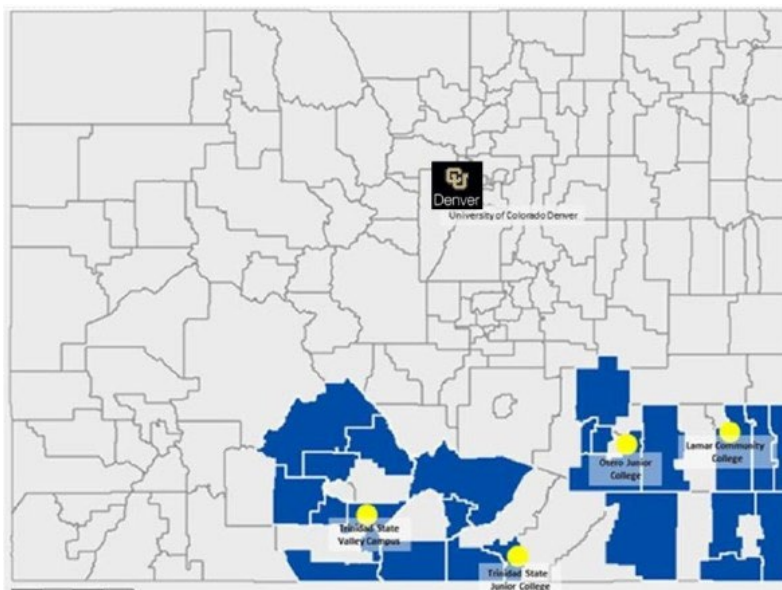


**NxtGEN Colorado:**  
**A Grow Your Own Approach to Preparing Teachers for**  
**Rural Colorado**



Proposal Submitted to:  
**Teacher Quality Partnership Program**  
U.S. Department of Education

**April 25, 2022**

Submitted by:  
**School of Education and Human Development**  
University of Colorado Denver



**School of Education  
& Human Development**

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO DENVER  
PR/Award # S336S220005

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Introduction: A Leading University in Diverse Educator Preparation ..... 1

The Next Generation of Teacher Preparation (NxtGEN) at CU Denver ..... 2

NxtGEN Colorado: Partners and Description of Work ..... 4

**A. Quality of Project Design**..... 5

    i. Rationale for Recruiting and Retaining a Diverse Rural Teacher Workforce..... 5

    ii. Goals, Objectives, and Outcomes are Clearly Specified and Measurable..... 10

        CPP 1: Increasing Educator Diversity ..... 24

        CPP 2: Supporting a Diverse Workforce to Strengthen Student Learning..... 25

        CPP 3: Meeting Students’ Social, Emotional, and Academic Needs ..... 25

        CPP 4: Promoting Equity in Access to Resources and Opportunities ..... 26

    iii. Part of a Comprehensive Effort to Improve Teaching and Learning ..... 27

    iv. Reflects Up-to-date Knowledge from Research and Effective Practice ..... 30

    v. Performance Feedback and Continuous Improvement are Integral to Design ..... 32

    vi. Designed to Build Capacity and Yield Results Beyond the Grant ..... 33

**B. Quality of Project Evaluation**..... 33

    i. Methods Provide Valid and Reliable Performance Data on Relevant Outcomes..... 35

    ii. Methods are Thorough, Feasible & Appropriate for Goals, Obj. & Outcomes..... 36

**C. Adequacy of Resources** ..... 39

    i. Adequacy of Support, including Facilities, Equipment and other Resources ..... 39

    ii. Budget is Adequate to Support the Proposed Project..... 40

    iii. Costs are Reasonable in Relation to Project Objectives & Design ..... 41

    iv. Resources to Operate the Project Beyond the Grant..... 42

    v. Relevance and Commitment of Partners to Implementation and Project Success ..... 43

**D. Quality of Management Plan** ..... 44

    i. Responsibilities, Timelines, and Milestones for Accomplishing Project Tasks..... 44

    ii. Procedures for Ensuring Feedback and Continuous Improvement ..... 49

**APPENDICES**

- Appendix A: Required TQP Checklists and List of Eligible Partner LEAs and Schools
- Appendix B: Needs Assessment
- Appendix C: Logic Model and Detailed Evaluation Plan
- Appendix D: Key Personnel Bios and CV
- Appendix E: Letters of Support
- Appendix F: Current Cost Agreement
- Appendix H: Other Attachments
  - Appendix H.1. US DOE Fact Sheet Recognition
  - Appendix H.2. Goals, Objectives, and Outcomes
  - Appendix H.3. NxtGEN CO Detailed Budget Narrative
  - Appendix H.4. Multi-year Sustainability Budget

### **Introduction: A Leading University in Diverse Educator Preparation**

The University of Colorado Denver (CU Denver) was founded in 1912 and serves 15,000 students. It is a Research 1 university offering a large portfolio of majors and degree programs. The university is a Minority Serving Institution with Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving (AANAPISI) status and emerging Hispanic Serving status. Forty-nine percent of CU Denver students are first-generation college-going (first-gen) and 42% identify as Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC). Fifty-nine percent of freshmen and 51% of undergraduates are BIPOC.

The School of Education and Human Development (SEHD) offers undergraduate, master's, and doctoral programs. The school has a diverse portfolio of teacher education programs rooted in deep partnerships with schools throughout Colorado. These diverse pathways are created around the idea of ‘the right fit, for the right student at the right time’ and allow students to enter the profession as undergraduates, transfer students, and graduate career changers. We offer licensure programs in early childhood education (ECE), special education (SPED), elementary education (ELEM), secondary science, English, and social studies, and middle school and secondary math. All programs have an explicit social justice mission with curriculum and extended clinical experiences framed around supporting the learning of economically, culturally, linguistically, and ability diverse learners. Partner schools are carefully selected to ensure whole-school buy-in and with criteria that guarantee teacher candidates will learn to teach in settings with economically, linguistically, and racially diverse students. The school’s programs have developed a national reputation of excellence as noted by the sample of recognitions below:

- Cited by US Department of Education (DOE, 2022) as 1 of 8 educator programs leading the way in preparing a strong, diverse pipeline of teachers. (See Appendix H)

- 2018 AACTE Best Practice Award in Support of Multicultural Education & Diversity
- One of the founding 15 leading educator preparation programs in the Educator Preparation Laboratory (EdPrepLab) created by the Learning Policy Institute (LPI) in 2019.
- Included in a national case study as 1 of 7 exemplary U.S. programs preparing teachers to teach for deeper learning and equity. (Darling-Hammond & Oakes, 2019)

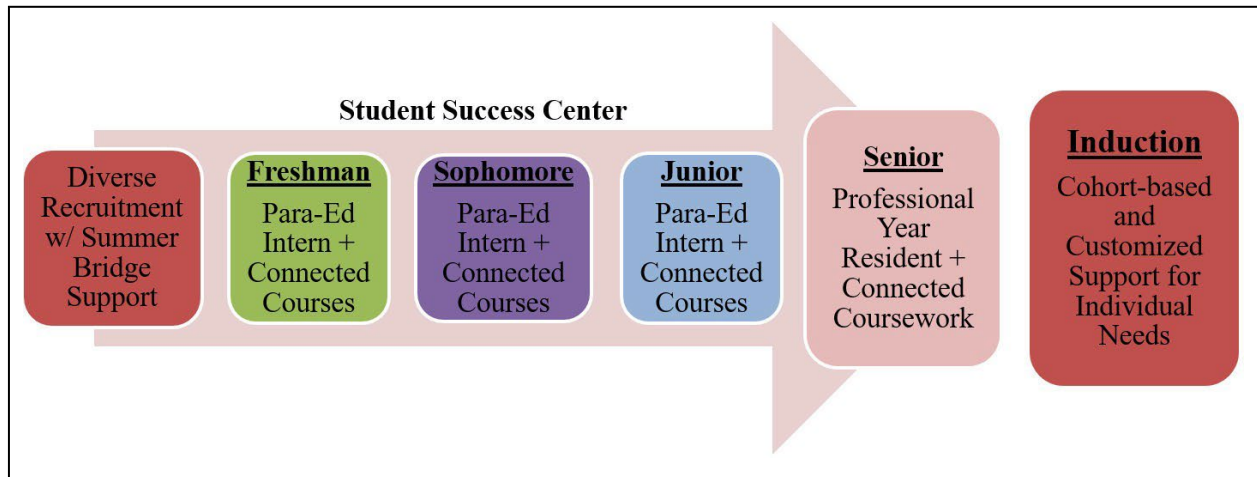
Our diverse students exhibit strong performance. Students must maintain a GPA of 3.0 and students must demonstrate strong growth and performance in extended clinical experiences embedded throughout the program. Students must establish a record of success prior to entering the final, Professional Year Residency (PYR), going through a rigorous admissions process requiring essays, strong early clinical evaluations, and a performance-based interview with school and university faculty. Completers must meet all state requirements for licensure and the average Praxis pass rate for students is 100%, including ECE completers.

### **The Next Generation of Teacher Preparation (NxtGEN) at CU Denver**

NxtGEN is an undergraduate teacher preparation pathway with extended clinical experiences that culminates in a full year residency developed with funding from a Teacher Quality Partnership grant in 2014 in partnership with Denver Public Schools. NxtGEN is a ‘grow your own’ approach to recruiting and preparing diverse ECE, ELEM, and SPED teachers. Over the life of the grant, NxtGEN produced 120 teachers with 133 moving through the pipeline at the end of the grant. Candidate demographics were as follows: 55% first-gen, 74% BIPOC, and 52% multilingual. The NxtGEN program has continued to thrive and has been recognized by Colorado’s Department of Higher Education as critical to meeting the state’s priority to diversify the workforce and increase teacher retention (See letter of support in Appendix E). Over the last six years, we have received over \$300,000 in state grants and \$200,000 more in other external

funding. NxtGEN's inclusion in the recent US DOE call to action as a preparation program leading the way to diversify the teacher workforce is strong evidence of its effectiveness. The figure below depicts critical elements of the NxtGEN model.

Figure 1: NxtGEN Undergraduate Grow Your Own Pathway



The critical elements of NxtGEN are described below.

- **Targeted recruitment & high touch admissions experiences** support diverse candidates.
- **High school education concurrent enrollment pathways** allow high school students to take education courses that transfer into licensure programs in a seamless transition into NxtGEN.
- **Summer bridge programs** mitigate summer melt and prepare for college and clinical roles.
- **School partnership development** ensures candidates work in cohorts in schools where university and school faculty are collectively ‘growing teachers’ in an inclusive context.
- **Half-time paid para-educator internships** serve as deep clinical experiences for NxtGEN candidates in the first 3 years of their program to help mitigate the cost of college.
- **A NxtGEN Coordinator** operates as the bridge between coursework and field, coordinates high touch support, maintains relationships with schools, coaches students, and tracks progress.
- **Specialized advising** from a first-gen advising specialist supports student success.

- ***Equity-focused preparation*** includes explicit equity, social justice focus, integrating content on culturally and linguistically sustaining pedagogies across the program.
- ***Wrap-around support*** from the SEHD Student Success Center (SSC) provides socioemotional and academic support including navigating university and school cultural contexts.
- ***High-quality mentoring*** provided by trained mentors carefully selected with school partners.
- ***Full year residency*** working alongside a single mentor teacher in the final year.
- ***Customized induction*** in the first two years of teaching.

