



2023-24 Distance Education Grant

Updated 5/2/23

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General Information

Vision and Goals for Virtual Education Programs

The vision for virtual education programs is for all students to gain greater equity of access and opportunity for achievement through rigorous, relevant coursework delivered via distance programming in conjunction with local schools; and, that students shall experience increased choice and flexibility within the state and local policy structures that ensure high-quality education while honoring local control traditions.

The Wyoming Department of Education (WDE) is making the Distance Education Grant (DEG) funds available in order to help reach the following goals:

- Developing and sustaining K-12 distance education courses offered through Virtual 307 programs;
- Increasing the availability of high-quality virtual education courses that meet state standards and are taught by Wyoming certified teachers;
- Increasing student participation in virtual education coursework; and
- Ensuring every student has equal access to the following priority courses: core courses, Hathaway Success Curriculum, Dual or Concurrent Enrollment, or Advanced Placement (AP) coursework.

Eligibility Requirements

The DEG is intended to be used for the following purposes:

- Content design and creation for priority courses;
- Professional development requirements;
- Evaluation of programs;
- Program accreditation; and
- Program maintenance, operational needs, and other necessary program components.

Eligible applicants include Wyoming school districts described in W.S. 21-3-101 through W.S. 21-3-104 with approved virtual education programs. Community colleges as defined in W.S. 21-18-102(a)(vii) and the University of Wyoming as established by W.S. 21-17-101 are eligible to participate when providing opportunities specifically intended for secondary students. These providing entities are hereby referred to as Virtual Education Program Providers.

Applicants must be approved Virtual 307 members prior to May 5, 2023. If applicants are not approved Virtual 307 members, please contact Lori Thilmany at lori.thilmany@wyo.gov or 307-777-7418 for information on the process to join the Virtual 307.

Method of Submission

Eligible applicants must submit an [online application](#) to the WDE no later than Friday, June 30, 2023.

Requests for clarification of the requirements or for other assistance in preparing and submitting a DEG application should be directed to Robin Grandpre at 307-777-5315 or robin.grandpre1@wyo.gov.

DEG Scoring and Award Process

Scoring of applications shall be scored and evaluated using this [rubric](#) by a selection committee. The application consists of the following competitive sections which includes the four award categories A-D with an option for additional points from the competitive priority.

A. Individual Course Design and Creation	<i>32 Points Possible</i>
B. Additional Content Design and Creation	<i>24 Points Possible</i>
C. Professional Development	<i>16 Points Possible</i>
D. Program Evaluation, Accreditation, Maintenance/Operational Needs	<i>8 Points Possible</i>
Competitive Priority	<i>4 Points Possible</i>
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Total Points	<i>84 Points Possible</i>

Award decisions are based on, but not limited to, the following considerations:

- Total points scored;
- The priority of course types being created, if applicable;
- The number of estimated students who will participate in the virtual education program and courses;
- Total program costs;
- Historical student success in the virtual education program, if applicable;
- The competitive priority being addressed; and

- Whether or not previous DEG awards to the applicant were fully expended.

Applicants will be notified on or before August 15, 2023, of their grant's status. Upon awarding of grant funds, a grant agreement detailing the grant recipient's and the WDE's responsibilities will be sent to the superintendent or college administrator to sign and return. Funds will be available to the grant recipient for activities during the performance period of August 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024.

Funding for the approved grant activities can be reimbursed by submitting invoices itemized by date, the award category, and a description of the expenditure. A copy of the receipts or other similar documentation must be provided and correlate to the items approved for reimbursement. All 2023-2024 funds must be obligated no later than June 30, 2024. Final invoicing and complete draw of funds can happen until September 15, 2024.

Reporting

Prior to the last invoice being paid, each grant recipient shall complete an end of grant survey to provide information on the progress and impact of the grant funds on students and virtual education programs.

Note: Final invoices will not be paid without the survey being submitted.

DEG Application Categories

The following information lists details for each of the grant categories: Individual Course Design and Creation, Additional Content Design and Creation, Professional Development, and Program Evaluation, Accreditation, Maintenance and Operational Needs. The 2023-24 DEG will also include a competitive priority.

A. Individual Course Design and Creation

Applicants requesting DEG funds to create or design a full course are required to submit basic information about the proposed course, a timeline for development, and the budget narrative describing the costs associated with the course creation process. Applicants must also include the number of students estimated to participate in the course(s) based on a needs assessment or prior enrollment numbers.

