



Rural Health Transformation Program Technical Assistance for School-Based Wellness Equipment – July 1, 2026

Prepared from presentation slides and speaker notes. This handout is designed as an accessible companion document for participants who may not be able to use slide decks effectively.

1. Agenda

Presenter: Sierra Beechie

Purpose: To help applications feel confident and prepared, we will review the funding opportunity guidance, highlight key requirements and provide a space for questions.

- Background
- Eligibility
- Purpose
- Unallowable costs
- Application and review
- Reporting
- Questions
- Resources and reminders

Information may change based on upon updated federal guidance or upon further consideration by North Dakota Health and Human Services (ND HHS).

2. Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP)

RHTP was authorized by the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (Section 71401 of Public Law 119-21) providing \$50 billion to all 50 states over five years

- North Dakota Health and Human Services (ND HHS) submitted an application to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)
- ND was awarded \$198.9M for year one (12/29/2025 – 10/30/2026)

North Dakota's application identified 4 initiatives

- Make ND Healthy Again
- Strengthen and Stabilize Rural Health Workforce



- Bring High Quality Healthcare Closer to Home
- Connect Technology, Data and Providers for a Stronger ND

3. Funding Opportunities

- Funding opportunities will be released in phases, with individual applications announced over time.
- Each funding opportunity will have a unique purpose, eligibility and timeline.
- Future year's funds will be determined by CMS based on the state's progress on the plan submitted in the RHTP application.
 - Use of funds must align with the state's RHTP application or provide justification.
 - Use of funds must follow state and federal guidance.
 - Awarded funds must receive proper state and federal approval.

4. School-Based Wellness Equipment

- Funding opportunity solicitation number: 210.122
- Total Funding: \$500,000
- 20 awards of approximately \$25,000

5. School-Based Wellness Equipment

Success Components

- Identification of specific equipment
- Specific costs of equipment
- Needs justification

Why School-Based Wellness Equipment matters

Pay-off of School-Based Wellness Equipment

6. Eligibility

Eligible:

- North Dakota's tribal, public and private schools located in rural North Dakota.

Target Populations

- Elementary school students
- Middle school students
- Junior high school students

- High school students

7. What is Rural?

- For Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP) funding opportunities, entities within the cities of Grand Forks, Fargo, West Fargo and Bismarck are considered urban and are not eligible unless at least 50% of the population served by the proposed project is rural North Dakota residents or the funding will primarily benefit rural North Dakota residents. RHTP funding must be used to support rural North Dakota citizens.

8. Purpose and Outcomes

Purpose

- Provide resources for wellness-focused equipment to help schools address students' physical, mental and emotional well-being needs, which are closely linked to academic success, attendance, engagement and overall school climate.
- Improve the health and well-being of students in rural and/or tribal communities.

Must support North Dakota's RHTP

Expected Outcomes

- Increase in individual participation in wellness activities
- Increases in physical activity
- Increases in nutrition
- Enhanced mental well-being
- Reductions in chronic disease, disability and premature mortality
- Improvements in policies, systems and environments that help to make the healthy choice, the easy choice.

9. Funding Opportunity Period

- Begin: Once the agreement has been fully executed following all required approvals and signatures.
- End: September 30, 2027. All funds must be fully expended by that date.

Timeline

- Applications due by July 30, 2026, 5 p.m. CT
- July 31 - August 17, 2026:



- Review and scoring
- Communication with applicants for adjustments if needed
- Approvals by CMS and ND HHS leadership
- Agreement development
- September 2026: All year one funds must be awarded
- September 30, 2027: All year one funds must be expended

10. Requirements to Receive Federal Funding

- Register with the Secretary of State to perform business in the state.
- If your organization has not been paid by a state entity before, you must register with vendor registry before you can be paid.
- ND HHS will require a W9 form to set up by your organization within our contract system. If your organization would like to be paid with electronic funds transfer, you need to submit the substitute IRS form W-9.
- Organizations need to register with SAMS.gov and receive a UEI number to receive these funds.