### **NxtGEN CO: Partners and Description of Work**

With this proposal, we address *Absolute Priority 1: Partnership Grants for the Preparation of Teachers* and the *Invitational Priority* to carry out an effective ‘grow your own’ pre-baccalaureate teacher preparation program. We build on the success of NxtGEN, bringing these critical elements to ECE, ELEM, SPED and middle school math and secondary science licensure pathways in four rural regions in southern Colorado, delivered in partnership with four rural community colleges (CC) and 26 eligible rural district partners (Appendix A: High Need LEAs).

***Partners.*** Over the last 9 years, the SEHD has partnered with rural Colorado districts to provide induction, professional development, and routes to teacher licensure through a comprehensive network called The Partnership for Rural Educator Preparation (T-PREP). Over the last 5 years we have partnered with Otero College (OC), Trinidad State College-Trinidad Campus (TSC-TC), and Trinidad State College-Valley Campus (TSC-VC) and the rural school districts within their service areas to offer undergraduate pathways to teaching. These programs leverage the Colorado statewide, 2+2 guided pathways. Students complete a 60-credit hour Associate of Arts degree at the CC that transfers into a BA in Education and Human Development at CU Denver. Students complete the remaining portion of the BA and licensure

with CU Denver in a combination of online, remote, in-person, and hyflex courses where students Zoom into courses on the Denver campus. They are placed in rural school districts for clinical experiences, allowing them to complete the program without leaving their communities. We currently have 2+2 plans for ECE, ELEM, SPED, middle school math and secondary science. At OC, we offer four of the pathways, two at TSC-TC, and two at TSC-VC.

NxtGEN CO will bring the NxtGEN elements to our licensure pathways with OC, TSC-TC, and TSC-VC and develop new licensure pathways in each. We will also bring NxtGEN licensure pathways to our new partner, Lamar Community College (LCC). All of the CCs are Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) and serve a diverse student population as follows: OC= 50.3% BIPOC, 39.5% Latinx; TSC (combined campuses) = 49.8% BIPOC, 41.3% Latinx, and LCC= 42.5% BIPOC, 33.7% Latinx (CCCS, 2021). NxtGEN CO will partner with 26 eligible rural districts within the service areas of the CCs to implement the NxtGEN model.

## **A. QUALITY OF PROJECT DESIGN**

The specific goals of the grant are to 1) implement grow your own strategies that expand access to teaching pathways for diverse, rural, first-gen students, 2) prepare high-quality teachers for rural partner districts in ECE, ELEM, SPED, and middle school math and secondary science, 3) improve the quality and retention of teachers through supported induction and ongoing professional development in Communities of Practice, and 4) disseminate and scale the NxtGEN model by incorporating key elements across CU Denver's existing teacher education programs, extending the model into new partnerships with additional rural and metro districts, and informing the larger teacher education field.

### **i. Rationale for Recruiting & Retaining a Diverse Teacher Workforce for Rural Schools**

Rural communities in Colorado are rich in diversity with a strong sense of history, purpose, and self-reliance. However, they face chronic challenges as economies shift, access to resources

dwindle, and young people move to follow opportunities (Simpson & Brown, 2017). Adequately staffing rural schools with a diverse workforce has been a persistent struggle. These statements exemplify the rural communities that serve as key partners in NxtGEN CO. Utilizing multiple data sources including our needs assessment (Appendix B) conducted with district partners for this proposal, we lay out a clear rationale for the significant need that NxtGEN CO will address.

### **Historical Pre-K-12 Inequities Include Poverty and Low Achievement**

**Poverty.** Decades of research confirm that poverty has significant impacts on children's overall well-being and attainment of educational outcomes (Gupta, de Wit & McKeown, 2007; Hilferty, Redmond, & Katz, 2010; Wood, 2003). Eleven of the 12 southern Colorado counties served by NxtGEN CO have the highest overall poverty rates in the state (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020). Child poverty rates in Colorado range from 24% to 43% (Kids Count, 2018) and the free and reduced lunch rate (FRL) for NxtGEN CO partner districts ranges from 44% to 88%, with half of our district partners serving students with a 70% or higher FRL rate (CDE, 2019b).

**Student achievement.** Student achievement in the vast majority of NxtGEN CO districts has significantly lagged behind state averages. Students in more than 80% of partner districts are performing below the state average in both English Language Arts and Math state assessments. Even more troublesome are significant gaps in performance. In 70% of the partner districts, less than 25% of students perform proficiently on one or both exams. In some districts, fewer than 10% of students meet proficiency (CDE, 2019a).

### **Inequities are Exacerbated by Lack of Qualified and Experienced Teachers**

**Shortage of diverse, qualified teachers.** The shortage of highly qualified teachers in rural Colorado continues at a crisis level. Based on the 2020-21 Colorado teacher shortage survey (CDE, 2021), rural schools in Colorado had 1,028 teaching positions they needed to fill. They



resorted to shortage mechanisms to fill nearly 9% of those positions including hiring alternative licensure candidates or long-term substitutes which only require a high school diploma. Dozens of those positions went unfilled all year. In fact, Colorado rural schools often go years without qualified math or science teachers (Whaley, 2017). Colorado has also named every licensure content area in rural schools as a qualifying shortage area (CDE, 2021). Additionally, Colorado rural schools face diversity gaps between teachers of color and students of color similar to what so many schools grapple with across the nation. The majority of NxtGEN CO school partners have a 40-percentage point gap or higher (CDE, 2020b).

The needs assessment results from NxtGEN CO partner districts indicate that all district leaders are experiencing challenges in recruiting and hiring diverse, qualified teachers. Licensure areas most frequently identified as challenging to fill were secondary science (82% of districts), elementary (76%), and special education (76%). They also consistently reported challenges in retaining teachers, especially in math (65% of districts). District leaders anticipated the need to hire an average of 6 teachers each for their districts for the 2022-23 school year; this estimate varied by district from 3 to 12 positions. While these numbers are small, they represent an average of 22% of their total workforce. For example, Mountain Valley district anticipates the need to hire 6 teachers next year, or 46% of their teaching workforce of 13 teachers.

***Teacher attrition is high.*** Attrition is the most significant factor in teacher shortages representing 66% to 100% of the demand (Sutcher, Darling-Hammond, Carver-Thomas, 2016). In 2020-21, nearly half of all eligible NxtGEN CO districts faced significantly higher turnover rates than the state, with five districts losing 25-50% of their staff in a single year. Other districts struggled to solve their attrition numbers by filling up to 1/3 of their positions with teachers on emergency or provisional licenses. Additionally, one district partner, Vilas RE-5, had 28.7% of their teachers

teaching outside their subject area. (See Appendix A: Eligible High Need LEAs and High Need School Data). In the Fall 2020 CDE District Needs Assessment, teacher turnover was identified as one of the top three concerns of Colorado superintendents, with nearly half of small rural districts (46%) responding that it was their most urgent staff-related concern (CDE 2020a).

***Teachers hired from out-of-state don't stay.*** A steady decrease of teachers being prepared in Colorado over the last 5 years means that an estimated 50% of teachers are hired from other states. When teachers lack connection and work in communities vastly different from their own, they struggle with pressures, internal and external, and change jobs or leave the profession (Cole, 2008) leaving rural districts in a continuous cycle of turnover (CDHE, 2017).

***Lack of experienced teachers impacts student learning.*** High attrition is most common and most devastating in schools with vulnerable populations. Longitudinal research shows that experienced teachers demonstrate significant increases in achievement through the first 15 years of teaching (Ladd & Sorenson, 2017). Constant turnover in rural schools creates a perpetual cycle of inexperienced teachers that negatively impacts achievement (Kini & Podolsky, 2016), not only in that classroom, but in the school overall (Ronfeldt, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2013).

***Lack of access to high quality induction and professional development.*** Rural schools face unique challenges in providing high quality supports for new teachers and professional development for existing teachers. By sheer nature of their size (more than 50% of NxtGEN CO district partners serve fewer than 300 students each), they lack the funding, human capital, and often expertise in supporting teachers across all licensure areas. They are also isolated geographically creating barriers in time and distance for teachers to access high quality induction and professional learning. In the needs assessment, districts indicated that the areas of greatest need for professional development were “supporting all teachers to address the needs of students

with differing abilities” and “Using data and assessment to inform daily instruction” (76% of districts). The most frequently chosen strategy to recruit and prepare teachers who stay was implementing focused professional development customized around teacher needs (94%).

### **Lack of Access and Support for Diverse First-GEN Students to Become Teachers**

Talented rural residents interested in becoming teachers have deep roots and a commitment to their community. However, their obligations make it challenging for them to leave to obtain a teaching license and there are few options close to home (CDHE, 2017). In addition, funding a 4-year college education is a barrier (Breunlin, 2020). The second most recommended strategy cited by our district partners in the needs assessment survey to support recruiting and preparing teachers who stay was providing financial support to potential teacher candidates (88%).

Although we have developed 2+2 programs with OC and both TSC campuses to create access for interested students, we are not seeing the same high-quality outcomes we have seen in our NxtGEN pathway in Denver. There are several reasons for this: 1) a lack of resources and coordinated effort to connect with and cultivate diverse local talent through targeted recruitment pipelines; 2) students struggle with finances and frequently stop-out to work or completely drop out due to lack of funding; 3) a lack of wrap-around support is influencing higher levels of attrition and ability for students to persist, particularly for diverse and first-gen students; and 4) district partners struggle to meet the needs of new teachers or provide quality PD.

In summary, long-term, historical inequities in rural education impact student learning and their overall life chances. Recent data from the CDE Fall 2020 Needs Assessment, the 2020-21 Colorado Teacher Shortage survey, and our own needs assessment with NxtGEN CO eligible districts, paint a grim picture of the ability to meet the growing needs of PK-12 students and school staffing, particularly emerging from COVID-19. To ensure rural students can learn and

thrive, it is critical that they have skillful teachers who will stay, teach, and lead across a career.

**ii. Goals, Objectives, and Outcomes are Clearly Specified and Measurable**

NxtGEN CO will bring the successful elements of NxtGEN to Colorado's rural communities to prepare a diverse pipeline of teachers and increase the capacity of existing teachers. Across the grant, we will develop NxtGEN licensure pathways in each of the CC locations to include ECE, ELEM, SPED, middle school math, and secondary science (See Table 1 below) in alignment with the needs identified by our district partners. The scope of work described below will be built on strong partnerships already in place with OC, TSC-TC, and TSC-VC and a strong commitment from LCC. Additionally, we have well-established relationships with 17 of the eligible districts through earlier work in T-PREP and will continue to develop partnerships with the remaining 9 eligible districts served by the CCs (See Appendix E for letters of support).

