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Career-Connected Learning for Native Youth (CCLNY) Project Abstract

While career pathways have emerged as a national best practice for accelerating students from high school to college or into the workforce, Indigenous students in rural, high-poverty areas of northwest New Mexico face countless barriers and limited access to well-supported pathways aligned to college credentials or the jobs those credentials could help them secure.

Aztec Municipal School District in NM is embarking on *CCLNY* as a labor data-informed and educational research evidence-based best practice to support academic and economic success for its Native students. In SY 2022-23, Aztec will launch 11 schoolwide CTE pathways of regional in-demand, high-value careers. The district is committed to ensuring equitable access and success for Indigenous students, who make up 20% of the school's population.

CCLNY embeds innovative career exploration and math curricula within well-constructed career pathways, including the culturally relevant Educators Rising program that raises teachers from within students' communities. Aztec is at the forefront of championing career-connected education as this approach will transform the economic trajectory of its students for generations. *CCLNY* includes career-connected core and CTE curricula, career-relevant work-based learning opportunities, capstone projects with local industries, and dual enrollment courses to accelerate students toward valuable college credentials and degrees and ultimately to quality occupations.

CCLNY will equip Native students with a tailored set of additional supports, Native American advisor/teacher staff and role models, work-based learning, and the creation of a model that can be replicated in other pueblos and tribal communities statewide. A thorough evaluation of the design, implementation, and outcomes for Native students will cultivate a broader understanding of equitable education and what students need to guide better utilization of federal resources to support the success of Native Indian youth far beyond the grant.

Narrative

Career-Connected Learning for Native Youth (CCLNY) is an equitable approach for providing culturally relevant, career-connected learning to aid Native youth to overcome decades of low graduation and high poverty rates suffered by their families in Aztec, New Mexico, and the surrounding Tribal communities. *CCLNY* meets the *Competitive Preference Priorities 2 and 3*.

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Tribal Partnership

Located in Northwest NM, Aztec Municipal School District (AMSD) is in partnership with a Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) Kinteel Residential Campus. Indigenous students make up 19.65% of the district's population (496 students), some of whom come from the NM and AZ portions of the Navajo Nation and others who reside within the district limits.

Competitive Preference Priority 3: Promoting Equity in Student Access to Education

It is vitally important that New Mexico's Native youth have equal access to high-quality education, student support services, and post-graduation college and employment in quality careers. Aztec High School is newly implementing a school-wide career pathways model. The *CCLYN* program will be uniquely focused on the needs of Native youth (including those from the Kinteel Residential Campus). Presently, the school district only employs six Native Indian staff members; one central objective of this program is to create new Native American advisor/teacher positions at the Aztec High School. The full-time Native advisor/teacher will work to mentor, understand, and meet Native learners' unique needs, as they embark on the new school model, progress toward chosen career destinations, and build partnerships with employers for work-based learning opportunities. It is essential to identify specific needs, employ more Native educators, support underserved and at-risk Native youth, discover barriers to educational equity, increase graduation rates and career readiness, and foster success for these students.

1. Critical Nature and Magnitude of Equity Gaps Endured by Native Indian Youth:

Reporting in December before the recent pandemic, the National School Boards Association drew attention to a concerning 2007 Education Committee of the National Caucus of Native American State Legislators' study showing that "Native American students performed two to three grade levels below their white peers in reading and math," and "were two times more likely to drop out of school" and argued that according to the 2020 education figures nothing had improved for Native youth (2020). This highlights that even before COVID-19 devastated Navajo Nation and other Tribal communities in New Mexico, Native Americans suffered some of the lowest education outcomes in the state. At present, Native youth continue to lead the state in risk factors, including living in poverty (40%) and high poverty areas (45%), in single-parent homes (60%), in families where no parent has secure employment (48%) and have families lacking health insurance (6%), and others who have reported delaying health care for their families (40%) (New Mexico Voices for Children, 2022, pgs. 18, 35, 49, 70). The educational impacts of these risk factors are reflected in the fact that Native students record the lowest proficiency rates in 4th-grade reading (89% fall below) and 8th-grade math (92% fall below), and 28% fail to graduate high school (New Mexico Voices for Children, 2022, pgs. 35-36 and 43).

2. Severity of Need: The severity of the need to account for the educational failures of Native Indian students in NM is undeniable. Families in school districts in NM have faced immense discrimination and low equity connected to education, as made clear in July 2018 when the lawsuit *Yazzie/Martinez v The State of New Mexico* was heard, and Judge Singleton ruled that NM had failed its Native American student population by denying the students an adequate education (Gudgel, 2018). The CCLNY program responds to this identified need, providing educational supports for Native youth who attend the Aztec Municipal School District.

3. Investing in At-Risk Native Youth and Educator Demographics: The *CCLNY* project recognizes that Native students, including many at-risk of educational failure, will benefit from an educator solely focused on their needs as they embark on a new high school model. Moreover, Native students will benefit from having an educator exclusively focused on their needs and who reflects their ethnic and cultural background. Teacher and educator diversity matters and has been shown to impact student learning, motivation, achievement, and college aspirations (Egalite & Kisida, 2017; Boisrond, 2017; Gershenson et al., 2017; Kamenetz, 2017; LPI, 2018; Texas A&M International University, 2019; Rix, 2021).

According to *NPR* writer Boisrond, “if your teacher looks like you, you may do better in school (2017, paragraph 1).” Researchers Anna J. Egalite and Brian Kisida (2017) reported after surveying six US school districts (including more than 80,000 public school students in grades four through eight) that data showed that “students assigned to a teacher with similar demographic characteristics experience positive benefits in terms of academic perceptions and attitudes (2017, p. 59).” More specifically, the study claims that students reported that they experienced better quality learner-teacher communication, felt more cared for and happier in school, were motivated and put in more personal effort towards academics, and aspired to attend college after having had an instructor who reflected them demographically. The most consistent benefits reports were when a student-educator matched gender and racial/ethnic demographics and when students viewed teachers as role models (2017).