11. Application

Background

Narrative

- Identified need and proposed goals
- Strategies, activities and measurable outcomes

Action Plan

Budget

12. Application – 1. Background

- Organization name and background
- Project lead and contact information
- Project title and brief description of why you're applying

13. Application – 2. Narrative

Identify Need and Proposed Goals

- Identify the need for the proposed project



- Challenges the proposed project aims to address
- Relevant local data, as applicable
- Identify similar projects, as needed
 - How will your proposed project enhance or expand rather than duplicate existing efforts?
 - Why is the expansion needed?

14. Application – 2. Narrative Continued

Strategies, Activities and Measurable Outcomes

- Describe specific equipment
- If there are multiple equipment purchase requests, number them in order of priority, with No. 1 being the most important
- For each piece of equipment requested, identify the strategic purpose and well-being outcomes that are anticipated. Outcomes should be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timebound (SMART) and directly linked to the equipment request.
- Outcomes should impact one or more of the following:
 - Increased individual participation in wellness activities
 - Increased physical activity
 - Increased nutrition
 - Enhanced mental well-being
 - Improvements in policies, systems and environments that help to make the healthy choice, the easy choice.

Sustainability

- Continued maintenance and use of technology and equipment

15. Application – 3. Action Plan

Timeline and Milestones

- Provide the timeline to successfully implement the proposed project
- Identify key milestones and estimated completion dates for each strategy and activity
- Specific equipment identification
 - Ordering
 - Arrival

- Installation

Metrics

- For each outcome, identify specific metrics that will be used
- How the metrics will be collected
- How they will be communicated

Key Personnel

- Internal
- Consultants

16. Application – Budget

Template for itemized budget

- Cover
- Budget
- Lease vs. purchase
- Provide an itemized budget with appropriate justification for each cost category (personnel, fringe, transportation, supplies, etc.).

RHTP funds are governed by applicable provisions of 2 CFR Part 200 and 2 CFR Part 300, with guidance from the federal RHTP Notice of Funding Opportunity and CMS's Frequently Asked Questions document.

The limits and unallowable costs detailed in this section come from federal guidance and are non-negotiable.

17. Unallowable Costs and Limits

10% Cap on Admin Costs Across All Funding

- Pre-award costs.
- Meeting matching requirements for any other federal funds or for local entities.
- Services, equipment or supports that are the legal responsibility of another party under federal, state or tribal law.
- Supplanting existing state, local, tribal or private funding of infrastructure of services.
- Renovation costs.



- New construction, building expansion or the purchase of buildings.
- Renovations or alterations are allowed if they are clearly linked to program goals. Cosmetic upgrades or significant retrofitting of buildings are not allowed.

18. Application Submission

Applications must be submitted through [Qualtrics](#)

- Your progress is automatically saved every time you click the Next button at the bottom of the page.
- If you need to stop, simply close your browser. You can resume within one week.
- To resume, click the original survey link again from the same device and browser.
- This feature will not work if you are using a private or incognito browser window.
- Submit early to avoid technical issues

Reminder:

- Applications due by 5 p.m. CT on July 30, 2026
- Applications not received by the submission date and time will be considered non-responsive and not reviewed
- Required Attachments
 - Budget template
 - Cover page
 - Budget

19. Application Review

Dates: July 31 – August 17, 2026

- Review and scoring by a committee
- Communication with applicants for adjustments, if needed
- Approvals by CMS and ND HHS leadership
- Agreement development

[Scoring Criteria on Funding Opportunity Webpage](#)

20. Reporting

Quarterly and annual reports

- Reimbursement requests



- Impact stories
- Progress reports
 - Metrics
 - Use of funds

21. Questions

- Review of questions received
- To ask a question today:
 - Submit via chat
- Funding opportunity FAQ and resources will be added to website
- We may not be able to answer all questions today

22. Resources and Reminders

- Visit the [Rural Health Transformation Program webpage](#)
- [Sign up to receive email updates](#)
- [Funding Guidance](#)
- Submit questions: [FAQ Survey](#)

23. Rural Health Transformation Program

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