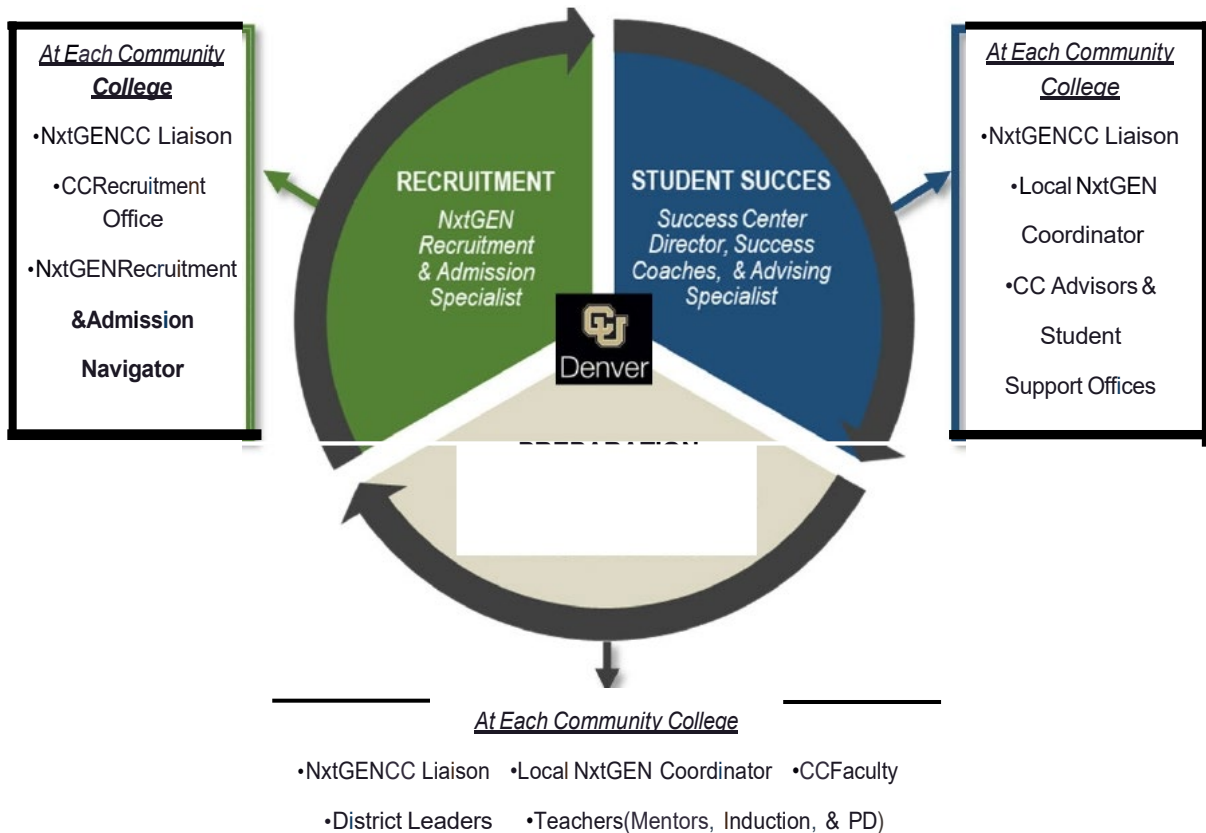
*Table 1: NxtGEN CO Licensure Pathway Roll-Out*

<b>College</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year2</b>	<b>Year3</b>	<b>Year4</b>
Otero College	ELEM, SPED, Science, Math	ECE		
Trinidad State-T	ELEM, SPED	Science	Math	
Trinidad State-Ve	ECE,ELEM	SPED, Science	Math	
Lamar CC		ELEM, ECE, SPED	Science	Math

The coordinative design of the grant is a hub-and-spoke approach (see figure 2). It establishes key personnel in each CC location and a central organizing personnel infrastructure in Denver. To ensure strong implementation, the grant's leadership team will include leaders from Denver and from each CC. This leadership team will support teams of staff on each side of the partnership who will collaborate on recruitment teams, student success teams, curriculum teams, clinical experience teams, and induction/professional development teams (See *Section D:*

Quality of Management Plan p. 45). The teams will work across the grant to guarantee the success of the project.

Figure 2. NxtGEN CO Hub and Spoke Approach



Below, we describe the specific activities for each goal, followed by measurable objectives and outcomes. A full table of the goals, objectives and outcomes can be found in Appendix H and align to the logic model located in Appendix C. We then end this section with how NxtGEN CO meets all four Competitive Preference Priorities.

**Goal 1: Develop and implement grow your own recruitment strategies**

**Recruitment and Admissions** - A Denver-based Recruitment and Admission Specialist (RAS) will work with CC recruiters and will organize and support the grant's local Rural Recruitment and Admissions Navigators (RRAN) in a hub and spoke approach. The RAS will work with

other grant staff to develop admissions goals aligned with the hiring needs of district partners as identified in the needs assessment and in ongoing collaboration with partners, focusing particularly on recruiting diverse, first-gen students.

The RAS will create networked, targeted recruitment strategies and plans across all 4 CC service areas in partnership with CC recruiters. The RAS will also design a system for tracking prospective students from inquiry to admission including transcript review, ongoing communication, and support for navigating the system. Our experience with our current rural first-gen students indicates that many face challenges in navigating this process and need a high level of support to persist to enrollment. The RAS will be proficient in using higher education CRM software to track student progress and provide just-in-time support. They will also build capacity in local RRANs to support recruitment and admissions in this high-touch model.

Local RRANs will have roots in and connections across the rural communities, familiarity with community organizations, veteran's associations, and existing relationships with prospective students and their families. As such they are best able to recruit and support candidates in each location. RRANs will work with the RAS and the local CC recruiters to carry out targeted recruitment activities in local high schools, ECE centers, paraprofessional pipelines, and community organizations. They will maintain connections with students until admission, working with the RAS to support next steps for each student in a hand off to advisors.

***Concurrent Enrollment High School Pathways*** – NxtGEN CO will support our 4 CC partners in the development of R-TEACH, a shared early college education-focused high school concurrent enrollment pathway. R-TEACH is aligned to recent state legislation (SB 21-185) to support high school students to begin taking college level teacher education and general education courses with the opportunity to complete additional college coursework beyond high

school at no cost to them. R-TEACH will enroll high school students across the service areas of each CC. While it is challenging for any single CC to offer the courses to small numbers of students, collaborating will allow them to create a rich set of courses offered in a predictable schedule and accessible through both in-person and hyflex models where rural students use video-conferencing to access a course. The use of hyflex models is a common practice for other general education concurrent enrollment classes already offered by the CCs. R-TEACH courses will transfer into the NxtGEN CO pathways. An R-TEACH Community Facilitator will support students in the program, nurturing a teaching identity, providing co-curricular opportunities that connect them with R-TEACH peers, inspiring educators, and community leaders, in ways that elevate teaching and build a commitment to the teaching profession.

**Goal 1 Objectives - 1.1** 8 recruitment events held annually; **1.2.** Over 5 years, 146 teacher candidates are enrolled in NxtGEN CO pathways; **1.2.1.** 50% of teacher candidates admitted to the NxtGEN CO are from under-represented groups and/or are first gen college students. **1.3.** By year 5, 32 high school students will have completed at least 1 course in R-TEACH, and 32 additional students will have completed 2 or more courses.

**Goal 1 Outcomes -** Recruiters connect with diverse prospective candidates who are successfully admitted to NxtGEN CO pathway options

## **Goal 2: Prepare quality teachers for partner rural districts through the NxtGEN model**

Below we describe how the essential elements of NxtGEN will be integrated and customized within the rural pathways to successfully prepare diverse, first-gen candidates for rural schools.

**Summer Bridge Programs.** The NxtGEN CO Rural Coordinator will collaborate with the Local NxtGEN Coordinators and the SEHD Student Success Center (SSC) to offer a summer bridge in

each CC location. Summer bridge will 1) support students in navigating institutional structures like financial aid and registration, 2) orient them to the services provided in the SSC, 3) prepare them for coursework with college success strategies, 4) provide paraprofessional training, and 5) support district hiring and onboarding processes for their para-educator intern roles.

***Paid Para-educator Internships and a Full Year Residency.*** NxtGEN CO candidates will complete up to 3 years in half-time, paid Para-educator Internship (PEI) positions and a full year residency in the final year. The number of years students spend in PEI positions can vary given students may transfer into the program with an existing AA or prior college credit. The NxtGEN Clinical Experience Coordinator, the Director of Partnerships, and the Local NxtGEN Coordinators will collaborate with district partners to construct PEI positions to meet the needs of the school and align to developmental clinical practice program requirements. Districts have similar challenges in recruiting and retaining para-educators and numerous current students in the rural 2+2 pathways work as para's, thus existing paraprofessional funds in each district/school will be utilized to hire PEIs. In addition, CU Denver has developed a model of leveraging federal work study funding to hire students in support roles in schools, making this a cost-effective option for district partners to hire PEIs.

NxtGEN CO candidates will complete a full year residency in the final year of the program. Funding sources for the residency year include the Colorado Rural Teacher Fellowship available to students who complete a full year residency and return to teach in a rural school. Additional state funding is anticipated with the passage of *HB22-1220: Removing Barriers to Educator Preparation* (2022 legislative season) providing a residency stipend for Pell eligible students.

***Equity-focused Curriculum Improves Teaching and Learning and Supports Rigorous Standards.*** The Colorado Teacher Quality Standards (CTQS) and content standards for each



licensure area form the basis of the Teacher Evaluation system across the state and CU Denver's teacher education curriculum and assessment tools are mapped to these standards. The standards include, among other things, requirements that teachers understand the science of learning development, can use data to make instructional decisions, grounds teaching in the Colorado Academic Content Standards, are able to implement standards-based learning, have strong pedagogical content knowledge, ground reading instruction in the science of reading and explicit instruction around the 5 essential elements of instruction, and are able to support the learning of culturally and linguistically diverse and differently abled students.

NxtGEN CO will build on this strong foundation and further refine curriculum customized to the rural context to ensure an equity focus and attention to grant reforms to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous standards and high levels of achievement. The Community College Liaison in each location will work with Denver NxtGEN leadership to develop Faculty Curricula Teams (FCTs) comprised of faculty from Denver and the rural locations. Teams will include education and arts & science faculty with responsibility for ELEM, SPED, ECE, and middle school math and secondary science licensure areas, as well as faculty from culturally and linguistically diverse education (CLDE), reading, and digital learning, and technology. These teams will identify strengths and gaps to refine curriculum to deepen the required grant reforms (Absolute Priority 1 Checklist) described below as well as other curricular reforms.

- **(a.1.) *Prepare Teachers*** to (i) meet State requirements; (ii) apply empirically-based practice and scientifically valid research related to 1) teaching and learning, 2) technology, 3) universal design for learning, 4) positive behavioral interventions, 5) the science of reading, and the 5 essential elements of reading instruction, use of reading assessments, and designing

targeted instruction for students with significant reading deficiencies; (iii) understand and use evidence-based practices in ECE.

- **(a.2.) Promote strong teaching skills.** Faculty specializing in child/young adult development, special education, and socioemotional learning will be integrated across FCTs to further embed content that promotes strong teaching, culturally sustaining pedagogies, working with bilingual students, and supporting cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development.
- **(b.2) Use empirically based practice and scientifically valid research** about teaching and learning to ensure that teachers are able to: (i) implement research-based practices; (ii) understand student learning; (iii) use student achievement data; (iv) use effective instructional strategies so that general education, special education teachers and early childhood educators: (A) meet the specific learning needs of students with disabilities, ELLs, gifted students, and struggling readers; (B) differentiate instruction; (v) participate on the IEP team; (vi) explicitly teach the 5 essential components of reading.
- **Develop Equity-focused, culturally sustaining curriculum** so candidates develop 1) an asset-based mindset, 2) pedagogies that build on the cultural wealth of diverse communities; 3) an advocacy stance; and 4) ability to remove barriers that negatively impact student success.
- **Connect Other Reforms.** NxtGEN CO will coordinate with other reforms and current grants in the SEHD including NOYCE, ECE state reforms through the Early Educator Investment Collaborative (EEIC), new state legislated high school pipeline programs (SB 21-185), and the CO READ Act to leverage resources and maximize impact.