Growing research connects educator demographics and having a “same-race teacher” to minority student success; in fact, *NPR* education correspondent Anya Kamenetz claims that role models are essential; arguing that even “having just one black teacher can keep black kids in school (2017).” Kamenetz cites a study (of Gershenson, Lindsay, Hart, and Papageorge) that

showed having one black teacher in elementary school reduced low-income black male probability “of dropping out of high school by 39 percent,” adding that those students, both female and male, who had had at least one African American educator (*several years prior*) then reported as high-school-students “stronger expectations of going to college (2017, paragraph 3).”

The cited research looked at the impact and “causal effect of exposure to a same-race teacher” after collecting data from North Carolina and Tennessee and publishing their findings in the *IZA Institute of Labor Economics*, claiming that “black primary-school students matched to a same-race teacher perform better on standardized tests and face more favorable teacher perceptions (2017, pgs. 1 and 30-31).” The research findings include a discussion of the study and what it shows about “role model effects.” According to Gershenson et al., some mechanisms of why this is occurring remain elusive, yet it does support the claim that investing in “same-race, educated role models” may encourage minority at-risk low-income youth to better invest in themselves because of improved motivation and attitudes (2017, p. 5). Furthermore, the “role model effects” are “especially important for the most at-risk students. (2017, p. 16).”

More districts recognize the importance and benefits of having teacher and educator demographics that reflect their student populations. For some schools, this is causing an additional challenge, as evident from the Learning Policy Institute (LPI) report entitled, “Teachers of Color: In High Demand and Short Supply” (2018). LPI claims that research shows teachers of color help close achievement gaps for students of color and students from low-income families and are highly rated by students of all races. According to LPI, “teachers of color boost the academic performance of students of color,” and “they have been linked to improving reading and math test scores, improved graduation rates, and increases in aspirations to attend college (2018, paragraph 6).” Therefore, districts and programs like the CCLNY

program at Aztec Municipal School District seek to increase teacher diversity and hire educators that reflect their student populations. Connected to the high demand for diverse educators, an intended outcome of the *CCLNY* program (and specifically the “Teacher Education” pathway being implemented as one of the 11 new career pathways) is to encourage Aztec students to become educators, while concurrently fostering a more diverse educator workforce.

Recognizing the importance of investing in Native youth, a central objective of *CCLNY* is to create a new Native American advisor/teacher position at the Aztec High School. This main objective is supported by research; as one author from the aforementioned study argues, “having one teacher” that reflected the student population “made all the difference to students; having two or three didn’t increase the effect significantly.” To respond to the challenge of teacher shortages, Papageorge recommends hiring more diverse teachers *and* immediately benefitting students by modifying student groupings so that every student works with at least one same-race teacher (Kamenetz, paragraphs 14-15).

a. Quality of the Project Design

1. Promise and Effects of Career-Connected Learning & Education: In 1916 when American educational reformer and philosopher John Dewey first wrote, “To find out what one is fitted to do and to secure an opportunity to do it is the key to happiness (1916/1999, p. 308)” he touched on the central premise behind career-connected learning and education. Likewise, Secretary of the US Department of Education Dr. Miquel Cardona when presenting the keynote address at the 2022 “Advancing Equity in Career-Connected Education Summit” described his faith in high-quality Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. Secretary Cardona advised educators to “meet students where they are and help them to get to where they want to go. (2022)” He discussed the challenges educators faced before, *and increasingly after the*

COVID-19 pandemic, and explained that we need to serve and support the potential of *all students*, and for those who were hurt most by the pandemic, we must “ensure that students who were underserved have ‘on ramps’ to ‘quality jobs.’ (2022).”

Career Connected Learning (CCL) principles support sustainable career readiness and offer an effective educational model. CCL, introduced by the National Center for College & Career Transitions, exposes students to the world of work during the learning process (Meeder & Pawlowski, 2020). Scholars Meeder and Pawlowski claim students with greater exposure to career-connected learning (specifically emphasizing CTE programs) are more likely to graduate from high school, enroll in a two-year college, be employed, and earn higher wages (2020).

Chris Bierly and Abigail Smith of Bain & Company also reference the potential and significant contributions of early college and career-connected learning models (2022). The authors explain that when career-connected learning is “done right” quality jobs (careers that are considered both high-growth and high-wage, more than \$35,000/annual) are made “available to a broader pool of young people (2022, paragraph 1).” Bierly & Smith argue CCL is essential in providing access to underserved students and those “who too often find access to such jobs beyond their reach,” adding “Well-designed CCL pathways close that gap by combining classroom learning with meaningful on-the-job work experience that leads to door-opening postsecondary degrees and credentials (2022, paragraph 4).”

2. Aspirational and Attainable Goals, Objectives, and Outcomes: The *Career-Connected Learning for Native Youth (CCLNY)* project will positively impact children and families in Aztec Municipal School District (AMSD) by linking education, the economy, and the workforce into a relevant and responsive program of Career and Technical Education (CTE) for high-demand, high-wage, and high-skilled jobs in the region. The focus of the project will be to provide tools

and personnel, specifically a Native American Academic Advisor/Teacher who will work within Aztec Municipal School District to help with integration and support of the project in hopes to provide greater supports to our Native American students. Over the last year, Aztec Municipal School District has worked to create 11 new CTE pathways in high-growth and high-wage occupations at Aztec High School that will be fully implemented for the 2022-2023 school year.

When looking at both district and state data, there is much that the district can do to continue to support our students, specifically our Native American Student population. AMSD is working in collaboration with the BIE's Kinteel Residential Campus located in Aztec, New Mexico. This dormitory specifically services Native American students who reside on tribal lands and want access to an alternative educational setting with more opportunities. The Kinteel dorm has seen a great decline in enrollment with a loss of over 80% of their population of Native American students over the last two years, greatly due to the pandemic's effect on NM and AZ tribal communities. (Past enrollment was 100 Native students, and current enrollment is 20 students.) This collaborative effort with Kinteel will provide new support, including tutoring, career advising, industry experiences, internships, a robust set of high school curricula experiences, and 8th-grade pre-high school transition support. The program will also encourage Native American students to take part in the CTE Teacher Education Pathway hoping to promote the outcome of future Native American educators within the school district.

2b. Native American Underrepresentation and Lack of Success in College: Native American students are the most underrepresented of all racial and ethnic student populations within higher education. Their underrepresentation is present at all levels: enrollment, persistence, and graduation. In terms of graduation rates, one study found that only 39% of Native American

students graduated in 2012 from four-year institutions, compared to 60% of white students (Knapp, Kelly-Reid & Ginder, 2012).

