

## **The School District of Pittsburgh (Pittsburgh, PA)**

### **REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)**

# **Proof of Concept: Evaluation of Implementation of the Community Schools Model**

**Issuance Date: October 24, 2017**

**Submission Date: November 6, 2017 at Noon**

## **PITTSBURGH PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

Request for Proposal: Proof of Concept - Evaluation of Year One of  
Implementation of the Community Schools Model  
Deadline for Submission: November 6, 2017

### **INTRODUCTION/PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to solicit proposals from Consultants experienced in program design and evaluation to lead the Pittsburgh Public Schools through an evaluation of its Community Schools initiative. The work is expected to begin on December 1, 2017

Specifically, Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS) is seeking a consultant to provide the following services:

- To evaluate the implementation of the Community Schools initiative
- To evaluate the numerous services and supports that we at PPS provide to students and families through outside partner agencies
- To assure that we are utilizing a full array of linkages and formal partnerships with local and regional service agencies, universities, hospitals, and other allied health, education, and human service agencies to meet the needs of the students and families
- To measure specific student and family outcomes to determine the degree to which the Community Schools model is proven effective
- To evaluate the validity of the Community Schools Needs Assessment instrument
- To define benchmarks and linkages for improvement in ongoing implementation

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Pittsburgh Public School District is a large urban district with a student body of approximately 25,000 students across 55 schools. The students of the district are diverse, both racially and socioeconomically with over half (53%) of its student body being African American, about a third (32%) being white, with Asian and Hispanic student representing about three percent respectively. Approximately 62% of PPS students live in low income families. (Council of Great City Schools Report, 2017)

Within the district, 28% of families live in poverty. According to the Allegheny County Department of Human Services, approximately 53% of all PPS students have utilized some human service supports. We know that of those students who utilize human service support, only about 30% are "Promise Ready" upon graduation from high school.

This indicates a strong connection between the health, social, and emotional needs of the students and academic success.

Through county data as well as conversations with teachers, principals, family members and other stakeholders we have learned that many of our students come to class with unmet mental and physical health needs. They experience homelessness, hunger, violence, and other types of trauma. According to the Allegheny County Department of Human Services, those experiences impact students' academic outcomes in the areas of state test assessments, attendance, grade point average, and reading proficiency.

We know that when schools address outside barriers to learning by providing an array of academic enrichment, youth development, family engagement, and health and social support within the schools, the teachers feel they are more effective and student outcomes are improved. To address this, the PPS Board approved a policy to implement the Community Schools model within the district in July/2016. The purpose of this model is to bring health and human services to the schools thereby eliminating outside barriers to learning and improving outcomes for our students.

At their core, Community Schools are effective schools that recognize the importance of meeting both academic and nonacademic needs so that students can focus learning. They are a partnership between the District, schools, families, service agencies, and communities to holistically support students.

The Community Schools model is not new. Districts across the nation have implemented the Community Schools model with great success. We have learned through the Coalition for Community Schools, a national organization that provides technical support to Community Schools across the nation, that Community Schools are smart schools that leverage human capital by combining historical school based approaches with existing community services on site at schools. When schools address outside barriers to learning by providing an array of health and social support within the school, teacher feel they are more effective and student outcomes are improved.

PPS is in the beginning stages of implementation of the Community Schools' model in five schools across the district for the 2017-2018 school year. We are seeking an outside evaluator (Consultant) to provide overall evaluation to the model to determine if cohesiveness, quality, scope of programs, and the services and supports that students and families receive are improved through this effort.

#### **SCOPE OF WORK:**

It is an exciting time here at PPS. We have a new Superintendent who has courageously examined the strengths and challenges of the district through a variety of methods to include listening tours where he met with more than 3,500 stakeholders and a thorough analysis of the

district utilizing the services of the Council of Great City Schools. Through his outreach and with the support of the PPS Board, we have adopted a Community Schools policy.

While we have completed some preliminary work on the development of the Community Schools model, we have begun the implementation of the initiative in five schools in the district in the 2017-2018 school year. During this pilot year, we look forward to working with a Consultant that will gather important data to inform and guide the program.

