

CTE Rural Health Transformation Grant

Grant Application Scoring Methodology & Rubric

Rhode Island Department of Education

Purpose & Overview

This document establishes the official scoring methodology, evaluation rubric, and reviewer guidance for the CTE Rural Health Transformation Grant (SY2025–2026), administered by the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE). It is designed for use by multiple independent reviewers who will score submitted applications and subsequently reconcile scores through a structured panel process.

Scoring Structure & Weights

Applications are evaluated across three sections that correspond directly to the grant application structure. Each section is weighted to reflect its relative importance in demonstrating program quality and RHTP alignment:

Section	Max Points	Description
Section 1: Project Proposal / Overview	20	RHTP alignment, innovation, leadership, partnerships
Section 2: Project Design & Implementation	40	Goals, student interest, management, implementation, resources, CTE alignment
Section 3: Budget & Budget Narrative	20	Completeness, activity alignment, narrative quality, fiscal responsibility
TOTAL	80	

Scoring Scale

Each criterion is scored on a 0–5 scale. Reviewers must select a whole number score (no half-points). The following definitions apply to all criteria across all three sections:

Score	Level	Description
5	Exceptional	Exceeds expectations in a meaningful way. Response is thorough and demonstrates a deep understanding of rural health workforce context. Criteria fully addressed with innovation or best practice.
4	Strong	Meets all expectations with clear, specific, and credible responses. Criteria addressed completely with minor gaps in depth or specificity.
3	Adequate	Meets most expectations. Response is reasonable and plausible but lacks specificity, supporting evidence, or full alignment to RHTP/CTE goals.
2	Developing	Partially meets expectations. Key elements are present but incomplete, vague, or only loosely connected to rural health or CTE priorities.
1	Weak	Minimally responsive. Criteria are acknowledged, but response is underdeveloped, lacks evidence, or demonstrates limited understanding.
0	Not Addressed	Criterion is absent or entirely non-responsive.

Reviewers are strongly encouraged to write brief justification notes for each score in the scoring sheet.

Section 1 Rubric – Project Proposal / Overview (Max: 20 Points, Weight: 25%)

This section evaluates the overall quality, clarity, and strategic alignment of the applicant's program overview. Reviewers should assess whether the proposal makes a compelling, evidence-based case for the program's fit with RHTP and CTE goals, and whether the LEA demonstrates readiness to execute.

Criterion	Guiding Question	Full Scoring Guidance (0–5)	Score
RHTP Alignment & Rural Context	Does the proposal clearly articulate alignment with Federal RHTP goals and address documented rural healthcare workforce needs in Rhode Island? More information on the RI’s RHTP Full application can be found here , with this project as a part of Initiative #10.	<p>5 – Demonstrates deep, specific alignment with RHTP priorities and cites specific rural community needs with evidence.</p> <p>4 – Clear alignment with RHTP priorities; rural context is present and credible.</p> <p>3 – General alignment stated; limited specificity on which RHTP priorities are addressed or rural community needs.</p> <p>2 – RHTP connection is vague or superficial; rural context is implied rather than demonstrated.</p> <p>1 – Minimal connection to RHTP; rural health rationale is absent or generic.</p> <p>0 – No RHTP alignment evident.</p>	/5
Innovation & Measurable Outcomes	Does the proposal describe an innovative approach and articulate specific, measurable student outcomes?	<p>5 – Proposes a clearly innovative model; outcomes are specific, measurable, and tied to workforce metrics.</p> <p>4 – Solid innovation or measurable outcomes; one dimension stronger than the other.</p> <p>3 – Outcomes are present but not fully measurable; innovation is incremental.</p> <p>2 – Outcomes described are vague or aspirational; little innovation beyond standard CTE programming.</p> <p>1 – No measurable outcomes; proposal is conventional with no innovative elements. 0 – No outcomes or innovation articulated.</p>	/5

