



**STATE OF VERMONT**  
JOINT FISCAL OFFICE

**MEMORANDUM**

To: Joint Fiscal Committee members  
From: Daniel Dickerson, Fiscal Analyst  
Date: May 19, 2016  
Subject: Grant Request #2821, #2822

Enclosed please find two (2) items that the Joint Fiscal Office has received from the administration.

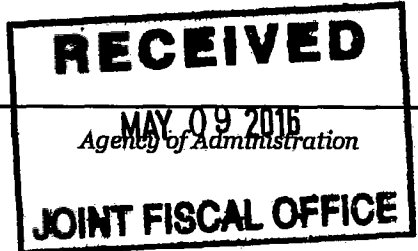
**JFO #2821** – \$250,000 grant from the Nellie Mae Foundation to the VT Agency of Education. The funds will be used by the Agency to implement Education Quality Review (EQR) pilot programs and develop frameworks for representing EQR data and mapping EQR to the State's continuous improvement program (CIP). The Agency will also use State matching funds of approximately \$664,000, which were previously budgeted for this purpose.  
*[JFO received 5/9/16]*

**JFO #2822** – \$1,000,000 grant from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to the VT Agency of Transportation (AOT). The funds are part of the FHWA Accelerated Innovation Deployment (AID) demonstration grant program and will allow AOT to use Business Process Management (BPM) systems to optimize a right-of-way acquisition on a roadway project spanning the towns of Pittsford and Brandon. AOT will use budgeted program development funds of \$251,000 as a match for this project.  
*[JFO received 5/12/16]*

Please review the enclosed materials and notify the Joint Fiscal Office (Daniel Dickerson at (802) 828-2472; [ddickerson@leg.state.vt.us](mailto:ddickerson@leg.state.vt.us)) if you have questions or would like an item held for legislative review. Unless we hear from you to the contrary by May 31, 2016 we will assume that you agree to consider as final the Governor's acceptance of these requests.



JFO 2821



State of Vermont  
Department of Finance & Management  
109 State Street, Pavilion Building  
Montpelier, VT 05620-0401

[phone] 802-828-2376  
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**STATE OF VERMONT  
FINANCE & MANAGEMENT GRANT REVIEW FORM**

<b>Grant Summary:</b>	Provides funding for Education Quality Review (EQR) pilot programs. Will support contracts to accelerate State's Longitudinal Data System and evaluation of student centered learning.				
<b>Date:</b>	4/27/2016				
<b>Department:</b>	Agency of Education				
<b>Legal Title of Grant:</b>	Educational Quality Review Implementation				
<b>Federal Catalog #:</b>	NA - Private Grant				
<b>Grant/Donor Name and Address:</b>	Nellie Mae Foundation 1250 Hancock Street, Suite 205N Quincy, MA 02169				
<b>Grant Period:</b>	From: 12/15/2015		To: 6/30/2016		
<b>Grant/Donation</b>	\$250,000				
	<b>SFY 1</b>	<b>SFY 2</b>	<b>SFY 3</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Grant Amount:</b>	\$250,000	\$	\$	\$250,000	

<b>Position Information:</b>	<b># Positions</b>	<b>Explanation/Comments</b>
	0	

**Additional Comments:** Grant does not obligate the state to spend its money to support initiatives outside of the state's current plans for implementing and evaluating Education Quality Standards and Education Quality Reviews. Fundign will support stakeholder engagement and the development of a framework for EQR data to be incorporated into the Longitudinal Data System that AOE is already developing. There is the potential for future grants from Nellie Mae Foundation.

