



# Questa Independent School District

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## NMPED

## Hard to Staff/STEM Grants

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## Purpose

- The purpose of these funds is to provide a \$5,000, \$7,500, and \$10,000 stipend per year to effective, highly effective, and exemplary STEM (grades 6-12), Special Education (K–12), Bilingual (K–12) or other hard-to-staff teaching positions to serve in low performing (D/F) schools.
- These funds can be used as a stipend to recruit these hard-to-staff teachers to teach in hard-to-staff schools or to attract and retain these teachers in low-performing schools.

## Goals

- To provide all students high-quality education in STEM (grades 7-12), Special Education (grades K-12), Bilingual (grades K-12) and other hard to staff areas that promote 21<sup>st</sup> century skills for college and career readiness.

- Questa Independent School District (QISD) is centered in a remote/rural town that continues to experience monumental changes due to the closure of the Questa Chevron Mine.
- The Chevron Mine was the largest employer in the area.
- It provided jobs for over 300 of our families.
- Many of these families have had to move away to seek other employment.
- We have seen a decline in our student enrollment.
- There are other external situations that resonate into the classroom and playgrounds which has led to relational violence and poor attendance.
- QISD is also experiencing great difficulty in maintaining staff and attracting staff to fill the vacant positions.
- In addition to community stress, QISD has a budget deficit that is quite significant.
- We have currently been approved for supplemental emergency funding.



QISD will continue to utilize the Project Lead the Way curriculum which provides one of nations top comprehensive approaches to STEM Education. Project Lead The Way (PLTW) is the nation's leading provider of K-12 STEM programs. Through world-class, activity-, project-, and problem-based curriculum, high-quality teacher professional development, and an engaged network of educators and corporate partners, PLTW helps students develop the skills needed to succeed in our global economy. PLTW courses are aligned with Common Core State Standards for Math and English Language Arts, Next Generation Science Standards, and other national and state standards. Courses and units are designed to complement math and science courses, and in some instances, are used as the core curriculum.

### Teacher Eligibility

Teaching assignment for 2016-2017 school year is 75% composed of courses in the hard-to-staff area applied for and approved by the PED. A teacher moving from one hard to staff school to another will NOT be eligible for the stipend.

This includes teachers who meet the criteria and move from an A, B, or C school to a D or F school.

Hold or be eligible for an alternative NM teaching license with a Bachelor's degree or higher in the hard-to-staff content area

OR

Hold an active NM teaching license with an appropriate endorsement AND have full-time teaching experience in approved STEM (grades 6-12), Bilingual, Special Education or other hard-to-staff courses with a proven track record of improving student achievement in the hard-to-staff area demonstrated by a summative evaluation of effective, highly effective or exemplary.

Understanding of the knowledge, practices, and processes of New Mexico Common Core State Standards and/or State Science/CTE Standards AND how curriculum may be organized to best serve diverse learners.

Understanding of and the ability to use strategies for managing, assessing and monitoring of student learning to inform instruction.

OR

Highly Effective or Exemplary English Language Arts teachers may qualify for this stipend according to the following:

Serves English Learners in 1062/1063 (traditionally reserved for TESOL)

Understands and implements English Language Development Standards adopted by New Mexico

Understands and implements Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Instruction in delivery of Common Core State Standards

If part of a Bilingual program, may be submitted in the bilingual instructional plan

OR

Teachers in all content areas who meet criteria, increase number of students instructed

Additional students per course

Additional students overall

### District Eligibility

Hard to staff public school districts and state chartered schools that demonstrate a commitment to recruit and retain qualified teachers of STEM, Special Education, Bilingual and/or other hard-to-staff area for a minimum of two years.



## **Recruitment**

Administrators at QISD will utilize the following venues for recruiting highly qualified STEM, Special Education, and Bilingual teachers:

- NM universities that have Education / Teacher College programs;
- NMREAP teacher recruiting system;
- College Job Fairs
- Public advertising venues, (i.e. district website, state-wide newspapers, etc.). – Taos News, Albuquerque Journal, Santa Fe New Mexican.
- Voluntary Transfer from within school district



### **Retention**

- To promote highly qualified STEM, Special Education, and Bilingual teachers to stay with QISD they will be offered the monetary incentive produced by this grant program, as well as support from staff mentors, community volunteers (as possible), colleagues and administration.
- Administrators will check with the new teachers periodically to see how their time at QISD is going, and if any further assistance is needed.
- Training and potential for growth as an educator will be available through the other incentives offered by the district and grant programs.
- Overall, these teachers will be made to feel welcome, supported, and valued.

## INITIATIVE PROGRAM

Each teacher interviewed for a STEM, Bilingual, and Special Education teaching position, if highly qualified, will be presented with the incentive that if they will commit to a minimum of two years at QISD, they will receive an initial stipend that will be distributed in April of that school year. If they complete the two years, a second stipend will be distributed in April of that school year. QISD believes that distributing the initial and final stipend towards the end of the school year, it will encourage teachers to stay with the school district.

## OTHER INCENTIVES

Funds will be used for recruitment initially allowing administrators to offer a recruitment stipend in year one and a retention stipend at the end of year two.



## MENTORING & SUPPORT

New highly qualified STEM, Special Education, and Bilingual Education teachers that sign contracts with QISD will receive the following mentoring and support:

- Assigned mentor that will assist with school protocols and logistics;
- First year teachers will be assigned a two year mentor that will work with them on areas of teachers that they may need assistance with, (i.e. planning, classroom management, working with parents, etc.);
- Support will be provided by either a staff mentor, or a staff or community volunteer to help the new teacher get settled in the community, (i.e. location of post office, bank, shopping areas, recreational areas, etc.)
- The school district office will keep on on-going list of potential rentals in the area for new teachers to view;
- STEM teachers will be offered a minimum of 2 days training in their respective field, as well as other trainings as they relate to educators as a whole each year. These trainings will be conducted either on-site at the district or via travel to another community (the district will pay for travel and per-diem as necessary);
- The teachers will work together with others in STEM, Bilingual, Special Ed to be a voice for building the best STEM, Bilingual, Special Ed. program possible with teamwork and support from each other and administration;
- The site administrator will work closely with the new teacher to answer questions and make them feel welcomed and comfortable.

## Number of Teachers who received the Stipend

	SY 13-14	SY 14-15	SY 15-16	SY 16-17
Math	1	2	1	0
Science	2	2	1	0
Special Education	0	0	1	0
Bilingual	0	0	1	1

## Number of Students that were impacted by the Grant

13-14	14-15	15-16
167	168	119

## **Suggestions:**

- **To add recruitment stipends back to the grant. We only received one retention grant this year.**
- **To allow teachers to receive the grant if they voluntary transfer to the hard to staff/stem subjects.**
- **Continue research on appropriate grant amounts based on District needs.**