Program Capacity & Preconditions for Success	<p>Does the proposal demonstrate that the LEA has the leadership, rural community embeddedness, facilities, equipment, and supply access to succeed?</p>	<p>5 – Strong evidence of dedicated, qualified program leadership; clear rural community ties; facilities/equipment explicitly confirmed as available or funded. 4 – Leadership identified with relevant credentials; most preconditions addressed. 3 – Leadership named; some preconditions addressed; gaps acknowledged but not fully resolved. 2 – Leadership unclear or preconditions not fully established; reliance on future acquisition without a plan. 1 – Little evidence of leadership capacity or readiness. 0 – Preconditions not addressed.</p>	<p>/5</p>
Partnership Identification	<p>Are all required and additional partnerships clearly identified, with defined roles?</p>	<p>5 – All required partners (minimum 1 industry partner) listed with specific roles, and evidence of commitment through a letter of support. 4 – Partners identified with roles; letters of support present for most. 3 – Partners named but roles are vague or letters of support are missing. 2 – Partners mentioned in general terms; no defined roles or commitments. 1 – Only minimal or generic partnership mention. 0 – No partnerships are identified.</p>	<p>/5</p>
Total Points			<p>/20</p>

Section 2 Rubric – Project Design & Implementation (Max: 40 Points, Weight: 50%)

This section is the most heavily weighted and evaluates the operational quality of the proposed program. Reviewers should assess the depth and credibility of the program design, implementation plan, and resource strategy.

Criterion	Guiding Question	Full Scoring Guidance	Score
Program Goals & Workforce Need Alignment	Do the program's goals directly and clearly address rural health workforce shortages identified in the RI RHTP?	<p>10 – Program goals are specific, directly tied to documented RI RHTP workforce roles, and clearly connected to local community needs.</p> <p>8 – Goals are clear and workforce-connected; minor gaps in specificity to local needs.</p> <p>6 – Goals are reasonable but general; not clearly differentiated to specific RHTP workforce roles.</p> <p>4 – Goals loosely tied to workforce; connection to RHTP shortages is assumed rather than demonstrated.</p> <p>2 – Goals are generic CTE goals with minimal rural health workforce framing.</p> <p>0 – Program goals not articulated.</p>	/10
Project Sustainability	Are resources planned to meet program needs, and is there a credible plan for sustaining the program after grant funds are expended?	<p>10 – Resources clearly matched to program activities; sustainability plan is specific, realistic, and leverages identified future funding sources or institutional commitment.</p> <p>8 – Resources well-aligned; sustainability plan credible with minor gaps.</p> <p>6 – Resources described but alignment to specific activities is partial; sustainability is mentioned but vague.</p> <p>4 – Resource planning is loose; sustainability plan is aspirational with no concrete mechanism.</p> <p>2 – Minimal resource planning; no meaningful sustainability discussion.</p> <p>0 – Resource alignment or sustainability not addressed.</p>	/10

<p>Student Interest & Participation Targets</p>	<p>Does the proposal provide data on student interest and set clear student participation targets?</p>	<p>5 – Compelling data demonstrating student demand (e.g., surveys, enrollment interest, focus groups); participation targets are specific and realistic. 4 – Good evidence of student interest; targets present but could be more precise. 3 – General claims of student interest without supporting data; targets mentioned broadly. 2 – Minimal student interest data; targets are vague or absent. 1 – No data or evidence of student interest. 0 – Student interest not addressed.</p>	<p>/5</p>
<p>Program Management</p>	<p>Does the proposal present a structured approach to program management with clear accountability to CTE and RHTP workforce outcomes?</p>	<p>5 – Oversight structure is explicit; roles/responsibilities defined; direct connection to RHTP sustainable workforce goals; management plan is comprehensive and credible. 4 – Strong management structure; RHTP connection clear with minor gaps. 3 – Management described at a high level; some accountability mechanisms present. 2 – Management is vague; limited accountability or RHTP connection in oversight structure. 1 – Minimal management detail; no clear accountability. 0 – Program management not described.</p>	<p>/5</p>