To build capacity and ensure fidelity to the curricular reforms above, rural adjunct education faculty will participate in initial summer training and will engage in ongoing collaboration with CU Denver faculty to contextualize curriculum for the rural contexts across the licensure

pathways and deepen the curricular reforms. While the reforms described above will initially be embedded within the NxtGEN CO pathways, over the course of the grant, these elements will be integrated across all teacher education pathways at CU Denver.

***Strong Content Preparation.*** CU Denver’s teacher education programs are designed in collaboration with the College of Liberal Arts and Science (CLAS) to ensure candidates have deep content knowledge and meet Colorado Department of Education licensure requirements. Secondary pathways include extensive coursework in the discipline. Likewise, ELEM, ECE, and SPED students are required to take courses in the core curriculum that provide a strong foundation in content areas related to math, science, social studies, writing and reading. In SPED teacher preparation, the Colorado K-12 SPED generalist license requires all candidates to have core grounding in disciplinary areas and pass both SPED Praxis tests as well as the four elementary content tests (science, social studies, math, and reading) to be licensed and highly qualified as described in section 612(a)(14)(C) of the IDEA.

To ensure strong content knowledge is embedded in the first two years of the rural pathways, we will create FCTs that include SEHD faculty, and CU Denver and rural CC liberal arts and science faculty. These teams will analyze key content courses, identify strengths and gaps and design new curriculum to strengthen content preparation. In addition NxtGEN CO will support opportunities for SEHD faculty to collaborate with CLAS faculty and rural liberal arts and sciences faculty in the design of professional development related to content teaching.

NxtGEN CO graduates in middle school math and secondary science will be well-positioned to teach Advanced Placement (AP) courses. Secondary teachers graduate with strong content knowledge having completed what accounts for a major in the content area (36-45 credits). They acquire significant pedagogical knowledge with courses that prepare them in standards-based

planning, student/inquiry centered pedagogies, assessment-informed instruction, and culturally and linguistically responsive teaching. Additionally, secondary teacher candidates will have opportunities to observe and co-teach in AP classes, and we will further develop graduate's abilities through induction and professional development and connect them with MA options.

***High Touch Advising and Wrap-Around Support.*** NxtGEN advising and support services are high touch and relational. A number of resources and people will enable delivery of this wrap-around support. First, NxtGEN CO candidates will receive specialized advising from a bilingual SEHD undergraduate advisor with expertise in supporting diverse first-gen students. Second, each candidate will be connected to the SEHD SSC staff who operate as intercultural mediators, helping students navigate what is often a new culture and discourse for many first gen students. This includes supporting students in navigating university systems, working with instructors, and supporting self-advocacy. Students have access to the full suite of supports offered through the SSC including socioemotional and academic resources such as workshops, tutoring, writing support, and Praxis supports among others. The SSC Director will work with the Student Success Coaches who staff the SSC to coordinate supports and build out additional targeted resources for rural candidates. The director will also develop a process for identifying the strength and needs of each candidate to create customized support plans and will track their progress across the program. Each candidate is assigned a Student Success Coach who will provide one-on-one coaching and support. Success Coaches will operate virtually, which we have found to be the preferred medium for the vast majority of SEHD students. Finally, the Local NxtGEN Coordinators will also provide high-touch, on the ground support, in person support operating as 'other mothers' (Collins, 2000; Stanley, 1993) creating caring, targeted support and brokering social and cultural capital in the university and school contexts.

***Extended Clinical Experience, High-quality Mentoring, and School Partnership Development.***

All NxtGEN CO candidates will engage in extended clinical experiences throughout the program in the role of para-educator interns and in a final full year residency. The local NxtGEN Coordinators for each region will work closely with rural school partners to foster the partnership with the school and provide in-depth clinical supervision and coaching feedback for the candidates. In addition, NxtGEN CO staff and leaders will collaborate closely with district partners to develop regional Collaborative Councils, similar to the council established with Denver schools. This collaborative infrastructure will facilitate co-construction of the clinical experiences such that they are closely tied to the preparation curriculum and ensure that two teachers (the NxtGEN CO candidate and their mentor) are intentionally collaborating to meet the needs of P-12 students. The equity consultant will also work with Collaborative Council to deepen the capacity of the NxtGEN Local Coordinators, rural faculty, and district partners to support diverse, first-gen candidates, provide coaching support and feedback, and ensure candidate's development of culturally sustaining and equity-focused practices.

The Local NxtGEN Coordinators will also work closely with school leaders to identify mentors who demonstrate strong practice, effective collaboration, and openness to mentoring and co-teaching with candidates in PEI positions and the final residency year. Given that small rural districts often have a limited pool of mentor teachers to choose from, we will engage a two-pronged process to select and build capacity and quality. First, all mentors will participate in initial training to build capacity. Mentor training will focus on developing equity-affirming collaborative relationships with NxtGEN CO candidates as well as high-impact mentoring techniques including explicit modeling, co-planning, co-teaching, providing feedback and supporting reflection. Second, mentors will have the opportunity to engage in a 9-credit graduate

certificate that leads to the state's new Colorado Mentor Teacher added endorsement. This endorsement will deepen capacity as equity-focused teacher leaders, support critical examination of their own practice, and support engagement in a statewide virtual professional learning community with other mentor teachers. Mentors for NxtGEN CO candidates will be provided a stipend for serving as a mentor as well as participating in ongoing training.

**Goal 2 Objectives - 2.1.** 100% of NxtGEN CO teacher candidates participate in support services; **2.2.** candidates report an inclusive, identity-safe learning environment & have mastered competencies; **2.3.** 90% of NxtGEN CO candidates meet or exceed expectations in internships & demonstrate competencies aligned with Colorado Teacher Quality Standards (CTQ); **2.4.** 75% of candidates graduate; **2.4.1.** 50% of graduates are from under-represented groups and/or are first gen; **2.5.** 90% of graduates complete the requirements for teacher certification within 1 year of completion: **2.5.1.** 90% of NxtGEN CO graduates are fully certified within 1 year of completion; and 20% are dually certified; **2.6.** 90% of graduates are employed first year; 80% employed by partner LEAs; 50% hired are from under-represented groups; and 80% teaching in high need areas; **2.7.** 70% of Rural Adjunct and CU Denver Campus faculty participate in PLCs; **2.8.** 100% of mentor teachers participate in mentor training and 80% make progress toward the mentor endorsement.

**Goal 2 Outcomes -1.** Candidates report being supported and well-prepared; persist to graduate, and complete licensure requirements; 50% of graduates are from under-represented groups; **2.** Teacher candidates demonstrate competencies aligned with Colorado Teacher Quality Standards on assessments; **3.** Graduates are employed by partner districts.

### **Goal 3: Improve quality and retention of teachers through induction and PD**

**Customized Induction.** NxtGEN graduates will receive 2 years of induction in an approach that

balances group support and customization in virtual Communities of Practice (CoP), a format used effectively in professional learning and uniquely suited to rural communities where there is often a great deal of distance between schools. CoPs will support continued development of content/pedagogical expertise and are organized to include the characteristics described below.

- *Choice of involvement in a topically driven CoP* in SEL, CLDE, Reading, STEM, ECE, or SPED. The content and materials used within the CoP will be constructed by CU Denver faculty and aligned with empirically based practice, drawing from the What Works Clearinghouse in these areas. The CoP will also be grounded in the processes of collaborative inquiry, structured dialogue and evaluating the impact of new strategies to connect theory to practice focused on student learning outcomes.

- *Participation in CoPs that include experienced teacher mentors*. There are often only 1 or 2 teachers in a given content or grade level in many schools. Participation in CoPs with teachers from the region provides opportunities for new teachers to collaborate with teachers in their discipline and learn from and with more skilled experts, who will also serve as their mentors.

- *Video coaching* focused on high leverage practices that impact student achievement and framed around evidence-based coaching techniques. Each teacher participates in 2 coaching cycles per semester.

- *Access to high-quality online professional learning modules* created by CU Denver faculty and grounded in empirically based practice and research on teaching and learning. New teachers will collaborate with their CoP facilitator to select modules based on their unique development.

Modules includes strategies that teachers can put into practice immediately in the classroom.

***New Teacher Mentoring and Professional Development.*** New teacher mentoring and professional development for experienced teachers are interwoven in the CoP design to address

the context of small rural schools. The grant will support 20 teachers each year who will operate as induction mentors and will also participate in their own professional development. Regarding mentoring, these experienced teachers will participate with new teachers in CoPs, receiving compensation and training for their mentoring role and participation. This design creates opportunities for new teachers to be mentored by other experienced teachers with shared content or grade-level teaching roles in small districts where teachers may not have disciplinary colleagues within their individual buildings or even in their district. Teachers receive compensation as the extreme shortage of substitutes in these rural districts prevents the option of release time. Regarding professional development, CoP participation will also enable teachers to deepen their own learning and strengthening their content knowledge and teaching skills in collaboration with their colleagues and the CoP facilitators. Teachers will benefit from collaborative inquiry connected to practice, video coaching and have access to an array of pedagogical content modules allowing them to customize their learning. Elementary, ECE, and SPED teachers will have the option to select the reading-focused CoP that will use collaborative inquiry to explore teaching that incorporates the essential components of reading instruction, use of assessments to inform instruction including intensive, targeted literacy instruction for students with significant reading deficiencies, and integration of literacy skills across subject areas.

***Support and Training for ECE.*** Colorado recently created a Department of Early Childhood responsible for aligning and strengthening the state's early childcare and education services, including a recently approved voluntary, universal preschool program. Additionally, in 2021 the SEHD won a \$2.3 million grant from the Early Educator Investment Collaborative (EEIC) to bring together a coalition of university, CC, and state leaders to work on issues impacting the field. The EEIC group will participate in and support the development of the new department,



focusing on workforce development and aligning the fields' standards frameworks with Colorado ECE standards. The PI of NxtGEN CO serves on the dean's group of the EEIC grant and will coordinate activities across NxtGEN CO to pursue innovative pathways, increased compensation for ECE educators who attain these degrees, and ECE standards alignment.

**Goal 3 Objectives - 3.1.** Up to 66 novice teachers engage in induction; up to 80 additional experienced teachers engage in professional development; **3.2.** CoP participants report deepened content knowledge & pedagogical skills; **3.3.** 100% of prepared teachers report they meet or exceed expectations on teacher effectiveness ratings; **3.4.** 80% of graduates are retained as teachers of record for 3 consecutive years & 70% are retained by partner LEAs.

**Goal 3 Outcomes - 1.** Induction & veteran teachers participating in CoPs report enhanced content, pedagogical knowledge & leadership skills; **2.** Teachers are retained by partner LEAs addressing the teacher shortage in Colorado; **3.** Exemplary teachers who reflect the demographics of their communities enhance the achievement & well-being of their students.

