

**ABSTRACT:**

**Title:** Extending Equity into the Digital Workforce

**Type:** Mid-phase

**Absolute Priorities:** AP 1, Moderate Evidence; AP 3, Promoting STEM education; CPP Computer Science; Invitational Priority 2, Promoting Equity

**Number of Students Served and Grade Levels:** 2900 students, 9<sup>th</sup> through 12 grades

**High-need students:** low-income youth, first-generation college-goers, racially and ethnically diverse students, and others underrepresented in higher education and the workplace.

**Description:** *Extending Equity*, the first major re-envisioning of Early College High Schools (ECHSs) since their introduction almost 20 years ago, extends the model's commitment to equity by: (1) creating an IT career pathway to build students' digital skills for today's workforce; (2) developing the pathway as an *online* course, available to a potentially unlimited number of students, particularly in rural areas where districts do not have the resources or enrollment to support an onsite IT program; and (3) bringing business partners online from every industry and across the state of NM to support and mentor students.

**Project objectives and outcomes:** (1) increase school infrastructures to support an online IT Career Pathway in all 20 NM ECHSs; (2) increase the availability of the online pathway for 125 incoming 9<sup>th</sup> grade students annually at a minimum, and all 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade students who wish to enroll; (3) provide career-infused Algebra 1 and Geometry curricula as a foundation for the IT pathway, increasing student math scores by 20%; and (4) increase participation and presence of 30 businesses through videotaped presentations, mentor/mentee relationships, capstone projects, and virtual and onsite work-based learning opportunities.

**Special Features:** The proposed design brings greater assurance that ECHSs accomplish what they set out to do—provide equity of preparation and opportunity to bring targeted students into rich, high-demand STEM careers.

**Partnering organizations:** Four Corners REC #1, San Juan College High School, Farmington Municipal School District, NMPED, businesses, and NS4ed (evaluator).