**Has Vantage budget detail been reviewed and reconciled?**     Yes     No    *STG* (Analyst Initial)

<b>Department of Finance &amp; Management</b>		(Initial)
<b>Secretary of Administration</b>		(Initial)



**STATE OF VERMONT REQUEST FOR GRANT (\*) ACCEPTANCE (Form AA-1)**

**BASIC GRANT INFORMATION**

<b>1. Agency:</b>	Education		
<b>2. Department:</b>			
<b>3. Program:</b>	Office of the Deputy Secretary		
<b>4. Legal Title of Grant:</b>	Education Quality Review Implementation		
<b>5. Federal Catalog #:</b>			
<b>6. Grant/Donor Name and Address:</b>	Nellie Mae Foundation 1250 Hancock Street, Suite 205N Quincy, MA 02169		
<b>7. Grant Period:</b>	<b>From:</b>	12/15/2015	<b>To:</b> 6/30/2016

**8. Purpose of Grant:**  
 This grant will support the development and piloting of the Education Quality Review (EQR): the primary accountability and continuous improvement mechanism for public schools under the state's Education Quality Standards (EQS). Nellie Mae will be providing the AOE with additional funding in the future, as a part of a three-year project cycle, potentially totalling \$1.5M. At the same time, this is a single purpose grant; acceptance of this grant, or interruption of grant funding after one or two annual cycles, will entail no further obligation for funding of this project by the AOE or State of Vermont.

**9. Impact on existing program if grant is not Accepted:**  
 EQRs are highly complex, and are a critically important to the AOE's tracking and supporting local-level implementation of EQS. If this grant is not accepted, the State would continue to fund EQR development at its current level, but would be unable to fully realize the potential of the EQR process.

**10. BUDGET INFORMATION**

	SFY 1	SFY 2	SFY 3	Comments
Expenditures:	FY 2015-16	FY 2016-17	FY 2017-18	
Personal Services	\$230,000	\$	\$	Funding and related budgets for the remaining years of the grant will be established, annually, by Nellie Mae and the AOE
Operating Expenses	\$20,000	\$	\$	
Grants	\$	\$	\$	
<b>Total</b>	\$	\$	\$	
<b>Revenues:</b>				
State Funds:	\$	\$	\$	
Cash	\$	\$	\$	
In-Kind	\$	\$	\$	
Federal Funds:	\$	\$	\$	

**APR - 5 2016**

**STATE OF VERMONT REQUEST FOR GRANT (\*) ACCEPTANCE (Form AA-1)**

(Direct Costs)	\$	\$	\$
(Statewide Indirect)	\$	\$	\$
(Departmental Indirect)	\$	\$	\$
Other Funds:	\$	\$	\$
Grant (source Nellie Mae)	\$250,000	\$	\$
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$250,000</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>

<b>Appropriation No:</b>	5100070000	<b>Amount:</b>	\$250,000
			\$
			\$
			\$
			\$
			\$
			\$
		<b>Total</b>	<b>\$250,000</b>

Has current fiscal year budget detail been entered into Vantage?  Yes  No

**PERSONAL SERVICE INFORMATION**

11. Will monies from this grant be used to fund one or more Personal Service Contracts?  Yes  No  
 If "Yes", appointing authority must initial here to indicate intent to follow current competitive bidding process/policy.

Appointing Authority Name: William Talbott Agreed by: WT (initial)

12. Limited Service Position Information:	# Positions	Title
<b>Total Positions</b>		

12a. Equipment and space for these positions:  Is presently available.  Can be obtained with available funds.

**13. AUTHORIZATION AGENCY/DEPARTMENT**

I/we certify that no funds beyond basic application preparation and filing costs have been expended or committed in anticipation of Joint Fiscal Committee approval of this grant, unless previous notification was made on Form AA-1PN (if applicable):	Signature: <u>WT</u>	Date: 3/31/2016
	Title: Deputy Secretary/CFO	
	Signature:	Date:
	Title:	

**14. SECRETARY OF ADMINISTRATION**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approved:	(Secretary or designee signature) <u>[Signature]</u>	Date: 5/4/16
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**15. ACTION BY GOVERNOR**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Check One Box: Accepted	<u>[Signature]</u>	5/4/16
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**State of Vermont Request for Grant Acceptance (Form AA-1)**  
**Project Narrative: Education Quality Review (EQR) Implementation**

**EQR Background and Goals**

EQRs are being developed as the primary mechanism for monitoring local-level implementation of Vermont's Education Quality Standards (EQS), and for supporting local-level continuous improvement efforts, as required by EQS. It is through this mechanism that Vermont intends to hold schools systems accountable for moving towards an educational system which prioritizes student-centered proficiency-based learning and personalization to increase students' college and career readiness.