The **Course Information** consists of the title, description, suggested grade level(s), delivery method (online, hybrid, etc.), and type (Core Course, Hathaway Success Curriculum, Dual or Concurrent Enrollment, or Advanced Placement). Additional information, such as how the course will positively impact student access or other priority goals, must be provided in the goals section.

In the **Development Timeline**, list the major benchmarks for the course development with anticipated completion dates. At a minimum, this timeline must document the anticipated date for delivery of the Virtual 307 course standards alignment to the WDE Virtual Education Program Manager for review and approval and when the course will be completed and available to students.

For the **Budget Narrative**, detail how the funds will be used to develop the course (contracts, teacher stipends, software or tools, consulting fees, etc.). Use the table provided in the application form to itemize and justify specific expenditures for this award category.

Note: Each course proposal will need to be entered separately. There is an option to add more lines to the course proposal as needed.

B. Additional Content Design and Creation

DEG applicants may also request funds to be used for the development of supplemental course materials (improvements and/or modifications to current courses, curriculum and standards mapping, course materials, learning objects, etc.) or virtual education program resources (professional development resources, enrollment documentation, student pre-enrollment survey or readiness assessment, website design, or other program components such as social and emotional learning) necessary to comply with requirements imposed under W.S. 21-13-330 and the Chapter 41 Virtual Education Rules.

Within the award category goals, applicants must be specific when stating the goal(s) of the proposal including, but not limited to: what content will be created, why this content is necessary for the program or course, historical student success in the course(s), and who will be developing the material.

For the **Budget Narrative**, use the table provided in the application to itemize specific expenditures for this award category. These expenditures must be clearly related to and justified by the goals narrative.

C. Professional Development

Applicants may request DEG funds to assist in professional development requirements such as, but not limited to, course fees, conference registration, presentations, necessary software or resources, etc. In-state professional development activities targeted to the largest number of educators will receive priority rating over smaller groups traveling out of state to regional or national conferences. Traveling out of state for training specific to the school district virtual education program platform(s), administration or curriculum will also receive priority rating over traveling out of state to attend conferences with multiple topics and threads.

Note: If your program intends to create their own professional development materials and/or programs (just-in-time training, handbooks, resources, available support materials), please use the "Additional Content Design and Creation" award category.

Within the award category goals, provide a brief description of the specific goals and objectives of the professional development plan such as the source/origination of the training, the rationale for this selection, the number of participants, and anticipated results. Applicants must show their professional development goals are aligned with school, district, or program strategic plans, and/or goals. Goals for the requested professional development opportunities must clearly define how the activities will directly benefit the virtual education teachers and/or students involved with the program. The anticipated results must be measurable, attainable, and realistic. Indicate the purpose and destination of any travel related to the professional development.

For the **Budget Narrative**, use the table provided in the application to itemize specific expenditures for this award category. Itemize any funding requested for travel, lodging, or meals separate from the fees or costs of the course, training, conference, etc. These expenditures must be clearly related to and justified by the goals narrative.

D. Program Evaluation, Accreditation, Maintenance and Operational Needs

The DEG may be used for program evaluation, accreditation, maintenance and other operational needs for virtual education programs.

Evaluation: DEG funding may be used for internal and/or external evaluations of individual courses and/or the Virtual 307 program overall. If the evaluation will be conducted internally, must provide a

description of the process and team, evaluative measures, outcomes produced, peer reviews, etc. If the evaluation will be conducted by an external service, describe the source/origination, the services provided, outcomes produced, and rationale for selection.

Accreditation: Applicants may request DEG funds to assist in meeting school district accreditation requirements. Allowable expenses to meet school district accreditation can include the application fee for Wyoming Professional Teaching Standards Board licensure, renewal for teachers employed by a virtual education vendor, or ensuring program curriculum alignment with the district assessment system.

Program Maintenance and Operational Needs: DEG funding may be used for addressing necessary program maintenance, operational needs, statewide assessment requirements, and other necessary program components. The goals and descriptions must clearly specify the intended use of funds (e.g. server costs, stipends for instructional support, learning management systems) and how these support the delivery of the overall virtual education program. **Funds will not be awarded for staff salaries and benefits or student tuition reimbursements.**

For the **Budget Narrative**, use the table provided in the application to itemize specific expenditures for this award category. These expenditures must be clearly related to and justified by the goals narrative.

Competitive Priority

For the 2023-24 DEG, there will be a competitive priority placed on the virtual education program evaluation category. The WDE is placing priority on districts evaluating program quality and effectiveness to ensure optimal student outcomes. The proposal should include a rationale about how the evaluation will be used to improve the virtual education program.