The percentage of low graduation rates from colleges and universities is even more dramatic in the Navajo Nation. Most area students who do continue in postsecondary education programs attend San Juan Community College in nearby Farmington. This college's graduation rate for Native American students (Class of 2017) was just 10% compared to other ethnicities in the same class—21% for Hispanic and 24% for Caucasian students (Salvatore & Dee, 2016). Other universities serving Native American students had equally low graduation rates including Diné College Shiprock North Campus (9%), University of New Mexico-Gallup (8%), and New Mexico State University-Grants (12%). This data suggests Native Indian students in the Four Corners region need additional opportunities to ensure relevant workforce preparedness and support for graduating from college. Moreover, these statistics are far worse when compared to the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center's finding that 67% of all students who start postsecondary programs earn a degree in six years' time (Shapiro et al., 2018).

2c. Goals and Outcomes Linked to Evaluation: AMSD's vision is to create a school district where students and staff feel "Inspired, Safe, & Fulfilled" each time they set foot on campus. Along with this vision, AMSD believes that our district and our schools are "Different by Design" meaning that we want to be intentionally different, providing innovative programs and impactful support to our student subgroups that need the most assistance. Both sayings are truly in the spirit of this grant because we want to provide innovative new course offerings and targeted supports that focus on our most at-risk populations.

The following “**Statements of Understanding**” drive project activities:

1. AMSD Native American students will increase both academic and technical skill mastery through the integration of 11 CTE pathways; Currently, AMSD has a total of 65 CTE concentrators and 0 CTE completers based on 2020-2021 NMPED data. Of these 65 CTE concentrators, none of the student population is Native American. By the end of this grant, we would like 100% of our student population (a current total of 650 AHS students) to participate in a CTE pathway. By 2025, AMSD will increase its CTE concentrators from 65 to 400 and have 75% of all Native students as CTE concentrators.
2. Through support and course offerings, AMSD will increase the graduation numbers of Native American students. 2021 State Average for graduation rate is 71 % for Native American students. 2021 AMSD graduation rate of Native American Students is 66% compared to a district-wide graduation rate of 73%.
3. In the 2022-2023 school year, AMSD will pilot a new CTE Teacher Education Pathway in collaboration with San Juan College. Students will participate in the student organization Educator Rising and take a sequence of coursework that includes: Childhood Development > Teacher Academy > Teacher Education Seminar (Internship) > Dual Credit Classes: SJC EDUC1120 Intro to Education & SJC SPED2110 Intro to Students with Exceptionalities. Current data: Currently there are no Native American students on this Pathway. Goal: year over year we will increase Native youth participation in the Teacher Education Pathway.
4. Build a more robust collaborative working relationship with Kinteel and the Native American student body resident population. With a signed partnership agreement and both governing boards in support of this grant, it is our hope with the AMSD Academic Advisor/Teacher, the district can provide more robust participation and supports for our Native American students

at Kinteel to include tutoring, academic advising, internship opportunities, guest speakers, and industry field trips. Current Data: 20 students at Kinteel when in the past they had 100. The goal triples the enrollment at Kinteel to 60 students with the support of the paid position to help with recruitment and support for AMSD.

5. Integration of Pathway2Careers career exploration and math curriculum to help increase students' self-efficacy in building career awareness, exploration, preparation, and relevance of coursework. (*For more on P2C please see, Part 6: Description of Continuing Activities.*)
6. Utilization of the Pathway2Careers online student portfolio of career destinations to track student career exploration and put them on a trajectory to success after high school.
7. Professional learning for Pathway2Career teachers (CTE and core-curriculum teachers).
8. Increased partnership with local business and economic development to cultivate internships and career-relevant capstone courses for students. Currently, we have zero industry partners and will be having an industry convening this May. We hope to have 11 industry partners (one for each of our 11 pathways) that will provide classroom-based industry experiences for our students.
9. Increased partnership with San Juan College providing access to career-relevant Dual Credit courses delivered with aligned CTE pathways. Currently, we are working with the college to offer two new Dual Credit Education Specific classes for the 2022-2023 school year. Each following year we will offer one new site-based dual credit opportunity for students.
10. Increased partnership with Indigenous families and students to inform the implementation of this approach and the support needed as the model grows over time.
11. Project management plan informed and overseen by both the district's Native American Advisory Council and Equity Counsel, which includes regional parents and tribal leaders.

12. Hiring an additional Native American Academic Advisor/Teacher to create a distinct infrastructure that meets Native students where they are and helps them achieve equitable outcomes in career pathways.
13. Increased partnership for paid, work-based learning opportunities for future educators within the school and community college communities and networks.
14. Community-based participatory research (CBPR), qualitative, and quantitative evaluation of the design, implementation, and outcomes for Native students in comparison to the rest of the Aztec student body and other Indigenous students in the region.
15. Leveraging relationships across BIE-funded schools, New Mexico Public Education Department, and Higher Education Department to share lessons learned with other districts and Native- serving schools statewide.
16. Sustainability beyond the grant through braided federal and state funding streams once the proper infrastructure is in place and evaluation shows what's working and what course corrections may be needed over time. Curricular content will be relevant to the real world, connecting students to viable career and college opportunities.

3. Project Methodological Tools & Additional Research: Current research supports increased emphasis on career readiness, STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics), and introducing and supporting underrepresented students to enter and follow pathways to quality careers. Career connected education and having students study specific CTE pathways (linked to high-growth and high-wage, or “high-value careers”) are effective ways to do this (NS4ed, 2021; The Pell Institute, 2021; Gillespie, 2021). According to the 2021 Historical Trend Report, not only do significantly fewer students from the lowest income quartile enroll in postsecondary

education; of those low-income students that do enroll, *only* 13% of students earn a bachelor's degree in six years (The Pell Institute, 2021, pg. 180).

As a response to this remarkable challenge, to best support all of the Aztec district's students, and especially considering the need of our underrepresented Native youth, the district has researched and selected **eleven career pathways for the new CTE model**, which includes:

- Teacher Education
(Educators Rising Model)
- Information Technology
- Healthcare
- Computer Science
- Engineering
- Natural Resources
- Construction Trades
- Animal Science
- Ag Mechanics and Machinery
- Welding
- Military Science

Each pathway is promising in that it provides paths to living-wage, valuable career destinations. Several pathways fall into the STEM and IT clusters, which are linked to many high-demand and high-wage occupations (CSTA-NM, 2017; Rainie, 2017; Saw & Agger, 2021).