EQRs includes two complimentary processes for assessing the efficacy of school systems:

- **Annual Snapshot Reviews**, in which quantitative data is used to assess school system performance across a range of indicators, including the degree of equity present for students within and across schools in a Supervisory Union or School District;
- **Integrated Field Reviews**, in which site review teams composed of local educators, AOE staff, and students engage in data-driven conversations about school system performance.

EQRs are potentially far reaching—they incorporate data across a broad spectrum of performance indicators, connect to the work of multiple AOE teams, and utilize the expertise of a wide range of educators in the field. Because of this, implementing EQRs effectively requires that they be reflected in multiple existing and developing state systems. It also means that EQRs should ideally be iteratively piloted and critically examined before being put into practice, both to ensure that they perform effectively, and to ensure that they can be leveraged for maximum positive impact within a school system.

**Project Goals and Anticipated Outcomes:**

To support the realization of the potential of EQRs, as described above, grant funding from the Nellie Mae Education Foundation would be used to accomplish the following:

- **Goal:** Convene a two-day stakeholder meeting that would be open to all EQR 2015-16 pilot participants.
- **Estimated Budget:** \$25,000
  - \$20,000 is for the conference fee, and includes facilities and conference-related expenses
  - \$5,000 is for personnel costs associated with mileage reimbursements
- **Expected Outcomes:**

- Collect additional feedback on the EQR pilot process that would be utilized to improve that process, prior to implementation
- Follow up with pilot participants on the status and evolution of the EQR development work.
  
- **Goal:** Collaborate with consultants to develop a framework for representing EQR data through the Statewide Longitudinal Data System
- **Estimated Budget:** \$150,000
- **Expected Outcomes:**
  - To accelerate the development and incorporation of EQR Snapshot visualizations of data into Vermont's Statewide Longitudinal Data System
  - The alignment of existing and developing AOE data management systems with common EQR goals, structures, and language, resulting in greater cohesion across AOE teams and systems
  
- **Goal:** Collaborate with Indistar consultants to align the Indistar continuous improvement planning tool with the structure and requirements of Vermont's Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP), under EQS.
- **Estimated Budget:** \$75,000
- **Expected Outcomes:**
  - Indistar will reflect CIP language and requirements, as described by EQS and the AOE



Budget Categories	NMEF Request	Other Funding Sources	Your Agency Contribution*	Total
<b>PERSONNEL (include FTE %)</b>				
Allison Keating, Program Technician			\$55,000	\$55,000
Chris Case, Project Manager (50%)-includes program evaluation			\$35,000	\$35,000
Debi Price, Program Director (30%)			\$27,000	\$27,000
Amy Fowler, Deputy Secretary (20%)			\$18,000	\$18,000
Participation of AOE staff in field reviews			\$20,000	\$20,000
Wendy Geller, Data Researcher (10%)			\$7,000	\$7,000
				\$0
<b>Total Personnel</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$162,000</b>	<b>\$162,000</b>
<b>FRINGE BENEFITS</b>				
Allison Keating, Program Technician			\$55,000	\$30,000
Chris Case, Project Manager (50%)-includes program evaluation			\$35,000	\$17,000
Debi Price, Program Director (30%)			\$9,600	\$9,600
Amy Fowler, Deputy Secretary (20%)			\$6,400	\$6,400
Participation of AOE staff in field reviews			\$4,000	\$4,000
Wendy Geller, Data Researcher (10%)			\$1,700	\$1,700
<b>Total Fringe</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$111,700</b>	<b>\$1,700</b>
<b>CONTRACT SERVICES</b>				
Extend contract with SLDS vendor to deploy annual snapshot	\$150,000		\$60,000	\$210,000
Contract with Indistar developer to map EQR to continuous improvement plans	\$75,000		\$2	\$75,002
				\$0
<b>Total Contract</b>	<b>\$225,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$60,002</b>	<b>\$285,002</b>
<b>OTHER DIRECT COSTS</b>				
Hosting of the 1st Annual Stakeholder Convening	\$25,000		\$0	\$25,000
Costs of site visits (stipends, training, substitutes, mileage)			\$330,208	\$330,208
Communications strategy, branding		\$30,000		\$30,000
				\$0
<b>Total Other Direct</b>	<b>\$25,000</b>	<b>\$30,000</b>	<b>\$330,208</b>	<b>\$385,208</b>
<b>TOTAL DIRECT</b>	<b>\$250,000</b>	<b>\$30,000</b>	<b>\$663,910</b>	<b>\$833,910</b>
<b>INDIRECT/OVERHEAD COSTS (list %)</b>				
				\$0
<b>Total Indirect</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>BUDGET TOTAL</b>	<b>\$250,000</b>	<b>\$30,000</b>	<b>\$663,910</b>	<b>\$833,910</b>
How much of this budget will or has been spent on lobbying?	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0