Implementation Plan & Spending Timeline	Does the proposal include a definitive implementation plan with spending timeline, goal alignment, and partner engagement?	<p>5 – Detailed, credible implementation timeline; spending milestones align clearly to program goals; partners' roles integrated into the plan.</p> <p>4 – Good implementation plan; timeline and spending mostly aligned; minor gaps.</p> <p>3 – Implementation described but timeline is high-level; spending alignment is general.</p> <p>2 – Implementation is vague or optimistic without supporting detail; timeline is unclear.</p> <p>1 – No real implementation plan; timeline absent or implausible.</p> <p>0 – Implementation plan not provided.</p>	/5
<u>CTE Board of Trustees Strategic Plan Alignment</u>	Does the proposal demonstrate alignment with the RI CTE Board of Trustees Strategic Plan priorities (High Quality, Equitable Access, Data-Driven Quality, Sustainable Funding, Learner-Centric Operations)?	<p>5 – Explicitly addresses multiple CTE Strategic Plan priorities with specific connections to program design.</p> <p>4 – Clear alignment to at least two priorities; connections are substantive.</p> <p>3 – Strategic Plan referenced; one priority addressed substantively.</p> <p>2 – Superficial reference to Strategic Plan without meaningful connection.</p> <p>1 – Strategic Plan mentioned in passing only.</p> <p>0 – No reference to CTE Strategic Plan.</p>	/5
Total Points		/40	

Section 3 Rubric – Budget & Budget Narrative (Max: 20 Points, Weight: 25%)

This section evaluates the quality, completeness, and credibility of the budget submission. Reviewers should assess both the completed budget template and the accompanying narrative, with particular attention to alignment between expenditures and proposed activities.

Criterion	Guiding Question	Full Scoring Guidance (0–5)	
Budget Completeness & Accuracy	Is the budget template fully completed across all applicable UCOA categories with correct unit/cost calculations?	<p>5 – All applicable budget categories completed; unit costs, FTEs/hours, and extended costs are internally consistent; UCOA codes are correct throughout.</p> <p>4 – Budget is largely complete and accurate; minor arithmetic or coding inconsistencies.</p> <p>3 – Most categories completed; some unit cost explanations missing or UCOA codes inconsistent.</p> <p>2 – Budget partially completed; significant gaps or calculation errors present.</p> <p>1 – Budget template barely filled in; major sections missing.</p> <p>0 – No budget submitted or template not used.</p>	/5
Budget-to-Activity Alignment	Does each budget line item clearly connect to a specific program activity described in the proposal narrative?	<p>5 – Every line item maps explicitly to a narrative activity; no unexplained or unconnected expenditures.</p> <p>4 – Strong alignment; one or two items could use clearer narrative justification.</p> <p>3 – Most items connected to activities; some line items lack narrative support.</p> <p>2 – General narrative connection, but many items are not tied to specific activities.</p> <p>1 – Budget and narrative appear disconnected; rationale is generic.</p> <p>0 – No budget narrative or no connection to activities.</p>	/5

Budget Narrative Quality	Does the budget narrative provide itemized justification for each category, explain cost calculations, and address sustainability post-grant?	<p>5 – Thorough narrative for each category; cost basis clearly explained; sustainability funding plan is specific and credible.</p> <p>4 – Solid narrative; sustainability addressed with minor gaps in specificity.</p> <p>3 – Narrative present for most categories; sustainability is mentioned but vague.</p> <p>2 – Sparse narrative; cost basis often unexplained; sustainability not substantively addressed.</p> <p>1 – Minimal narrative; most items unjustified.</p> <p>0 – Budget narrative absent.</p>	/5
Fiscal Responsibility & Value	Are expenditures reasonable, allowable under RHTP/CTE guidelines, and represent strong value for the investment?	<p>5 – All expenditures are clearly reasonable and allowable; strong value evident.</p> <p>4 – Expenditures generally reasonable; value is apparent with minor questions.</p> <p>3 – Most expenditures appear reasonable; one or two items raise questions about allowability or value.</p> <p>2 – Some expenditures appear excessive, duplicative, or of questionable allowability.</p> <p>1 – Significant concerns about reasonableness or allowability.</p> <p>0 – Budget raises serious fiscal responsibility concerns.</p>	/5
Total Points			/20

Final Scoring

Use this section to update all total scores from each section.

Section	Description	Review Score	Max Points
Section 1: Project Proposal / Overview	RHTP alignment, innovation, leadership, partnerships		20
Section 2: Project Design & Implementation	Goals, student interest, management, implementation, resources, CTE alignment		40
Section 3: Budget & Budget Narrative	Completeness, activity alignment, narrative quality, fiscal responsibility		20
TOTAL	<i>Total combined score for all sections</i>		80