supporting Instructional Shifts

Year 2 Module 3: Supporting a Culture of Science Professional Learning

During the year-long Building Science Leaders Network, Science Leaders developed a vision for how they can use their role to advance implementation of the NM STEM Ready! Standards and New Mexico Science Instructional Scope. The majority of the year focused on preparing science leader participants to implement their vision at the district or charter school level using the Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM) and Program Elements Matrix (PEM) to achieve equitable, student-centered science. Science leaders practiced observation learning walks in science classrooms, then planned feedback related to instruction and assessment that could support teachers in shifting their practice to meet the goals of the NM STEM Ready! Science Standards. Narrowing the focus on recognizing and leveraging students' cultural and linguistic resources.

- First, the science leaders identified strategic areas of concern at the district or charter level using the CBAM survey tool,
- Second, the science leaders analyzed data collected and aligned that data with the district or charter DASH Plan to draft a PEM, creating actionable PL goals and PL implementation,
- Third, the science leaders practiced science instructional observations with video cases,
- Fourth, the science leaders utilized the tools provided and created by the WestEd facilitation team to enact observation learning walks and feedback cycles at their sites,
- Fifth, the science leaders brought artifacts and reflections back to the virtual sessions to discuss and to prepare for their next implementation cycle.

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

WestEd's deep knowledge in the convening and facilitating of LEA science leaders makes them the one source capable of supporting the continued work in building capacity in New Mexico. Building Science Leaders is facilitated by a one-of-a-kind collective group of expert facilitators by WestEd, who have been actively applying and advocating for equitable, cohesive science teaching and learning practices from the inception of NGSS. WestEd's strong individual professional skill set leverages their vast amount of science pedagogical knowledge to collaboratively meet the unique needs of the Building Science Leaders Network professional learning initiative. This uniquely formed facilitation team is a vital and integral part of our professional learning initiative because it provides participants with the foundational context for science teaching and learning. WestEd's facilitation, along with the participants, is an interwoven structure of support that the science leaders need to create and sustain equitable systematic change in science at their districts and charter schools. The Building Science Leaders Network is projected to grow and add more participants within our existing structure, bringing in more district and charter schools into the science network.

WestEd continues to bring years of professional expertise, current and studied pedagogical practices for K-12 science educators, nationally recognized within the science education community, and above all, a clear understanding of our New Mexico educational ecosystems.

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.

WestEd's deep knowledge in the convening and facilitating of state and district facilitators makes them the one source capable of supporting the continued work in building capacity in New Mexico. This vendor is the only candidate to lead and develop this work, as they have been engaged in this work for the past four years.

The PED also reviewed similar programs in a national review and found the following:

- *Making Sense of Science* (WestEd) does not contain a lesson analysis component or lesson adaptation.
- *Next Generation Science Exemplar* (NGSX) only focuses on practices and implementation.

Certified by:

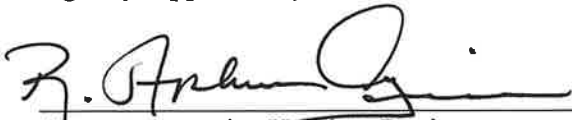
Date: 6/3/2026



Agency Chief Procurement Officer

Agency Approval by:

Date: 06/03/2026



Agency or Entity Head or Designee