After the initial *CCLNY* project year, the program will work to incorporate and use Pathway2Careers (P2C) Career Exploration and Math Curriculum and career readiness tools. P2C serves as a bridge bringing together career-connected learning strategies and academic content and includes a Labor Market Navigator that provides accessible, real-time, localized labor market information. P2C is also incorporating equity data into the labor market data. Through the Labor Market Navigator tool, students, their family members, community stakeholders, and educators can work together learning from the regionalized information, which will influence data-informed decision making. The P2C Program engages students in mathematical reasoning using examples from specific industries, such as construction and

healthcare. It also teaches essential transferable work skills such as teamwork, critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, and communication.

The P2C Career Exploration and Math lessons aim to engage in students' learning processes deeply. Students develop a more substantial interest in the content by connecting teaching and learning to the real world. In addition, each learner examines college and career opportunities that align with their strengths and values (Kemple & Willner, 2008).

P2C curricula improves the flexibility and accessibility of CTE and engages more students in fully realized career pathways. P2C provides curricula that support career readiness for all students. P2C teaching guidelines also instruct educators on how to employ culturally and linguistically responsive teaching (CLRT) (Hollie, 2017). Ultimately, career-connected learning helps students understand the "why" behind the "what." When students are provided with tools to make learning relevant and applicable to themselves, their motivation, performance, retention, and interest increase (Malka & Covington, 2005; Jang, 2008; González et al., 2009; Marzano & Pickering, 2011; Yeager & Dweck, 2012; Hulleman et al., 2014).

4. Evaluation Connected to Logic Model:

The *CCLNY* Logic Model breaks down the project into:

- Inputs (Activities & Partnerships);
- Intervention (Outputs);
- and, Outcomes (Short and Long Term Goals).

The project outcomes will be defined as short and long-term, and they will be measured using student surveys and assessments, administrative data, and regional employer/stakeholder surveys. After the initial pilot year, short-term outcomes will be examined. Student outcomes in years two and three will be compared to the baseline year of implementation.

5. Logic Model:

INPUTS	INTERVENTION COMPONENTS	OUTCOMES
<p>The creation and implementation of new core subjects in 11 Career Pathways will require sustained partnerships between:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education Agencies • Aztec Municipal Schools • Executive Leadership Council • Project Leadership Team • New Native staff member(s) • Kinteel Residential Campus • NM Public Education Dept • San Juan Community College • Native American families • AMSD Equity Council • AMSD Indian Advisory Council <p>Workforce Specialists</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partners for Workforce Innovation • NM Dept of Workforce Solutions • P2C Labor Market Specialist <p>Local Boards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment Board <p>Curriculum Partnerships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Mexico State Workforce Board • NS4ed • CTE Industry Council • Pathway2Careers Career Exploration 	<p>Fully scripted core subject with Career Awareness Taught in Grades 6-12:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create menu of employer-supported grade-level capstone projects. • Integrate career-infused math and financial literacy learning into core subjects with NS4ed guidance. • Confirm district commitments to P2C career exploration and integrate into district's platform. • Professional Learning for educators supporting student career exploration and development. <p>Curriculum that Emphasizes High-Demand Job Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify key industries/employers with guidance from CLNA and state and local workforce boards. • Interviews, podcasts, and employer videos that showcase high-demand occupations, state demographics, and authentic real-world career stories. <p>Local Boards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop mentoring, internship, and apprenticeship opportunities with local industry leaders. 	<p>Short Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New position of Native American Academic Advisor/Teacher, and possibly a second Native staff member. • Student satisfaction with 11 CTE areas and curriculum shift. • Achievement - State assessments. • Achievement - P2C assessments • Completion of Algebra I by 9th grade. • Behavioral Engagement (<i>reflected in attendance and discipline</i>) • Awareness of quality Career Options. • High School Graduation. • Post-Secondary Aspirations. • Student Satisfaction with Career Awareness & Curricula. <p>Long Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career Readiness & Post-Secondary Success • College Enrollment. • Career Selection. • Labor Market Success • Equitable workforce participation. • Match between preparation and regional workforce needs. • Employer satisfaction with CTE student graduate skills/readiness. <p>(Outcomes will be measured using administrative data and surveys.)</p>

b. Quality of Project Personnel

1. Essential Personnel Descriptions:

Project Director: [REDACTED] who is the Director of Career and Technical Education for Aztec Municipal School District will be the *CCLNY* project director. [REDACTED] has a robust history creating innovative CTE programming to help tribal communities promote college and career readiness throughout New Mexico. [REDACTED] has over 15 years of educational experience working with diverse populations as a teacher, coach, principal, academic coordinator and now a director.

Project Oversight: [REDACTED] who is the Superintendent of Aztec Municipal School District will be the project oversight for the *CCLNY* project. [REDACTED] has over 14 years in education as a teacher, dean, principal, curriculum director, and superintendent and has worked to support diverse at-risk populations in Merced, CA, Roswell, NM, Bloomfield, NM, El Paso, TX, and now Aztec, NM. As Superintendent of Aztec Municipal School District, [REDACTED] will be in charge of program oversight and reporting the progress of the *CCLNY* project to the governing AMSD school board.

Project Facilitator: [REDACTED], Associate Superintendent of Teaching and Learning for Aztec Municipal School District will be the project facilitator. [REDACTED] has over 15 years in education as a Special Education Teacher, Elementary Principal, and District Administrator. Lauren is a passionate educator who has spent her career working with and helping students in Aztec, NM and is also the lead of the district's Equity Council. [REDACTED] knowledge and perspective of the local community and demographics is integral to fully supporting our at-risk population. [REDACTED] also oversees all Federal Programs and will work to implement additional funding sources to make this project both sustainable and able to expand to different subgroups of need.

Project Advisory Council: AMSD Equity Council: Formed in 2021, has worked tirelessly to provide equity and access within the district. The application for this grant is one such initiative. The Equity Council is made up of program leads of various at-risk groups throughout the district and will be the Project Advisory Council for the *CCLNY* project. The Advisory Council will form the duties and scope of the Native American Academic Advisor/Teacher, help implement the project, and oversee the *CCLNY* benchmarks and success measures.