**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**  
**Between**  
**Nellie Mae Education Foundation, Inc.**  
**and**  
**The Vermont Agency of Education**  
**December 15, 2015 – June 30, 2016**

**Grantee Background**

The Vermont Agency of Education (VTAOE) provide leadership, support, and oversight to ensure that the Vermont public education system enables all students to be successful. The VTAOE is committed to improving the learning of every student in the state. They work to achieve that goal within federal policy and intensifying public focus on cost effectiveness and accountability. They also work in a state with a demonstrated commitment to quality and equity in education and a legacy of public engagement. The VTAOE is proud of their many innovations, from portfollos to personalized learning plans, from their farm to school initiatives to college access opportunities. Vermont has often led the way.

**About the Nellie Mae Education Foundation**

The Nellie Mae Education Foundation (NMEF) is the largest philanthropic organization in New England dedicated exclusively to education. We're helping to reshape public education across New England to be more equitable and more effective—so every student graduates from high school ready to succeed in life—and contribute to their communities as informed citizens.

We work with schools to implement the principles of student-centered learning—learning that is personalized, engaging, competency-based and not restricted to the classroom. We're helping schools strengthen what is working and substantially update and improve policies and practices that are outdated.

Over the past year, the Foundation has engaged in an extensive strategic planning process to set an ambitious, five-year plan that incorporates four new initiatives. It is our expectations that the interaction of these initiatives will advance the target of 80% readiness by 2030:

*Build Public Understanding and Demand:*

The goal of this initiative is to build stronger public awareness and understanding of innovative approaches to public schooling, while cultivating public support and demand. [Learn More.](#)

*Build Educator Ownership, Leadership, and Capacity:*

To implement student-centered approaches to learning with rigor and reliability, tools and resources must be developed and utilized. [Learn More.](#)

*Develop Effective Systems Designs:*

A cornerstone of the Foundation's mission is to promote the transformation of education systems towards student-centered approaches. [Learn More.](#)

*Advance Quality and Rigor of Student-Centered Practices:*

This initiative focuses on building a research base of evidence supporting student-centered learning through evaluations of student-centered practices in high schools, researcher-practitioner





collaborations, and establishing criteria for what it takes to put high quality, student-centered learning into practice. [Learn More](#).

### **Project Description**

Current models of accountability across the nation have narrowly focused on English/language arts and mathematics and prioritized student test results. As a result of this narrow focus on a subset of desired outcomes, school systems distort educational practice, winnowing school goals and discounting other learning which is valuable for a well-rounded citizen.

In 2013, the Vermont State Board of Education adopted the Education Quality Standards (EQS) to challenge this narrowing of educational purpose and to hold schools accountable for implementing an educational program which serves the full breadth of learning we deem essential. These standards established proficiency-based learning in all curricular areas, flexible pathways and personalization, safe and caring school environments, high-quality staffing and financially efficient practices as the cornerstones of educational programming in the state.