---

#### **Goal 4: Scale and disseminate the NxtGEN CO model**

---

Across the life of the grant, key elements of NxtGEN will be incorporated into CU Denver's existing teacher education programs including concurrent enrollment pipelines, summer bridge, wrap-around support, extended clinical experiences across a full 4 years including a full-year residency, and high-quality mentors who participate in mentor training and earn the added endorsement. By the end of the grant, we will also expand NxtGEN to a new rural CC and districts within their service region as well as other local metro area districts that are currently engaging in the launch of NxtGEN with CU Denver. Finally, grant leadership will work with evaluation partners to assess the impact of NxtGEN, conduct research on the model and will

share our learning in state and national conference presentations and in media and other publications to inform the larger teacher education field.

**Goal 4 Objectives - 4.1.** The NxtGEN CO model is regularly refined and updated based on on-going review of program data and cost per program completer; **4.2.** By Year 4, NxtGEN CO expands to new 9 eligible districts in the grant and deepens the pathways for the 17 districts; **4.3.** By Year 5, critical elements of the model are integrated into additional CU Denver teacher preparation pathways; **4.4.** By Year 5 the model will be expanded into 21 new school districts in Colorado beyond those participating in the grant; **4.5.** By Year 5, the NxtGEN CO model will be disseminated to scholars and educators in the broader field of teacher education in at least 4 professional conferences or research documents.

**Goal 4 Outcomes -1.** Program data are reviewed regularly, and results are used to inform continuous quality improvement of the model; **2.** Key elements of the NxtGEN CO model are integrated and sustained in additional CU Denver teacher preparation pathways and in new partner districts; **3.** The model is disseminated in the broader field of teacher education.

---

### **NxtGEN CO Meets all Competitive Preference Priorities CPP**

**CPP 1: Increasing Educator Diversity.** NxtGEN CO will provide a high-quality teacher preparation program for rural Colorado. All the participating IHEs are Minority Serving Institutions. NxtGEN CO undergraduate preparation pathways include a full year residency in the final year placed in high needs eligible rural partner districts. The grant is aligned with the best practices for recruiting, supporting, and graduating our predominantly first-gen, diverse students in this grow your own model where they will become teachers in their communities (Learning Policy Institute & the Public Leadership Institute, 2021).

The grant will extend a proven, effective pathway into teaching, the NxtGEN model, which produced and continues to produce a highly diverse group of teachers for DPS as described in the introduction. NxtGEN CO will bring the critical elements of NxtGEN to 26 rural Colorado districts. With targeted recruitment, high-quality preparation including extensive clinical experiences and mentoring, wrap-around supports, and two years of induction support, NxtGEN CO ensures underrepresented candidates are fully represented in admission, complete the program with licensure, and are retained as teachers over a long career.

***CPP 2: Supporting a Diverse Workforce to Strengthen Student Learning.*** NxtGEN CO will increase the number of diverse, and effective teachers with licensure (certification) and dual endorsements. Curriculum in the NxtGEN licensure pathways ensure that teachers are well-prepared with deep content knowledge, have strong pedagogical skills, and are prepared to provide culturally and linguistically sustaining teaching and learning experiences for their diverse students. Rural Colorado is experiencing an extreme shortage of teachers in all licensure areas which NxtGEN CO will address through the five licensure pathways (SPED, ELEM, ECE, and middle school math and secondary science). NxtGEN CO will also increase the number of teachers with dual endorsements. All ELEM teachers will have a dual endorsement in CLDE and all SPED candidates will be eligible for an added endorsement in ELEM. Additionally, the NxtGEN CO licensure pathways results in an EDHD BA which is part of a 4+1 or BA/MA pathway allowing qualified candidates in their final undergraduate year to take 9 credits of required coursework at the MA level which applies to an MA. The BA/MA supports candidates in adding another endorsement in Reading, CLDE, or math and science at the graduate level.

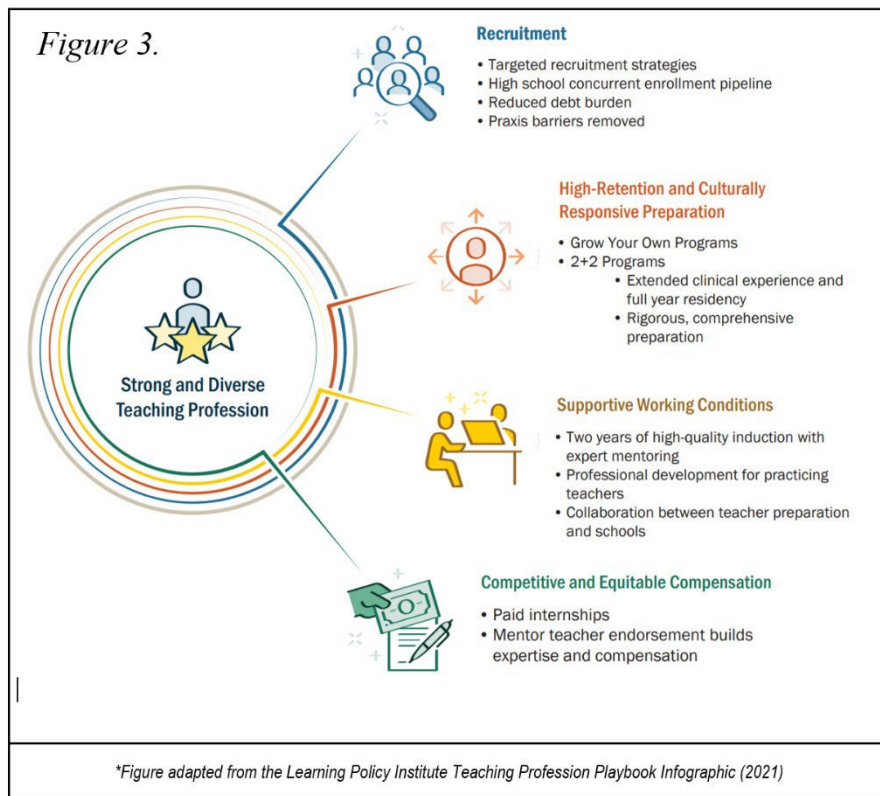
***CPP 3: Meeting Students' Social, Emotional, and Academic Needs.*** NxtGEN CO's programs focus on equity and social justice, centering the lived experiences of diverse students in the

curriculum and privileging an approach that builds upon the cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005) of students in the program. Student success supports are designed and implemented in culturally sustaining (Paris, 2005; Paris & Alim, 2017) systems and processes that name and take up the assets and strengths of our predominantly first-gen and diverse students and fosters the maintenance of a strong cultural identity. The curriculum and student success culture has been intentionally designed to foster a sense of belonging and inclusion for underserved first-gen, diverse students as well as create intentional supports to increase persistence.

***CPP 4: Promoting Equity in Access to Resources and Opportunities.*** NxtGEN CO promotes equity in student access and opportunity in multiple ways. First, as described in CPP 3, NxtGEN creates an equity-focused culture of support for our diverse, first-gen students. Second, NxtGEN takes up an explicit equity-focused curriculum that integrates the following concepts across multiple courses: 1) understanding and transforming structural barriers in schools and one's own positionality and biases 2) supporting culturally and linguistically diverse students and students with special needs, and 3) culturally sustaining pedagogies across content areas. This preparation supports NxtGEN students in acquiring critical perspectives on schooling and society so that they can identify and reduce the barriers that exist for their students, create inclusive and identity-safe learning environments, teach in culturally sustaining ways, and advocate for student needs. This preparation will be made even stronger in NxtGEN CO. An equity consultant and the SEHD Associate Dean for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion will work with faculty, particularly with new rural staff, and district partners to deepen their capacity to support an equity focus in courses and internships, understand their own positionality, beliefs, and biases, and further embed culturally sustaining, equity-centered pedagogies across the program.

**iii. NxtGEN CO is Part of a Comprehensive Effort to Improve Teaching and Learning**

NxtGEN CO is part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and to support rigorous academic standards for students through the recruitment, preparation, and support of a diverse workforce. The work of the grant is organized around the strategies described in *The Teaching Profession Playbook: Building a Strong and Diverse Teaching Profession* produced for the Partnership for the Future of Learning by the Learning Policy Institute and the Public Leadership Institute (2021) in collaboration with 26 organizations including the American Federation of Teachers, the Economic Policy Institute, The National Associations of Elementary School and Secondary School Principals, and the National Education Association. The elements described in the Playbook offer a comprehensive set of strategies that, when used together, recruit, prepare, develop, and retain high-quality, diverse teachers who have the knowledge,



skills, and ongoing support to develop as teachers who can impact learning and support rigorous academic standards for students.

Figure 3 articulates how NxtGEN CO is explicitly aligned with the four key elements laid out in the Playbook and are further described in the sections below.

***Effective Recruitment Strategies*** – Creating a strong diverse workforce begins with multiple effective recruitment strategies as well as identifying and removing barriers that prevent diverse candidates from entering the workforce. NxtGEN CO is aligned to the strategies named in the Playbook in the following ways: 1) a grow your own approach with focused recruitment strategies to locate and support talented community members into teaching; 2) a high school concurrent enrollment educator pathway, R-TEACH, allows students to earn college credits that transfer into the rural NxtGEN pathways; 3) reduced debt burden through paid internships as well as R-TEACH courses that are paid for through state concurrent enrollment funding; 4) collaboration with state legislators on *HB22-1220: Removing Barriers To Educator Preparation* (2022 legislative season) to provide paid residencies for Pell eligible students; and 5) expanding approaches to demonstrate competency beyond Praxis through HB22-1220 to remove this significant costly barrier for diverse, first-gen students.

***High-Retention and Culturally Responsive Preparation.*** Rigorous, comprehensive preparation increases the likelihood that new teachers will be retained and improves their ability to positively impact student achievement. The Playbook lists four prominent strategies in this area, including grow your own & 2+2 programs, well-supported teacher residencies, and coursework that provides deep preparation. NxtGEN CO is aligned with all of these recommendations in the following ways: 1) a grow your own model brings in candidates from the community who have deep roots, community cultural knowledge, and are more likely to be retained across a long career; 2) a 2+2 model provides an affordable pathway for rural first-gen, diverse students and in NxtGEN CO enables them to stay in their community to complete all four years; 3) deep, extended clinical experiences working alongside trained mentor teachers beginning with paid PEI positions in the first 3 years and a culminating full-year residency accumulating more than a

2800 hours of clinical experience across the program; and 4) curriculum that is designed to provide foundational knowledge in learning theory, child development, empirically-based and scientifically valid teaching methods, and culturally sustaining pedagogies for diverse students.

***Supportive Working Conditions.*** Simply recruiting and preparing teachers is not enough to ensure a more diverse teacher workforce. According to the Playbook, the context in which teachers are prepared and begin their careers requires supporting teachers across a long career in schools where the working conditions support retention and growth. There are 4 primary strategies named in this area: high quality induction and mentoring, ongoing professional learning and growth, collaboration and shared leadership, and supportive site leadership.