The Project Leadership Team includes the following:

- [REDACTED] Native American Edu. Coordinator for Aztec Municipal School District.
- [REDACTED] - English Language Learner Coordinator for Aztec Municipal School District
- [REDACTED] - Metal Health Coordinator for Aztec Municipal School District
- [REDACTED] - Director of Special Education for Aztec Municipal School District
- [REDACTED] - Secondary Edu. Instructional Coach for Aztec Municipal School District
- [REDACTED] - Elementary Edu. Instructional Coach for Aztec Municipal School District
- [REDACTED] - Student Act. Specialist and Home Living Asst. for Kinteel Res. Campus.

2. Project Director's Qualifications, Training & Experience: [REDACTED] is the Director of Career and Technical Education (CTE) for Aztec Municipal School District (AMSD) and is the project director lead for *CCLNY* project. In his first eight months as the Director of CTE, [REDACTED] has successfully increased students equity and access to site-based dual credit, created a new work-based learning program, increased internship opportunities throughout the county, bridged local industry to create more student access to place-based education (industry field trips, externships, guest speakers, and career fairs) and has done a complete redesign of CTE sequencing from kindergarten to 12th grade with the implementation in 11 CTE pathways that will be fully implemented in the 2022-2023 school year.

Prior to coming to Aztec, [REDACTED] was the founding Principal of Bond Wilson Technical Center (BWTC) which is a New Mexico Public Education Department-designated early college high school academy. BWTC offers CCSD high school students in grades 10th through 12th dual credit coursework in collaboration with Navajo Technical University and San Juan College. BWTC opened its doors in August of 2018 and currently has six guided industry-based pathways in high-growth, high-wage occupations that include Welding, Healthcare Sciences, Construction Trades, Mechatronics (Engineering/Computer Science), Industrial Maintenance, and Culinary Arts. In three years of being open, Principal [REDACTED] generated \$2.8 million in donations and grants to start new initiatives, built six new state-of-the-art labs, and worked to renovate the school's site to better promote student learning. Through collaboration of industry partners such as Raytheon, Arizona Public Service, North American Coal- Bisti Fuels, and Navajo Transitional Energy Company, BWTC became a successful early college CTE center, offering students relevant, industry-based, hands-on learning while giving students engaging experiences through activities like state skills competitions, guest speakers, industry field trips, internships, and hands-on industry-based projects.

Prior to being the founding principal of BWTC, [REDACTED] worked in many educational settings—school leadership, classroom teaching, high-level district curriculum development, assessment, data reporting, and analysis. [REDACTED] supported Central Consolidated School District's (CCSD) turnaround initiative which led to increased scores and school grades. Through deep data dives with teachers and principals, the district greatly improved their reading and math proficiencies. As the data coordinator for CCSD, he managed the student information system for both state and federal reporting, and ensured correct reporting for federal Impact Aid, Perkins funding, Next Gen CTE Funding, special education, NM SEG funding, bilingual

compliance, and ESL submissions. █ ensured correct data reporting for grants, state, and federal funding was accurately reported in a timely manner. He was the primary designee for grant data reporting for GEAR UP (\$120,000) and Johnson O’Malley (\$300,000), and he assisted with NMTEACH evaluations and NMPED standardized testing.

In addition to his work in K-12 education, Milo served as the Coordinator of Enrollment Services at San Juan College where he managed and promoted dual credit accessibility, and Coordinator of Service Learning at New Mexico State University (NMSU) where he placed and supported students in Las Cruces Public Schools to help reading and math literacy.

█ roots in education lie in classroom teaching where he taught Modern American History, NM History, U.S. Government, Economics, and AP Human Geography for eight years. █ studied secondary education at NMSU where he graduated with high honors and a 4.0 GPA in 2006. He was awarded a Master’s Degree in Curriculum & Instruction from NMSU in 2011 and he received a post-graduate certificate in Educational Leadership from Western New Mexico University, 2021. This past year █ was named the “CTE Administrator of the Year” for the New Mexico Association for Career and Technical Education (NMACTE).

3. Project Personnel Qualifications: For detailed information on project leads personnel qualifications, training, and experience please see resumes located in the Part 6 attachments.

c. Quality of Project Services

1. Quality of Project Services and Partner Collaboration:

For the *CCLNY* program to succeed, the collaboration between various stakeholders is essential. Details are discussed in the project management planning section and in the provided timeline. In year one the Executive Leadership Council (ELC) and the Project Advisory Council will meet, collaborate, and start engaging with the local community. The councils will also work to recruit

and hire the proposed Native American academic advisor/teacher/role model. Later in the first year, the *CCLNY* leaders will work to engage parents/families and students and begin providing professional learning for teachers and staff. During years 2 and 3 the program will open a stakeholder portal, and work to engage more community businesses and members. As discussed prior, the Pathway2Careers Labor Market Navigator tool will aid the program leaders in identifying potential partners and understanding the local labor market. Labor data will inform a comprehensive local needs assessment (CLNA) and industry partnership building. This tool will be shared with Aztec administrators, teachers, counselors, advisors, families, and students.

Moreover, thanks to first-of-its-kind P2C Program and curricula developed with federal funds for New Mexico, students served by Aztec have access to career-connected learning embedded within well-constructed career pathways aligned with high-value, high-wage careers in their area (\$35,000 and above annually), including the culturally-relevant Educators Rising Program (2022). During the 2nd and 3rd years of grant support, Aztec will focus on integrating the P2C Program curricula and tools into classrooms by providing professional learning to educators. The curricula and tools will connect to the 11 CTE pathways and especially help students to develop math skills. With career-connected learning growing in policy and practice nationwide, Aztec is launching an intervention strategy specifically for its students that could transform the economic trajectory of Native Americans for generations.

2. Explanation of Meeting the Needs of the Native American Local Population: Over the past school year, Aztec Municipal School District has seen great change. With new district leadership under a new superintendent who joined the district this summer, AMSD has moved quickly with the introduction of new aligned CTE programming in grades K-12. District leadership has also been heavily involved in reviewing past district data, to develop innovative

ways to support our most at-risk student populations. This grant application is in the spirit of this, where AMSD is working to provide more supports to ensure that our Native American population is not only successful in graduating but more importantly successful, after leaving our schools as they enter the post-secondary setting and the workforce.