While Vermont has nationally strong achievement results as measured by NAEP or graduation rates, the state continues to have persistent gaps between students of privilege and those who are school dependent- students learning in poverty, students with disabilities and students who are learning English. Vermont believes that by providing a stronger focus on personalization of the learning experience, they will better engage students, and particularly the "school-dependent" students to become college ready. It is for this reason that EQS were adopted to extend Act 77 which identified the need for flexible pathways to graduation. Through this legislation, students participate in a range of learning activities including service-learning, work-based learning, Career and Technical Education, dual enrollment and Early College and other locally developed learning opportunities.

**Education Quality Reviews** are the *mechanism* by which the Agency of Education, the State of Vermont and their local communities will be able to determine how well they are delivering on the broad promises set forward by the Education Quality Standards and whether or not schools systems are delivering educational opportunities which are substantially equal for all students in the state. It is through this mechanism that Vermont intends to hold schools systems accountable for moving towards and educational system which prioritizes *student-centered proficiency-based learning and personalization to increase students' college and career readiness*. EQR includes two complimentary processes for assessing these criteria:

- **Annual Snapshot Reviews:** Each year the state will gather quantitative data which measures dimensions of school quality. This data will be examined for overall performance and to assess the degree of equity between Supervisory Unions/Districts, for students within the Supervisory Union/District and between schools. The data will continue to use English and Math scores, however they become two of nearly twenty metrics considered in Academic Achievement and nearly 120 metrics overall that include metrics for SCL.
- **Integrated Field Review:** At least every three years, school systems will participate in an Integrated Field Review. The Integrated Field Review builds on the inspectorate model used in other states and countries to examine the work of schools systems through site visits. The visiting team will be comprised of students of the hosting Supervisory Union, educators from other Supervisory Unions and Agency of Education staff. The team will engage in classroom



observations, artifact reviews, panel discussions or interviews with parents, students and staff and collaborate to generate their assessments of school system performance. Reports will be published and will include a summary of the data collected, commendations, recommendations and assessments of dimension performance.

This is a three-year investment to support the VTAOE's development and implementation of the state's EQRS. In year one, funding will primarily support contractual services to accelerate and enhance specific components of the State's Longitudinal Data System (SDLS). Funding will also support the customization of the state's Continuous Improvement Planning Platform to reflect data critical to assessing proficiency-based learning, personalization, and student-centered learning (SCL). Some funding will support community outreach and stake holder meetings.

A critical component of the SDLS is the **Annual Snap Shot** that will show an overall assessment of performance and will indicate the degree of equitable opportunity and outcomes across the state, for students within the Supervisory Union/District and between schools. Funding will enhance the sophistication of data collection in part, to accurately reflect how Supervisory Unions and Districts are implementing SCL. For example, within the criteria of Personalized Learning:

- **Any time Anywhere**, this will allow districts to gather data on the number of high school seniors participating in one or more expanded learning opportunities out of the classroom.
- **Learning is Competency-Based**, this will allow districts to assess how students are meeting proficiencies towards graduation across multiple experiences.

It will accelerate the production and visual accessibility of dashboards, engage in field testing of the reports with stakeholder groups, and build the capacity of Agency staff to build and maintain the platform in the future. These strong and accessible technology tools for school systems will ensure that the initiative is well received by the field and the community.

**Continuous Improvement:** Vermont utilizes IndiStar for its continuous improvement planning platform. The current system is tied to the national system of assessing school and district quality, e.g., the quality of direct instruction and tight teacher control. This is a national platform that can be customized to reflect local needs. Funding will accelerate and enhance the alignment of the system to the EQS and integrate the results of the EQR work in the planning process. As with the Annual Snap Shot, this reflects the state's shift to personalization, proficiency, and SCL. As this a national system, it will contribute to national efforts to measure data critical to the rigorous implementation of SCL at scale and at a systems level.

#### **Project Design and Implementation Plan**

- December 2015  
– March 2016
- **Integrated Field Review Pilot Round Two**
    - Includes: Training for school systems, Training for AOE staff, Training for students, eight site visits, Feedback loops on process and implementation.
  - **Annual Snapshot:** Develop frames with consultant for visualizations of data; initial design consideration and deployment for review with pilot sites.
  - Full Budget Plan and Scope of work for year two and three.



