REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
FOR SPRING 2018 NETWORK PROVIDERS FOR THE ADVANCED COURSE NETWORK

Applications must be received by 4:00 PM on OCTOBER 6, 2017

The Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE), is requesting Advanced Course Network Provider Applications from interested Rhode Island schools, Rhode Island districts, nonprofit organizations and colleges to offer advanced coursework for Rhode Island high school and middle school students with the goal of expanding access to advanced coursework opportunities that promote college and career readiness.

Responses to this Request for Proposals will be accepted electronically only. A link to the application form is available on www.ride.ri.gov/advancedcoursework. Additional resources including a preview of the application form are available on the RIDE website as well. The Rhode Island Department of Education reserves the right to accept or reject, without prejudice, any or all submissions to promote the best interest of the State of Rhode Island.

RFP Key Definitions

**Advanced Coursework:** Rigorous learning opportunities that support students in developing their individualized pathways.

**RI Advanced Course Network:** A Network of course providers offering advanced coursework opportunities to Rhode Island high school students. The Advanced Course Network includes four categories of courses: Dual Enrollment, Advanced Placement, Career Preparation and Career Exploration.

**Dual Enrollment:** Courses taken with college providers, offered for college and high school credit. Courses in the ACN may be offered by the college, taught by college professors (dual enrollment) or courses taught by approved high school or community based partner instructor (concurrent enrollment).

**Advanced Placement:** Courses established and approved by the College Board that culminate in taking the College Board’s Advanced Placement exam.

**Career Preparation:** Courses that culminate in a student earning an industry recognized credential and align to relevant established Career and Technical Education Board standards.

**Career Exploration:** Courses are designed to develop workplace skills including specific industry skills, applied learning skills or world languages. Courses:

1. Are aligned to one or more set of standards from the Career and Technical Education Board or result in development of Applied Learning Skills measured by either the Rhode Island Learning Champions or Providence After School Alliance issued rubrics; and,
2. Allow students to gain experience with practicing industry professionals and/or work-site experience.
**Network Member:** A district or school that chooses to extend the Advanced Coursework Network Opportunities to students in their district and/or school.

**Network Provider:** A district, school, Rhode Island based community based organization, higher education institution or Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training (DLT) training partner that delivers advanced coursework opportunities to Rhode Island students.

**Introduction & Overview**
The Advanced Coursework Network is designed to create opportunities for Rhode Island public school students to identify, pursue and realize their respective individualized graduation pathways. As Network members, schools and districts enable students to enroll in high value academic- and career-focused courses while they remain enrolled at their school. Courses are offered in various modalities to encourage the greatest participation from students. The Advanced Course Network includes four categories of courses: Dual Enrollment, Advanced Placement, Career Preparation and Career Exploration. Courses in the Advanced Coursework Network are available to all RI Students in grades 6 - 12. State funding covers the cost of public school students’ participation. Home school and nonpublic school students and families are responsible for costs of participation at the negotiated rates.

**Minimum Network Provider Qualifications**
Through this RFP, the Rhode Island Department of Education is seeking qualified applicants to provide coursework in Spring 2018 to students across the state as Network Providers. At a minimum, Network Providers must:

1. Be a Rhode Island LEA (school or district), Rhode Island-based community based organization, Rhode Island institution of higher education or Department of Labor and Training (DLT) training partner. Providers may partner with corporate or out-of-state organizations to develop or offer courses.
2. Demonstrate experience and success offering learning experience similar to the proposed coursework.
3. Assure that the organization has policies and procedures in place to address student health and safety as applicable to the coursework that will be proposed by the Provider.
4. Assure that the organization has at least the minimum supports in place as required by respective laws governing the organization to support students requiring Special Education Services and students identified as English Language Learners.

**Advanced Course Network Course Specifications**

1. **Courses.** Proposed courses must meet the above definition of at least one of the following course types: Dual Enrollment, Advanced Placement, Career Preparation or Career Exploration. Applicants may choose to offer a new or existing course either developed by the applicant or in partnership with a third-party provider (including out-of-state or corporate organizations.) Applications should identify third party providers. Additional course priorities include:
   - Any of the four course categories designed with specific supports for students receiving special education services.
   - Any of the four course categories designed with specific supports for students identified as English Language Learners.
   - Courses taught in languages other than English.

2. **Modality.** Courses may be proposed in face to face, blended or fully virtual models.

   **Instructors.** Assure that instructors meet the teacher certification requirements of the Rhode Island Department of Education. The certification area of teachers must be aligned to the subject matter of the course. Per state regulations, college faculty teaching college a college course must meet the criteria of...
the higher education institution but does not require a Rhode Island Teaching Certification. There are three acceptable instructor models for ACN courses:
   a. College Faculty teaching a college-credit-bearing course
   b. Certified Teacher delivering course
   c. Certified Teacher supervising instruction and assessment by a second instructor.