With a new district direction, AMSD has conducted extensive focus groups and empathy interviews with diverse populations of students, parents, educators, industry representatives, and local community members on how they envision the future of the school district. One such interview with a parent of a Native American student indicated that she was glad that she brought her student into the district but wished that it provided more opportunities and exposure for students in careers. With information gained from these focus groups and individual interviews, a team of over 40+ stakeholders from diverse perspectives throughout the district has worked to develop a strategic plan based on providing more supports and opportunities for all of our students. Additionally, this year AMSD has created a governing committee called the AMSD Equity Council which is made up of representatives from various stakeholder groups including district departments such as Federal Programs, Special Education, English Language Learners, Mental Health, and the Indian Education Department. This team serves as champions for student populations that are most in need and as a normal school board, the equity council oversees and approves actions of the district with budgeting, calendaring, and new initiatives that may impact students. This group has been imperative in challenging the old norm, working on creating new opportunities for students, and working to acquire funds to ensure new initiatives are successful.

d. Quality of the Management Plan

1. Adequacy of Management Plan: CCLNY includes several major components—outreach to the community, coordination of duties and goals of the Native American Advisor/Teacher, and

further development and integration of the Teacher Education Pathway to promote additional dual credit and internship opportunities for students.

- Coordinating these components throughout the project will be the Project Director, Milo [REDACTED] of Aztec Municipal School District.
- Outreach to the stakeholders will be conducted by Lauren Laws who is the AMSD Equity Council Lead and the Project Facilitator for the *CCLNY* Project.
- Development of the Teacher Education Pathway will be in collaboration with Alexis Esslinger, The Director of the Teacher Education at San Juan College.

These three key personnel constitute the project's Executive Leadership Council (ELC). Together, they will implement the project and oversee program benchmarks and success measures. As the grant applicant, Aztec Municipal School District will serve as the fiscal agent, committing the personnel, resources, and active participation required for success. The ELC will also work with educational partners, including the developers of Pathway2Careers NS4ed; Evaluation Specialist Dr. Joseph Goins; and AMSD Superintendent Kevin Summers.

- NS4ed, LLC is a career readiness solution (educator services and curricula) provider.
- CEO, Dr. Joseph L. Goins, is a career-connected learning expert with over 30 years of experience in research and Ed Tech, serving as the independent evaluator.
- Kevin Summers, Superintendent of Aztec Municipal School District, brings extensive experience and appreciation for data-informed decision making and will be the internal liaison for the evaluation team.

The *CCLNY* logic model, presented on page 15, will be used to guide planning, implementation, communication, and evaluation to ensure results-based performance. These inputs/activities will offer benchmark information, charting actual progress versus targets, so the evaluator and stakeholders can make informed decisions related to continuous improvement.

Utilizing existing organizational and operational structures, the *Executive Leadership Council* will ensure the goals and objectives they established can be achieved within the grant timeline with efficacy, efficiency, and sustainability.

1b. Planning Period: The project will have a very short planning period as a considerable amount of work redesigning the 11 new pathways has already taken place. Planning, developing a job description, and hiring will take place over the 2022 summer break with implementation starting Fall of 2022.

1c. Timeline:

Year/Quarter	Activity	Benchmark/Milestone	Responsibility
Administrative Start-Up			
Y1, Q 1	Establish financial controls	Financial structure in place	Project Director (PD)
Y 1, Q 1-2	Convene Executive Leadership Council (ELC)	Initial meetings, agenda	PD
Y 1, Q 1	Begin Planning Period	Begin community outreach through newsletters and social media	ELC, PAC
Y1, Q 1-2	Convene the Project Advisory Council (PAC) to develop job description & scope of work, and hire position	Job description posted and hiring of NA Academic Advisor/Teacher	ELC, PAC
District Supports			
Y1 Q1	Get budget set up in district for Native American Academic Advisor	Budget set to support CCLNY	PD
Y 1 Q 1	Set up office space and classroom space at Aztec High School for the Native American Academic Advisor	Office space and classroom space set up	PD
Y1 Q 1-2	Review software/hardware requirements	Schedule support as needed	PD, ELC
Y1 Q3 <i>ongoing</i>	Provide PD on CTE, Project Based Learning, SEL, and Equity	Presentations/attendance logs on expanded business partnerships, IT, and equity	PD, PAC
Teacher Education Pathway Development			
Y1 Q1 <i>ongoing</i>	Development of course content, assessments	Completed course sequence outline syllabi, and assessments	ELC, HS counselors, and SJC admin
Y1 Q1 <i>ongoing</i>	Enrollment of students in Dual Credit classes	Enrollment dual credit education specific classes on campus at AHS	PD

Development of Business Partnerships and Program Videos			
Y1 Q2-4 <i>ongoing</i>	Identify and secure internship sites	10 student interns in teacher classrooms throughout AMSD	ELC and PAC
Y1 Q2-4 <i>ongoing</i>	Integrate business presentations into the course content	Integrated program	ELC and PD
Y2-4	Develop capstone projects for Teacher Education Seminar classes	Students in all 11 pathways will participate in an industry-based capstone project	Businesses; ELC and PAC
Marketing, Recruitment, and Enrollment of Students			
Y 1 <i>ongoing</i>	Develop recruitment materials for parents and students	Completed materials, family engagement & distribution	PD
Y1 2-4 <i>ongoing</i>	Hold informational presentations for parents and students	Scheduled meetings; attendance sheets	PD
Y 1Q 3-4 <i>ongoing</i>	Recruit, admit, and enroll students in the program	Tracking sheets, annual student enrollment	PD
Y 2-4	Develop interim benchmarks	Establishment of internal benchmarks, independent evaluation benchmarks	PD, ELC, PAC Superintendent; indep. evaluator
Y 2 Q 3	Development of stakeholder portal	Portal in place; stakeholders apprised of the availability	PD, ELC
Y1-4	Conduct independent evaluation	Studies of efficacy; reports	NS4ed

2. Ensuring Diversity of Perspectives

As mentioned earlier, AMSD has instituted a District Equity Council to help promote equity throughout the district and to promote diverse perspectives when making district decisions.