- March – June 2016
- **Integrated Field Review, Pilot Round Three:**
    - Includes: Training for school systems, Training for AOE staff, Training for students, eight site visits, Feedback loops on process and implementation.
  - **Annual Snapshot:** Populate data and run beta tests with end users from a variety of sources.
  - **Community Outreach:** Host the annual convening of Stakeholders in a two-day Summit.
  - **Continuous Improvement:** Deploy Request for Proposals and contracts for providers of Systemic Improvement professional development for AOE staff (PD in July of year 2).

#### **Role and Responsibility of NMEF**

The Foundation will participate actively in the Education Quality Reviews by on-going participation in project planning and implementation including the following activities:

- Attending important meetings, training sessions and events
- Working with the grantee to develop NMEF reports

#### **Reporting**

The grantee will provide quarterly updates and a final report that describe accomplishments towards reaching stated goals, discuss outcomes of the work, provide a critical analysis of lessons learned, and propose changes to be made to the project, along with a budget detailing expenditures to date. At the end of the grant year the grantee will provide the Foundation with a financial summary.

#### **Organizational Agreement**

The Nellie Mae Education Foundation will award a grant totaling \$250,000 to support the program outlined in this Memorandum of Understanding. This grant will be payable based on the budget attached to this memorandum and subject to the terms contained herein.

Payments will be made to The VTAOE per the following schedule:

- Upon return of the signed MOU: \$150,000
- Upon receipt and review of interim progress report, spent-to-date, and review of year two work plan and budget (3/31/16): \$85,000
- Upon receipt and review of the final expenditure report and narrative (7/30/16): \$15,000

The VTAOE (the Grantee) agrees and consents to the following conditions of the grant:

1. Funds will be used solely for the purposes stated in the MOU. Any portion of the grant which has not been expended within the time period specified in the MOU will be repaid to the Foundation.
2. Grantee will advise the Foundation immediately if the federal government, IRS, or state or local authorities gives the Grantee notice of a change in its tax status.
3. The Foundation requires that grantees seek approval for any reallocation of their total budget funds that is over 5%.



4. Grantee shall not use any portion of the funds granted herein to carry on lobbying or otherwise to attempt to influence specific legislation, either by direct or grassroots lobbying, nor to carry on directly or indirectly a voter registration drive, nor to make grants to individuals on a non-objective basis, nor to use the funds for any non-charitable or non-educational purpose.
5. In order to promote the work of the Foundation and its grantees in a way that strategically enhances the public profile of both parties, the grantee shall contact the communications department of the Nellie Mae Education Foundation before any media outreach/communication surrounding the awarding of the grant. The grantee will coordinate with Shaun Adamec, Director of Strategic Communications. He can be reached at [sadamec@nmeffoundation.org](mailto:sadamec@nmeffoundation.org) or 781.348.4204.
6. Grant funds must be invested in highly liquid, FDIC insured bank accounts with the primary objective of preservation of principal so that they are available for the project. Interest accrued to the grant should be applied to the project and reported in the grant's final financial report.
7. The Nellie Mae Education Foundation and the grantee enter into this agreement in "good faith," recognizing that implementation plans are based on information and circumstances presently known. The grantee or NMEF may terminate this agreement with 30 days written notice. Should the agreement be terminated the grantee will receive compensation for work completed to date, including all actual costs incurred and any non-cancellable obligations, and/or shall return to the Foundation all grant funds unused as of the date such notice of termination is sent.

*While this memorandum of Understanding is subject to future negotiations, it is signed by:*

Rebecca Holcombe  
Secretary of Education

12/24/2015

Date

DocuSigned by:  
  
2234A738245147B

Nicholas C. Donohue, President & CEO  
Nellie Mae Education Foundation

12/21/2015

Date

**Annual Snapshot:** Develop and deploy RFP and contracts for development of the Online Accountability Platform for the Annual Snapshot Review<sup>1</sup>

**Continuous Improvement:** Deploy RFP for vendor related to adapting Indistar to EQR requirements

<sup>1</sup> We will draft and publicize the RFP prior to securing funding but we cannot enter into contracts until JFO has granted approval of the grant.