NxtGEN CO is aligned with these strategies in the following ways: 1) two years of customized induction that includes mentoring from other experienced rural teachers in CoPs; 2) professional development for teachers in the NxtGEN CO eligible districts that supports their growth and development while developing their own sense of purpose and leadership; and 3) Collaborative Councils in each region where NxtGEN CO leaders and partner school principals and other teacher leaders learn and work together to prepare diverse teachers in culturally affirming, and equity-centered contexts that support the growth of new and veteran teachers alike.

***Competitive and Equitable Compensation.*** Teachers are more likely to stay when they are fairly compensated, when their debt burden is manageable, and when their expertise is recognized.

NxtGEN CO supports these strategies in the following ways: 1) paid internships limit the degree of debt students acquire and simultaneously compensates them for required clinical hours; and 2) mentor teachers in NxtGEN are supported in completing the Colorado Mentor Teacher added endorsement, contributing opportunity for increased salary as well as recognition of their expertise and skill as a teacher leader.

**iv. NxtGEN CO Reflects Up-to-date Knowledge from Research and Effective Practice**

The strategies laid out in the Playbook and taken up in NxtGEN CO provide the means to ensure a strong diverse teaching workforce who will stay, teach, and lead across a long career. A robust, current research base supports the design of NxtGEN CO elements and approaches.

***Recruitment Pipelines & Supports for Diverse, First-Gen Students.*** In-depth, targeted, and coordinated recruitment approaches are necessary to identify and support diverse, first-gen students into teaching pathways. The evidence-based practices implemented in NxtGEN CO proven to be instrumental in the success rate of first-gen and underserved college students are: active and targeted recruitment and early college experiences including concurrent enrollment pathways (An, 2013; Dickhoner, 2014); fostering strong and caring relationships, high-touch mentoring and advising; attention to academic & socioemotional needs; building intentional communities of support; easing debt burden, and tracking progress to provide targeted, just in time support (Carver-Thomas, 2018; Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017; Castillo-Montoya, M. & Ives, 2021; Farris & Chan, 2022; Hold & Winter, 2018; Strand, 2013).

NxtGEN CO employs these evidence-based practices in several ways: 1) recruitment staff with deep knowledge of the local context who utilize a relational approach to identify and support prospective students; 2) early, in-depth experiences allow high school students to explore a career in teaching through the R-TEACH pathway; 3) summer bridge supports early strategies for success as college students and PEIs; and 4) Student Success Coaches, Academic Advisors, and the local NxtGEN Coordinators provide high-touch academic and socio-emotional supports for first-gen, diverse students.

**Effective Teacher Residencies.** Robust evidence on the importance and impact of teacher residencies exists (Azar, Grossman, Lozier & Scheib, 2021; Stringer, 2019). Design elements



that produce impact include: 1) strong district/university partnerships; 2) coursework tightly integrated with clinical practice; 3) full-year residency; 4) high-ability, diverse candidates recruited to meet district hiring needs; 5) financial support for residents; 6) cohorts of residents placed in “teaching schools” that model good practices; 7) expert mentor teachers who co-teach with residents; and 8) ongoing mentoring and support for graduates (Guha, Hyler, & Darling-Hammond, 2016; Silva, McKie, Knechtel, Gleason, Makowsky, 2014).

These elements have traditionally been applied to the design of 1-year master’s programs, but NxtGEN CO has applied these evidence-based design factors to the creation of our pre-baccalaureate, ‘grow your own’ design. Evidence indicates that ‘grow your own’ teachers from the community are more committed to staying to teach in their communities (Azar, Grossman, Lozier & Scheib, 2021; Valenzuela, 2017), reducing teacher attrition. This is important as research indicates that teachers become more effective at supporting student learning with experience (Ladd & Sorenson, 2017; Papay & Kraft, 2015).

**Effective Induction & Professional Development.** Research is clear that when new teachers receive targeted support, they experience measurable progress in their practice with students, increasing efficacy and satisfaction, and the likelihood that they will stay (Barnes, Crowe, & Schaefer, 2007). NxtGEN CO utilizes a virtual Communities of Practice (CoP) model with structured problem-solving, reflective practice and diverse networking, characteristics of CoPs shown to impact effectiveness (Cox, 2013; Barbour, Armstrong, Condrón & Palermo, 2018; Stacey, Smith, & Barty, 2004). These CoPs are further grounded in evidence-based practices of professional learning that lead to positive student outcomes. This includes sustained experimentation with high leverage practices (Brownwell & Swaner, 2010; Martin-Raugh, Reese, Tannenbaum, Steinberg, & Xu, 2016), opportunity for structured dialogue, practice, and

coaching (Kretlow & Bartholomew's; 2010; Wasik & Hindman, 2011), a focus on student growth and development (Cordingley and Bell, 2012), and learning in networks of support (Bell et al. 2006). Veteran and new teachers will be learning with and from one another, creating the conditions for cross-mentoring and developing shared, collective expertise. All teachers in the CoP will engage in video coaching cycles focused on high leverage practices proven to impact student achievement (Allen et al., 2015; Allen et al., 2011; Christensen, Knezek & Tyler-Wood, 2015; Martin-Raugh, Reese, Tannenbaum, Steinberg, & Xu, 2016) and framed around evidence-based coaching techniques to target individual teachers' strengths and needs (Geller & O'Donnell, 2017). In addition, all teachers will customize their learning experience by selecting high quality content modules based on their own personalized needs. Each module includes instructional and pedagogical strategies that teachers can put into practice immediately increasing the likelihood that teachers will acquire new tools they can apply immediately and that they will see an impact on student growth leading to increased efficacy (Guskey, 2020).

#### **v. Performance Feedback and Continuous Improvement are Integral to Design**

NxtGEN CO draws upon the strong set of evaluation and assessment tools used across all of CU Denver's teacher education programs. These tools are designed to assess a candidate's developing ability to support diverse communities of children and include content assessments embedded in coursework, three Early Field Experience and the Professional Year Residency evaluation rubrics with embedded professional dispositions and behaviors, a Planning, Teaching, Assessment Capstone with comprehensive rubrics, and an end of program exit survey that includes a social justice scale. Data from these tools are analyzed annually. Patterns and trends in the data are used to make changes to the program in a process of continuous improvement. A comparison data set collected prior to the grant will help NxtGEN staff evaluate and assess how

changes to the program over the course of the grant impact NxtGEN CO candidate preparation and the development of teaching skills with diverse communities of children in rural contexts.

**vi. NxtGEN CO is Designed to Build Capacity and Yield Results Beyond the Grant Period**

NxtGEN CO will build capacity to yield results far beyond the grant period in multiple ways. First, the roles and infrastructure critical to implementing the program will be well-established. The team structures that include CU Denver and CC leaders, faculty and staff developed across the grant ensure this. Leadership, recruitment and admissions, student success, curriculum, clinical experience, and induction/professional development teams will have well-developed meeting patterns, collaborative structures, routines, and processes to support the work beyond the grant. The grant also builds capacity in district partners to support new teachers through regular collaborative council meetings and high-quality mentor training, ensuring that schools will be able to continue this work well into the future. At the end of the grant, NxtGEN CO will have prepared 86 teachers with 60 more in the preparation pathways. R-TEACH will have supported 64 students explore a career in teaching. These teachers are grown from their rural communities and are committed to staying to teach and lead across a long career, reducing teacher turnover in these communities and increasing student achievement. The grant will have also supported 66 teachers in induction, 40 mentor teachers for NxtGEN CO teacher candidates, and 80 practicing teachers through professional development, enhancing their teaching to improve student learning for years to come. Finally, NxtGEN CO has a strong financial plan to ensure NxtGEN CO will be sustainable beyond the life of the grant (See *Section C: Adequacy of Resources*).

---

**B. QUALITY OF THE PROJECT EVALUATION**

---

***Evaluator Qualifications.*** Project evaluation will be provided by The Evaluation Center, which is situated within the SEHD at CU Denver. Since its inception in 2004, the Center has provided

program evaluation for clients within and outside the University functioning as an independent, self-supporting entity with access to campus research resources. Currently, the Center has a staff of 23 full- and part-time evaluators who represent a variety of academic fields including team members with long-term experience in PK-12 education in Colorado. The team is strong in quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methodologies and has experience implementing a wide range of evaluation theories, approaches, and dissemination methods.

The Evaluation Center's vision is to improve lives and communities through high quality evaluation. As members of the Equitable Evaluation Initiative, we are committed to promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion. We strive to conduct evaluations that are culturally responsive and contribute to social justice. The Center's mission is to advance the value and understanding of evaluation through collaboration with clients in schools, institutions of higher education, governmental agencies, and nonprofit organizations. We emphasize using collaborative processes and producing actionable results throughout the evaluation while maintaining flexibility as programs evolve. As an organization, the Center abides by the American Evaluation Association's Guiding Principles for Evaluators and is certified through the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative to conduct human subjects' research.

***Relevant Experience.*** The Center has extensive experience evaluating federally funded and education-related programs including serving as the external evaluators for the NxtGEN U.S. Department of Education Teacher Quality Partnership grant to CU Denver (2014 – 2020). Among other evaluation projects, the Center currently serves as external evaluators for higher education programs intended to increase educational access for students from under-represented groups and to diversify the workforce. This work includes four projects funded by the National Science Foundation (partners are Front Range Community College/St Vrain School District;

BioFrontiers Institute at the University of Colorado Boulder; New Mexico State University; and CU Denver) and two projects funded by the National Institutes of Health (partners are CU Anschutz Campus and University of New Mexico).

***Evaluation Design.*** The NxtGEN CO evaluation team will ground their work within the framework of developmental evaluation (Patton, 2006), which is particularly suited for use with initiatives that aim to improve systems and impact the lives of program beneficiaries. It is an iterative approach that is responsive to context and to new learning as innovations emerge and evolve within complex systems like public education. Unlike traditional evaluation, the developmental evaluator's role is collaborative and embedded within an initiative. The evaluator serves to promote learning by collecting and analyzing process, formative, and summative data in collaboration with program leaders and modifying evaluation tools and methods as needed. Evaluation results are provided in real-time to inform continuous quality improvement and to assess progress toward intended outcomes and performance measures (including those established by the Department of Education under the GPRA and section 204(a) of the HEA).

#### **i. Methods Provide Valid and Reliable Performance Data on Relevant Outcomes**

Evaluators will provide valid and reliable performance data on the NxtGEN CO outcomes. Validity will be strengthened by the use of mixed methods to allow the triangulation of results collected from both quantitative and qualitative sources. Existing SEHD surveys and teacher effectiveness rating tools will be used which allows comparison to historical data. The use of an external evaluation team will further support validity by minimizing researcher bias. Reliability will be supported by calculating inter-rater and internal consistency reliability for quantitative results, by engaging multiple evaluators and program leaders in the interpretation of data, and by taking summary results back to interviewees (teacher candidates, mentors, partner district

representatives, faculty) to “member check” the results.

## **ii. Methods are Thorough, Feasible, & Appropriate for Goals, Objectives & Outcomes**

***Evaluation Methods.*** The evaluation team will use methods that are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of NxtGEN CO. The Evaluation Center will implement a comprehensive evaluation and strive to include the voices of all participants to assure thoroughness. As local evaluators in the state, they will work to assure that data collection is done in a respectful, non-intrusive, and personal manner. The evaluation team has many years of experience in the Colorado PK-12 and higher education community; therefore, they are knowledgeable about terminology, timelines, and state initiatives. Evaluators will use traditional evaluation tools and methods (surveys, interviews, focus groups) that will be reviewed by The Evaluation Center’s internal BIPOC caucus and local leaders in partner districts to assure cultural appropriateness. In addition, more innovative methods such as storytelling and journey mapping shown to be effective in evaluation studies with students from diverse backgrounds will be employed (Velez et al., 2022). These methods will provide students with opportunities to reflect on their access to higher education and development of identities as teachers.