AMSD is heavily committed to continuing the equity council and is working to get more student and parent involvement in the committee, which is currently lacking. Recently, we were able to get representatives from our partner in this grant, Kinteel Residential Facility. Kinteel additional has given the group a unique perspective and has helped us considerably in formulating supports for our dorm students.

The mission of the AMSD Equity Council is to “Provide an equitable and culturally/linguistically responsive educational experience for all AMSD students. We strive to create an educational environment where diversity is valued and each day students feel inspired, safe, and fulfilled.” The goals of the council include the following:

1. Create an action-oriented team that represents diverse subgroups within the district;
2. Ensure that diverse perspectives are heard in district decisions;
3. Make recommendations on programming support for our diverse student populations;
4. Integrate Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Instruction (CLRI) into all schools;
5. Provide professional development and tools to support teachers in social and emotional supports of students;
6. Provide professional development opportunities for staff in best practices related to CLRI, social-emotional learning, and equity.

Help to create equitable student-centered learning environments throughout the district through: CTE Pathways, ADC Portfolios, Internships, Dual Credit, Native Indian advisor/educator.

3. Building Sustainability

The management plan builds capacity and results that will extend for many years within Aztec Municipal School District. *CCLNY* will create a new Native American academic advisor/teacher position that will quickly support Native American students. The district has received funding from various grants as seed money for new positions and initiatives. Most, if not all of these positions, have become fully funded by the district once funding has lapsed. One such position was our current College and Career Readiness Coach position, supported by a competitive grant. This position has truly been imperative in promoting dual credit acquisition for our high school students and because of this position, the district currently leads our region in dual credit

acquisition and the number of site-based dual credit opportunities for our students. Without grant-funded startup funds, many district initiatives would not be possible.

With CTE and Native American support growing at the NMPED, we have seen substantial funding increases. We expect to soon have enough funds to fully integrate this position and possibly a second position. The grant builds capacity by improving the district's relationship with our Indigenous communities and providing extended curricula supports and digital tools to help promote career readiness for many years after grant funding has lapsed.

e. Quality of Project Evaluation

It has been shown in research that African American students benefited from having at least one educator that reflected them demographically. *CCLNY* will consider that research as we evaluate the impact of the new Native American advisor/teacher/staff on the Aztec high school Native American student population. We will partner with Dr. Joseph Goins, as an evaluator, to survey and follow the 123-student population, analyzing and studying the perceived “role model effect.”

In a recent educational summit on equity and career-connected learning, researcher Ivonne Garcia promoted fostering community engagement when thinking critically about equity and evaluating educational programs. Garcia posits that equity-based research practices and education should include community engagement and encourage “students to tell their stories (2022).” Garcia encouraged educational leaders to foster stakeholder engagement when evaluating and to use community-based participatory research (CBPR). By surveying student participants, we may better understand the role that educators reflecting their student population’s race and ethnicity play, and this research may be applicable for helping Native youth across the United States (Egalite & Kisida, 2017; Gershenson et al., 2017; LPI, 2018).

The **CCLNY independent evaluation** will be conducted by Joseph L. Goins, EdD, Evaluation Specialist. Dr. Goins has worked extensively in education research with specialization in outcome and process evaluation, cost-effectiveness analysis, matching procedures, and modeling student growth. Most recently, he was selected for an EIR Mid-Phase evaluation for *Expanding Access for Early College High Schools*. The EIR Mid-Phase is an RCT Tier 1 Evaluation and was selected as the highest-rated application in the country in 2021.

The project evaluation will be thorough, feasible, and appropriate to goals. It will examine the short-term and long-term impacts of introducing a *Career-Connected Learning Program for Native Youth (CCLNY)*. The evaluation is designed to address the extent to which implementing a CCLNY program predicts:

- Short-term and Long-term effects of the Native American teacher/advisor/staff on student behavior/engagement, and the “role model effect.”
- Short-term student outcomes a) attitudes about college/careers, b) college and career readiness.
- Long-term student outcomes such as a) post-secondary enrollment, and b) career selection.
- Long-term labor market outcomes a) equitable workforce participation, b) alignment of student skills and workforce needs, and c) employer satisfaction with the curricular shift.

The following table summarizes evaluation plans for the three years of implementation.

Evaluation Characteristics	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Design	Experimental	Year-over-year comparison	Year-over-year comparison
Outcomes	<i>Short-term:</i> College and career attitudes and readiness	<i>Short-term:</i> College and career attitudes and readiness. <i>Long-term:</i> post-secondary enrollment	<i>Short-term:</i> College and career attitudes and readiness. <i>Long-term:</i> post-secondary enrollment, employer satisfaction
Data Sources	End-of-year admin and survey data	Start and end-of-year survey data, end-of-year admin data	Start- and end-of-year survey data, end-of-year admin data

Additional analysis will be conducted, whenever possible, to examine if student characteristics (e.g., race, ethnicity, gender, poverty status, disability status, *etc.*) moderate the association of career course enrollment with short-term and long-term outcomes. Moreover, the external evaluator will examine whether short-term outcomes such as attitudes about college and careers mediate the association of career course enrollment with long-term post-secondary success outcomes.

Initial Pilot Period: Year 1: An experimental design will be applied to examine the short-term impacts of the initial pilot year of implementation. Students from Aztec Schools can elect to participate in any of the career pathway programs offered through Aztec. From the pool of students that choose to participate, a sample of randomly selected students will be given a student attitudinal survey. The students not opted in one of the career pathways will be given a similar student survey to analyze the variances.

Baseline equivalence between groups on relevant student composition characteristics such as race, ethnicity, gender, poverty status, and prior achievement will be examined before estimating differences in outcomes. If any baseline inequivalence is found, the Coarsened Exact Matching (CEM) procedure will be used to balance the intervention and control groups.