3. **Recruitment and Open Enrollment.** All courses must be open to all qualified students statewide. Providers may set course-specific prerequisites. Courses will then be filled on a first-come-first-serve basis. Providers may not implement additional qualifications or screening processes beyond the established prerequisites for the course.

4. **Nonpublic Student Tuition Access.** The tuition price accepted by RIDE will be available for home school and nonpublic students. RIDE’s funding will pay only for public school students that have been approved to take the course by their full-time public school. However, the course provider must provide a mechanism for home school and nonpublic students to pay for the course at the negotiated rate directly to the course provider.

   **Tuition Structure.** Providers will use the Budget Template to demonstrate cost-based pricing and economies of scale. Students, families and schools should not incur any additional course related costs. Please note the following items:
   a. Textbooks. Textbooks must be included in the proposed tuition price.
   b. Transportation. Transportation may be included in the proposed tuition price. RIDE will consider transportation expenses in tuition prices that remain within the tuition range guidelines.
   c. AP and other credential test fees. Course providers must include the cost of credential issuing test fees in their tuition proposal. Only Providers with established policies stating otherwise may be granted an exception.

5. **Payment Structure.** Payment will be made at established points throughout the duration of the course based on course enrollment at the time of the enrollment report and/or progress with established course goals.

6. **Schedule.** Any courses with synchronous meeting times should be scheduled to meet after 2pm on weekdays or during weekends. Courses beginning before 2pm may be accepted if the course is an existing section scheduled for non-ACN student populations.

**RFP Application Submission and Evaluation**

All applications must be completed using the online form and budget template. Each section listed has the maximum number of points that can be received in the Provider application process. The RFP application will include:

**Section 1: Provider and Proposal Overview - Required, No Points**

**Section 2: Organization Overview**

1. Provider Vision for Course Offerings up to 5 points
2. Provider Background (History and Education Experience) up to 5 points
3. Supports for students requiring special education services No points, required
4. Description of additional services for students requiring special education services up to 5 points
5. Supports for students identified as English Language Learners Assurances No points, required
6. Description of additional supports students identified as English Language Learners up to 5 points
7. Recruitment Strategies up to 5 points
8. Safety and Liability Protection Assurance  
   No points, required

**Section 3: Course Information**

1. Course Overview  
   No points, required
2. Course Curriculum and Experience  
   up to 20 points
3. Course Outcomes  
   up to 20 points
4. Standards Alignment, Activities and Assessments  
   up to 20 points
5. Course Budget (template required) & Budget Narrative  
   up to 15 points
6. Instructor Qualifications/Experiences  
   No points, required

**Section 4: Provider Assurances - Required, No Points**

**Timeline and Requirements**

RIDE will review complete applications on a rolling basis as they are received. The review team comprised of RIDE staff, field experts and other relevant parties will conduct an evaluation of completed applications, as described below. RIDE reserves the right to approve any number or none of the applications if it determines that such a recommendation appears to be in the best interests of the ACN. RIDE reserves the right to approve whole or partial applications and request additional information as required. Approval of courses does not guarantee enrollment payment.

A preliminary MOU will be issued at the time of approval. Only courses that meet their minimum enrollment requirements will be confirmed for the approved term. Minimum enrollments will be established by RIDE based on the provider tuition proposal. Once confirmed, an amended MOU will be issued to finalize payment terms. This program has a limited budget.

If approved, RIDE will work with course providers to establish specific course and/or provider goals for student outcomes that will be used in evaluating the course. Each course will be expected to have at least one externally validated measure of student success.

Funding will be allocated on a first come first serve basis for courses that meet their minimum enrollment, until the budget is fully drawn.

Each applicant shall submit one electronic copy through the online form. Hard copy applications will not be accepted. A PDF of the application is available for planning purposes only on www.ride.ri.gov/advancedcoursework. Applications must be received by **4:00 PM on OCTOBER 6, 2017**

Any questions relative to your submission shall be directed to advancedcoursework@ride.ri.gov. Upon receipt, all applications shall become the property of the State without compensation to the proponent, for disposition or usage by the State at its discretion. The State assumes no responsibility or obligation to the proponent and will make no payment for any costs associated with the preparation or submission of any Proposal Statements.

**Reference Materials**

Applicants are encouraged to review course catalogs of Rhode Island LEAs to understand the existing landscape of advanced coursework options. Additionally, applicants are encouraged to review the 16-17 ACN catalog on ride.gosignmeup.com, the College Board’s Advanced Placement opportunities and additional industry/field resources with reliable college and career readiness data.