***Evaluation Plan.*** The evaluation consists of process-oriented, formative, and summative approaches and will be guided by four evaluation questions that align with the NxtGEN CO goals and outcomes as identified in the logic model (see Appendix C1). Below, each question is presented with an overview of the data collection, timelines for implementation, and the required GPRA and HEA performance measures. (See Appendix C2 for a detailed evaluation plan table.)

***Evaluation Q1: To what extent is NxtGEN CO successful in recruiting diverse, rural, and first gen students for the teacher preparation program?*** Evaluators will review program records each semester to track recruitment events and enrollment numbers in both the R-TEACH pathway and

in the NxtGEN CO rural pathways by demographic groups. Evaluators will also use surveys, interviews, and focus groups to collect the perceptions of participants on the quality of support and preparation received and their suggestions for improvement. Data collection will be both on a semesterly and annual basis.

*Evaluation Q2: To what extent is NxtGEN CO successful in preparing high quality teachers for partner LEA districts especially in teacher shortage areas of ECE, ELEM, SPED, and secondary content?* Evaluators will annually monitor the quality and expansion of partnerships with qualifying districts through observations of meetings/review of meeting minutes and surveys of district partners. In addition the number and level of satisfaction of faculty participating in PLCs and faculty curricular teams as well as pre-service mentors involved in training and the mentor added endorsement will be collected annually using participation records, surveys, and interviews. NxtGEN CO teacher candidate participation and satisfaction with student support services will be evaluated each semester as well as annual review of candidate's teacher preparation program assessments, examining the % who met or exceed expectations aligned with teacher quality standards (HEA 1). Additionally each year, students will be engaged in interviews and storytelling to collect their perceptions of the learning environment, their developing identity as teachers, and progress toward mastery of teacher competencies during field experiences and the professional residency year. Evaluators will track teacher candidate persistence toward their degree and graduation (GPRA 3) each semester including % from under-represented groups or first-gen status. Evaluators will also annually track attainment of licensure/certification (GPRA 1 and 2; HEA 3), and employment as first year teachers in partner LEAs (GPRA 4, HEA 4), including % from under-represented groups and % teaching in high need areas (HEA 6, 7, 8).

*Evaluation Q3: To what extent is NxtGEN CO successful in improving the quality and retention of teachers in partner LEA districts?* Evaluators will review records of participation in induction and professional development for teachers in eligible district partners each semester. Annually, qualitative methods including surveys, interviews, and focus groups, will be used along with similar storytelling and journey-mapping methods described above to collect their perceptions of the customized support for their professional development. Teacher effectiveness will be assessed by collecting ratings from teachers and through interviews with supervisors in the partner districts. Employment records will be reviewed annually to track teacher retention for three years (GPRA 5).

*Evaluation 4: To what extent are key elements of the NxtGEN CO model disseminated and incorporated into additional CU Denver pathways, new partner schools, and beyond?*

Evaluators will observe and document the refinement, expansion, and dissemination of the program providing real-time data to guide the process. Sustainability indicators will be defined and assessed in collaboration with program leaders, including monitoring cost per completer (GPRA efficiency measure).

***Data Integrity, Analyses, and Reporting.*** Evaluation methods, instruments, and procedures to protect participant confidentiality will be reviewed by the Colorado Multiple Institutional Review Board; evaluators will incorporate any recommendations into the design. Evaluators will store all program data on a password protected, dual verification network. Participant information including sensitive employment records will be maintained by case number only (rather than by name or employee number).

Quantitative data will be analyzed primarily with descriptive statistics using SPSS software. When assumptions are met for parametric or non-parametric tests, additional analyses will be



conducted, especially examining changes over time when historical information is available. Qualitative data (interview, focus group, storytelling results) will be analyzed by at least two evaluators working separately using NVivo software. Key themes and representative quotes will be identified using a consensus process. Collaborative data interpretation sessions will be conducted with program leaders and other stakeholders, as possible, to assure the context of the results is considered (Pankaj & Emery, 2016).

Evaluators will facilitate bi-monthly meetings with NxtGEN CO program leaders to share evaluation results in a timely way to encourage use for continuous quality improvement. Annual summary reports will also be prepared and shared to support annual reports and dissemination.

## **C. ADEQUACY OF RESOURCES**

### **i. Adequacy of Support, including Facilities, Equipment, Supplies, and Other Resources**

The SEHD has a strong history of securing and successfully implementing grants including the robust infrastructure necessary to support NxtGEN CO. Offices will be available on each campus for staff with rural staff housed on the community college campuses. All grant staff will be provided with technology. CU Denver faculty are highly skilled in different formats of course delivery, including remote (Zoom), online, face-to-face (F2F), or in a hyflex approach where students Zoom into F2F courses in Denver. Hyflex classrooms in both Denver and CCs are equipped with the high quality technology (e.g. multiple cameras and mics) necessary to support student engagement and learning. Lastly, the licensure pathways are well-established, stewarded and taught by faculty who specialize in each area as well as have expertise in culturally, linguistically and ability-diverse pedagogies as well as a strong equity-focused stance.

Several key SEHD offices will support the successful implementation of NxtGEN. The ***SEHD Office of Recruitment and Outreach*** is fully staffed and able to support the new

Recruitment and Admission Specialist and Rural Recruitment and Admission Navigators, provide training on CU Denver systems, and guidance in accessing recruitment and admissions processes. ***Office of Academic Services and Advising*** provides seamless support for students from admissions to graduation. The Manager of Undergraduate Advising will advise NxtGEN CO students and has a long history of supporting diverse, first-gen students. The ***Office of Partnerships*** oversees all clinical experiences and has well-designed systems for placing students in internships, running background checks, organizing collaborative councils, and tracking clinical experience-related data (performance evaluations, Praxis, etc.). The ***Student Success Center*** has a complete suite of resources for students including Praxis materials, workshops, writing support, and study materials. Students have access to all these materials through a shared Learning Management system. The Director has deep expertise in providing supports to diverse, first-gen students and provides comprehensive training to all Success Center Coaches. The ***Office of Continuing & Professional Education (CPE)*** has a large and diverse set of faculty-created content modules to be used in induction and professional learning and CPE faculty are experts in video coaching. The ***Office of Digital Learning & Technology*** is fully staffed with expertise to support technical needs, web-design, as well as professional development for faculty to integrate technology and hyflex/remote/on-line instruction. The ***Office of Assessment*** builds data systems and dashboards that allow access to data for continuous improvement. The ***Office of Grants and Contracts*** provides post-award support for faculty to manage external grants including accounting and support for reports. Finally, the ***Office of Marketing*** provide support and expertise in the design of marketing materials and overall marketing strategy implementation.

## **ii. The Extent to which the Budget is Adequate to Support the Proposed Project**

We have many resources and well-established infrastructures in the SEHD and CC partners that are critical to this project. The requested budget has been carefully developed to allow us to build on those resources to bring critical and proven NxtGEN elements to these rural pathways and to guarantee success (See Full Budget Narrative in Appendix H). The coordinative design of the grant is a hub and spoke approach and this is how the budget has been organized. It establishes key personnel in each CC location and a central organizing personnel infrastructure in Denver. Personnel devoted to each CC location focus on recruitment/admissions, student success, high school concurrent pathway development, and rural pathway coordination on each side of the 2+2 (courses and school partners). Central personnel funded through the grant include roles for an overall NxtGEN Rural Coordinator, a project director, Director of the SEHD Success Center, R-TEACH community support, and an Induction/PD coordinator. A full-time recruitment and admissions specialist will coordinate recruitment activities across all four CC locations and will ensure high touch support from application to enrollment. These centralized roles will coordinate the work across sites and establish shared processes and efficiencies. We have also included sufficient funds to support faculty involvement in the continuing refinement and contextualization of the curriculum, and faculty match ensures that there is ongoing stewardship of the curriculum. Finally, grant funds and matching for upper-level leadership in each CC location ensures a high level of institutional support for the work of the grant.

### **iii. Costs are Reasonable in Relation to the Objectives, Design, & Significance of Project**

The extreme shortage of teachers in rural Colorado has been historically addressed by bringing in teachers from metro centers and other states. These teachers often leave within the first few years as they lack an understanding of rural culture and have no connections to the community. This shortage has been exacerbated by COVID-19 as teachers leave the field at increased

rates. The cost of the revolving door of teachers in rural Colorado is high. Financially, it is money that could go to improving learning experiences for children and supporting educator development. As Wise (2014) maintains, “The monetary cost of teacher attrition pales in comparison to the loss of human potential associated with hard-to-staff schools that disproportionately serve low-income students and students of color” (All4Ed Press Release). NxtGEN CO’s grow your own approach stems the loss of teachers and produces not only financial benefits, but human potential benefits as well.

NxtGEN costs are a very reasonable investment to produce the benefits of better prepared teachers who persist across a career affecting the lives and learning of thousands of children. The design of the grant and our objectives are focused on this outcome and will have the following impact: a) 86 new teachers prepared to stay, teach, and lead across a long career and 60 candidates in the pipeline well on their way to becoming rural teachers; b) 40 pre-service mentor teachers will be trained, actively mentoring with many acquiring a Mentor Endorsement; c) 66 new teachers will have received high quality induction support to increase their effectiveness and efficacy; d) 80 practicing teachers will have received professional development to increase their effectiveness and deepen their content knowledge; and e) 64 high school students will have completed one or more R-TEACH concurrent enrollment courses for free, making significant headway in becoming teachers. Overall, NxtGEN will have had a significant impact on the development of 330 current and future rural educators.

#### **iv. NxtGEN CO has the Resources to Operate the Project Beyond the Length of the Grant**

NxtGEN CO has been designed with sustainability in mind, as was the first NxtGEN grant with Denver Public Schools which continues to this day. Sustainability for NxtGEN CO has been accomplished, in part, with CU Denver and the CCs carrying 100% of the matching budget

demonstrating that there are significant resources and infrastructures in place that will allow each institution to absorb the cost and roles of NxtGEN CO in their own budgets. Each IHE has committed resources to sustain the NxtGEN CO pathways beyond funding as can be found in their letters of support. Our school district partners have expressed their enthusiasm for preparing local teachers and have also committed to sustaining NxtGEN pathways as the need for teachers continues to grow in each area.

Grant support will allow us to develop critical infrastructures, build capacity, and increase enrollment so that the work is sustainable. CU Denver leadership has already worked with our Budget and Finance office to develop a cost-revenue model built on anticipated tuition revenue to support critical roles after grant funding, including local NxtGEN Coordinators. The SEHD will absorb key roles and responsibilities under existing infrastructures such as the Office of Recruitment and Outreach, Office of Partnerships, Student Success Center, and Office of Continuing and Professional Education. The CCs will similarly absorb key responsibilities. School partners will continue to leverage existing budgets to hire NxtGEN PEIs, and we will leverage local and state resources to fund professional year residents. A multi-year budget in Appendix H demonstrates how staff and activities will be sustained beyond the life of the grant.