The CEM approach is preferable to the more commonly applied propensity score matching approach due to its efficiency and robustness to measurement error, among other attributes (Iacus, King, & Porro, 2012; U.S. Dept of Edu, 2012c; King et al., 2011; Stuart, 2010). When CEM is applied, units are exactly matched on dichotomous variables and proximally matched on continuous variables that have been temporarily coarsened (i.e., binned) into categories. The generalized equation for the matching algorithm is $Y_i = T_i|X_i$ where for each unit i ($i = 1, \dots, n$) the treatment variable T_i takes on the value of 0 if the unit is in the comparison

group and I if the unit is in the P2C treatment group. X_i represents a set of K covariates measured before treatment exposure, and Y_i is the measured outcome. The treatment effect is then estimated as the simple difference in outcomes between the treatment group and the comparison group: $TE_i = Y_i(1) - Y_i(0)$.

After adjusting for an imbalance between groups (*if needed*) the evaluator will estimate group differences in key outcomes. Significance levels will be derived using conditional OLS regression models that include school district fixed effects.

The short-term outcomes examined after the initial pilot year will include a) state test scores in English language arts and mathematics, b) completion of Pre-Algebra, Geometry, Algebra 1, c) school attendance and discipline, d) awareness of career options, e) post-secondary aspirations, and f) interest in careers. Administrative data to measure outcomes a), b), and c) and surveys will be administered to measure outcomes c), d), e), and f). Whenever possible, we will draw survey questions from existing surveys with established reliabilities, such as the Student Semantics Survey and the Student Aspirations Survey, to measure student attitudes (Iacus, King, & Porro, 2012; U.S. Dept of Edu, 2012c; King et al., 2011; Stuart, 2010).

Full Roll Out: Years 2 and 3: At this point, an experimental approach to evaluation will no longer be viable. Alternatively, student outcomes in years two and three will be compared to student outcomes from the baseline year of implementation. For example, a baseline measure of the proportion of 9th graders who completed Algebra 1 (overall and by subgroup) will be drawn from the Education Data Warehouse for the year prior to the pilot year. If taking a career course increases the likelihood that a student completes Algebra 1 as an example by 9th grade, then we would expect to see year-over-year increases in these rates, overall and by subgroup.

A similar approach will be used to examine changes in long-term outcomes such as post-secondary enrollment. Enrollment data will be drawn from the National Student Clearinghouse database. A baseline measure of the percent of students who enrolled in post-secondary the year after high school graduation (overall and by subgroup) will be drawn from the first year of program implementation. These baseline rates will then be compared to the post-secondary enrollment rates. Again, if taking a career course increases the likelihood that students will enroll in post-secondary, then we would expect to see increases in enrollment rates over the study period. Such a finding would be particularly telling because enrollment rates have been stagnant for nearly a decade (U.S. Department of Education, 2017b, Table 302.30).

Additional long-term outcomes are measured in year three of the two student cohorts who have graduated and entered either the workforce or post-secondary education. The evaluator will administer surveys gauging whether students have engaged in post-secondary opportunities that meet labor market demands and align with their interests/skillset and survey employers to ascertain if they have noticed changes in the preparedness of incoming employees.

Several design concepts make *CCLNY* easy to replicate in any state or community across the country: (1) Vertically aligned courses through CTE can be modeled in other communities; (2) By positioning the proposed career courses as a core subject, students build their awareness of careers as they build academic skills; (3) The inclusion of career courses and career pathways as part of a student's class schedule increases familiarity; (4) The relevance of career exploration and pathway development will engage students in their academic programs and improve student outcomes of academic proficiencies and graduation. Also, the CTE pathways will build deeper career awareness and will strengthen bonds between high schools, colleges, and the workplace.



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
BUDGET INFORMATION
NON-CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS**

OMB Number: 1894-0008
Expiration Date: 09/30/2023

Name of Institution/Organization

Aztec Municipal School District

Applicants requesting funding for only one year should complete the column under "Project Year 1." Applicants requesting funding for multi-year grants should complete all applicable columns. Please read all instructions before completing form.

**SECTION A - BUDGET SUMMARY
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION FUNDS**

Budget Categories	Project Year 1 (a)	Project Year 2 (b)	Project Year 3 (c)	Project Year 4 (d)	Project Year 5 (e)	Project Year 6 (f)	Project Year 7 (g)	Total (h)
1. Personnel	75,000.00	100,000.00	100,000.00					275,000.00
2. Fringe Benefits	12,500.00	12,500.00	12,500.00					37,500.00
3. Travel	2,500.00	5,000.00	5,000.00					12,500.00
4. Equipment								
5. Supplies	2,500.00	2,500.00	2,500.00					7,500.00
6. Contractual	90,000.00	25,000.00	25,000.00					140,000.00
7. Construction								
8. Other								
9. Total Direct Costs (lines 1-8)	182,500.00	145,000.00	145,000.00					472,500.00
10. Indirect Costs*	9,125.00	7,250.00	7,250.00					23,625.00
11. Training Stipends								
12. Total Costs (lines 9-11)	191,625.00	152,250.00	152,250.00					496,125.00

*Indirect Cost Information (To Be Completed by Your Business Office): If you are requesting reimbursement for indirect costs on line 10, please answer the following questions:

(1) Do you have an Indirect Cost Rate Agreement approved by the Federal government? Yes No

(2) If yes, please provide the following information:

Period Covered by the Indirect Cost Rate Agreement: From: 08/01/2022 To: 07/31/2025 (mm/dd/yyyy)

Approving Federal agency: ED Other (please specify):

The Indirect Cost Rate is 5.00 %.

(3) If this is your first Federal grant, and you do not have an approved indirect cost rate agreement, are not a State, Local government or Indian Tribe, and are not funded under a training rate program or a restricted rate program, do you want to use the de minimis rate of 10% of MTDC? Yes No If yes, you must comply with the requirements of 2 CFR § 200.414(f).

(4) If you do not have an approved indirect cost rate agreement, do you want to use the temporary rate of 10% of budgeted salaries and wages?

Yes No If yes, you must submit a proposed indirect cost rate agreement within 90 days after the date your grant is awarded, as required by 34 CFR § 75.560.

(5) For Restricted Rate Programs (check one) -- Are you using a restricted indirect cost rate that:

Is included in your approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement? Or, Complies with 34 CFR 76.564(c)(2)? The Restricted Indirect Cost Rate is _____ %.

(6) For Training Rate Programs (check one) -- Are you using a rate that:

Is based on the training rate of 8 percent of MTDC (See EDGAR § 75.562(c)(4))? Or, training rate of 8 percent of MTDC (See EDGAR § 75.562(c)(4))?