#### **v. Relevance and Commitment of Partners to Implementation and Success of the Project**

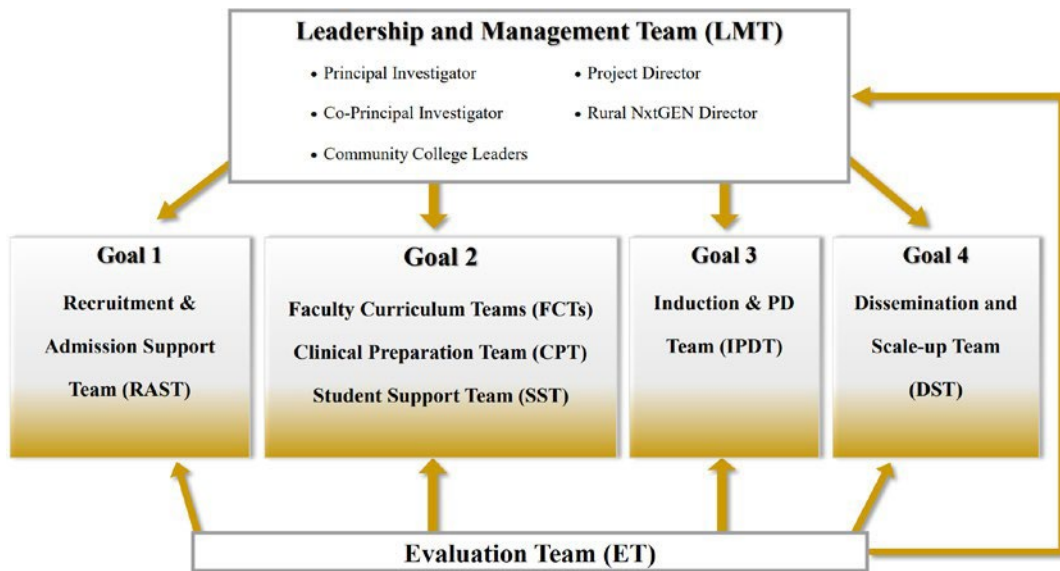
NxtGEN CO expands a proven model for diversifying the educator workforce and is built on a strong existing collaboration among three critical types of partners in the preparation of teachers for rural Colorado: a four-year institution, four CCs, and 26 eligible rural districts. The work of preparing teachers in these 2+2, grow your own teaching pathways is not possible without each partner fully committed to the work and that commitment is demonstrated in the letters of support provided by each partner. Developing these pathways in four highly impacted

rural areas will prepare teachers for some of the state’s most diverse and economically vulnerable children. Furthermore, the project has support from the highest levels at CU Denver, the state, and nationally which is demonstrated in letters of support from CU Denver Chancellor [REDACTED], the Co-Interim Dean of SEHD, the Colorado Department of Higher Education, the Colorado Center for Rural Education, Early Childhood and Workforce Development Councils and finally Colorado Senator and former governor, [REDACTED] who has sent a letter directly to [REDACTED], Program Manager of TQP.

**D. QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT PLAN**

**i. Responsibilities, Timelines, and Milestones for Accomplishing Project Tasks**

Figure 4: Management Teams.



NxtGEN commits key personnel in the SEHD and each CC location and creates an organizational system of management teams to ensure that the goals of the proposed project are accomplished on time and within budget (See Figure 4 above). The LMT is responsible for administration and management of the project and oversees successful implementation of project activities in coordination with key personnel in teams. NxtGEN key personnel bring extensive

professional expertise, content knowledge and management capacity to the project. (Brief bios/vitae included in Appendix D). Below we describe the responsibilities of the key personnel and their role across all teams indicated in **red** text. Personnel to be hired on the project are designated as (TBH). More details are included in the Budget Narrative in Appendix H.

**[REDACTED]**, **PI, *LMT***- Oversight of all aspects of the grant and all teacher pathways; coordination and communication with the partner community colleges

**[REDACTED]**, **Co-PI, *LMT***- Oversee district partnership development, clinical practice design and paid internship experience

**[REDACTED]**, **Project Director, *LMT***- Overall project administration; creation and maintenance of systems to monitor grant activities / timelines; liaison with the ET; grant reporting

**[REDACTED]**, **Rural NxtGEN Director, *LMT***- Operationalize all 4 partnership pathways to develop curriculum; 2+2 agreements; support and manage local coordinators at each site; build capacity of rural instructors, liaison between LMT and all other teams

**Community College Leaders:** VP's of Academic Affairs, ***LMT***- Oversight/supervision of CC NxtGEN pathways, including R-TEACH; coordination/communication with project leaders

**NxtGEN Community College Liaisons (TBH), *RAST, FCT, CPT*** - Coordinate CC side of NxtGEN pathways, coordinate with other CC offices (recruitment, advising, financial aid).

**Local NxtGEN Coordinators (TBH), *RAST, FCT, SST*** -On-the-ground local support for students, deepen partnerships with schools, teach internship seminars and supervise internships

**[REDACTED]**, **Director of SEHD Student Success Center, *SST***—Oversee services & resource design in SSC; create progress tracking systems, train/supervise Success Coaches

**NxtGEN Recruitment & Admission Specialist (TBH), *RAST*** - Outreach, recruitment, and application supports in collaboration with the Rural Recruitment and Admission Navigators

██████████, **SEHD Advising Specialist, SST** - Provides program advising, development of 4-year plans, supports registration and graduation processes

██████████, **NxtGEN Clinical Experience & Mentor Coordinator, CPT**-Facilitates mentor teacher PD, contextualization of clinical experiences and supervision tools in the rural locations

██████████ **Induction & PD Coordinator, PDT** - Coordination of induction and PD activities, training, and supervising induction and PD facilitators; refinement of the model

██████████ **Evaluation Lead, ET** -Oversee formative and summative assessment and guide continuous improvement

NxtGEN Teams include several other SEHD personnel and offices (e.g., CU Denver and CC Education and Arts & Science faculty, Associate Dean of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, SEHD offices described in *Section C: Adequacy of Resources*, p. 39-40). NxtGEN will also be supported by consultants including *Rural Recruitment and Admission Navigators* for each CC, an *R-TEACH Community Facilitator*, and an *Equity Pedagogy Consultant*. More detail about their responsibilities is included in Appendix H: Budget Narrative. The table below outlines the major tasks, teams, and milestones of the grant. Refer to figure 4 above for team abbreviations.

Table 2: Management Plan

Major Tasks	Personnel & Teams	Milestones	YEAR				
			1	2	3	4	5
Identify & hire grant personnel & build capacity	LMT	Recruitment & Admissions Specialist, Local Rural Recruitment & Admission Specialist, Local NxtGEN Coordinators, CC Liaisons, Induction/PD Facilitators, Student Success Coaches hired					



C O L O R A D O			Regular meetings held for each work scope						
	Develop & Implement Recmt. & Adm. Plan	LMT	Comprehensive recruitment plan developed						
			Student admission process blueprinted						
		RAST	Recruitment team is trained on CRM						
			Recruitment & admission plan revised						
	Develop R-TEACH Concmtent Emollment Pathway	CC	Vision for R-TEACH solidified among CCs						
			Leaders & Liaisons	R-TEACH courses identified					
		R-TEACH Comm. Facilitator	R-TEACH schedule determined						
			Marketing & recruitment plan developed						
			Students emolled in courses each semester						
			R-TEACH community plan developed						
			R-TEACH analyzed & plans refined						
	Develop & Implement Summer Bridge Programs	SST	SUilllller bridge designed & dates identified						
			Infonnation communicated to students						
			SUilllller bridge implemented in each CC						
SUilllller bridge analyzed & plans refined									
Clinical Preparation & Mentoring	CPT, Co-PI, Rural NxtGEN Director	NxtGEN info shared with district partners							
		PEI funding model established							
		Mentor teachers identified							
		New mentor teachers trained							

			Collaborative Councils created & convened							
Cuniculum Work	LMT, FCTs  Rmal NxtGEN Director		2 + 2 plans are reviewed							
			Grant refonns integrated across cmTiculum							
			Suppo li for rnral instrnctors implemented							
			Professional Leaming Communities created							
			Twice semester PLC meetings held							
Develop Student Success Services	LMT  SST		Vision & plan for student success developed							
			Orientalions, registration sessions held							
			Monthly CC coholi meetings held							
			Student caseload assigned to SSC Coaches							
			Customized suppo li plans created							
			Monthly SSC calendar of services published							
			Success tracking system developed & used							
M O C.,	LMT  IPDT		Facilitators trained on video coaching							
			Induction/PD CoPs folmed							
			Customized content modules selected							
			New induction mentors are trained							
			CoPs meet monthly							
			4 video coaching cycles completed							
Suppo liing	PI		Monthly EEIC meetings attended							

	ECEwork	ECE Faculty	ECE standards aligned					
			New ECE workforce strategies pursued					
0 < C	Integrate reforms	FCTs	Reforms integrated across pathways					
			Key NxtGEN elements extended pathways					
	Scale NxtGEN	LMT	NxtGEN extended to 9 rural districts					
			NxtGEN extended to 3 metro districts					
			NxtGEN extended to CC & districts					
	Disseminate NxtGEN's impact	LMT	Dissemination plan developed					
			One or more proposals submitted					
One or more publications pursued								

**ii. Procedures for Ensuring Feedback and Continuous Improvement**

NxtGEN utilizes two primary mechanisms for ensuring collaboration, ongoing communication, feedback, and continuous improvement. The first is the *team structure* shared in the previous section that brings together key personnel and partners in *regular meeting patterns* (weekly/bi-weekly/monthly), to systematically address issues and find solutions.

- **Leadership & Management Team meets weekly** to track administrative, instructional & financial aspects of the project & discuss strengths, challenges, and solutions.
- **Recruitment Support Team meets bi-weekly** to track recruitment and refine targeted recruitment strategies.
- **Faculty Curriculum Teams meet bi-weekly** to assess the progress of curriculum revisions and rural instructor capacity and adjust as needed.

- ***Clinical Preparation Team meets bi-weekly*** to assess clinical experience, mentor teacher PD & assess needs in the rural locations.
- ***Student Support Team meets weekly*** to monitor individualized student support strategies and services, track student, retention & degree completion & refine support strategies.
- ***Induction and PD Team meets bi-weekly*** to assess and monitor delivery of PD activities and engage in continued refinement of the Induction and PD model across the grant.
- ***Dissemination and Scale-up Team meets monthly*** to assess the impact of NxtGEN and disseminate the model and determine steps for the scale-up plan.

The second primary mechanism for ongoing feedback and continuous improvement is ***bi-monthly systematic data reviews*** with the Leadership and Management Team (LMT) and the Evaluation Team (ET). The Evaluation Team will bring formative data, including enrollment data, data from teacher education student program assessments, questionnaires, surveys, interviews, databases, and observation protocols to bi-monthly meetings to evaluate performance related to project objectives and activities so teams can adjust as needed to ensure overall accomplishment of NxtGEN goals. These processes for receiving ongoing feedback are an integral part of project activities. Additional continuous improvement efforts through formative evaluation are included in *Section B, Quality of the Project Evaluation*, p.33.