Within the schools the consultant will evaluate program implementation and its impact on participants' needs, and behaviors, and provide recommendations for program improvement in the following years. Examining our Community Schools' rollout, the Consultant will evaluate activities that address the following program goals:

- To implement the Community Schools model through designated Schools across the district
- To provide a cohesive, quality array of services and supports to students and families
- To establish linkages and formal partnerships with local and regional service agencies, universities, hospitals, and other allied health, education, and human service agencies

Specific areas that need to be addressed include but may not be limited to:

- Overall implementation strategies
- Lead Partnership effectiveness
- School site management
- Student indicators
- Family engagement
- Operational progress in creating a shift in ownership, depth and sustainability
- Community partner effectiveness
- Needs assessment results
- Community assets to identify area of needs and opportunities
- Staff perceptions and understanding of the Community School model and partner relationships

#### **PROJECT REQUIREMENTS:**

1. PPS is seeking proposals from applicants who can address the above stated program goals and activities and who can provide additional expertise to help the district achieve successful project outcomes.

2. The applicant selected will be responsible for completing all project work products and final deliverables (i.e. overall evaluation, evaluation tool, evaluation of five designated schools, revised Needs Assessment, etc...)
3. Applicants are to identify which of the aspects of the project will require Board, District employee, community members, school leadership, school staff and Central Office staff involvement and include the expected time requirements for all activities involving their participation
4. Proposals must include a clear description of the applicant's plan to complete all of the project components to include what order in which the projects will be completed, how long each component will take to complete, etc....)

**TIMELINE**

The Office of the Superintendent is requesting proposals from experienced and qualified individuals/companies. Selection of the consultant will be made based upon the proposals submitted and possible interview if needed. A timetable for the selection process is provided below:

- October 24, 2017: Release of RFP
- November 6, 2017 Receipt of Proposals
- November 9, 2017 Interview Date (if necessary)
- November 15, 2017 Recommendation for selection
- November 21, 2017 Legislative Approval by Board

**Upon the release of the RFP and during the conclusion of the selection process, there shall be no communication between any prospective respondents, their lobbyist(s) or agent(s) and any employee of Pittsburgh Public Schools or its elected Board of Directors, except as provided for in the RFP. Any violation of this provision by any prospective firm and/or its agent shall be grounds for immediate disqualification.**

**APPLICATION PROCESS AND PROCEDURES**

All proposals shall be submitted to Pittsburgh Public Schools as follows:

LouAnn Ross  
 Pittsburgh Public Schools  
 Office of the Superintendent  
 Coordinator, Community Schools  
 341 South Bellefield Avenue, Room 113  
 Pittsburgh, PA 15213  
 Tel: (412) 529-3083  
 Fax: (412) 622-3604  
 Email: [lross1@pghboe.net](mailto:lross1@pghboe.net)

Proposals for this RFP are to include:

1. A brief Executive Summary
2. A description of the applicant's general approach to program design and evaluation, including methodology, perspective, and philosophy that guides your work
3. A list of project deliverables to be created with a detailed timeline for each deliverable and overall project completion date
4. A detailed budget that breaks out expenses
5. Proposals can be submitted in electronic format, faxed, or mailed to the Office of the Superintendent by **Noon on November 6, 2017.**
6. Proposals, including any and all attachments, cover letter and tabs should not exceed twenty-five (25) pages in length on 8 ½" x 11" paper, single spaced using a minimum of font size 11 pt.

Proposals should be submitted following the instructions detailed below. PPS reserves the right to select a proposal in its entirety or some portion(s) thereof. Furthermore, PPS reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and waive irregularities.

Any questions regarding this RFP should be addressed to Ms. Ross.

Responses should address the following questions or requests for information:

**I. Letter of transmittal**

Each proposal should be accompanied by a letter of transmittal which summarizes key points of the proposal and which is signed by an authorized officer.

**II. Experience and Qualifications**

Provide brief biographies for the partners and employees who will be supporting PPS' account, including any relevant work experience for each. Please include only those individuals who will work on PPS' account and specify their role in the project.

Please describe relevant experience with board member governance training including previous work with other school districts. Please provide three references.

**III. Company Information/Equal Employment Opportunity**

- A. Describe your company's equal opportunity policies and programs.
- B. Has your company or any of its employees, or anyone acting on its behalf, ever been convicted of a crime or offense arising directly or indirectly from the conduct of your company's business or have any of your company's officers, directors or persons exercising substantial policy discretion been indicted or otherwise charged in connection with any criminal matter, i.e., financial misconduct, fraud or child abuse

which is still pending? If so, please describe any such indictments and surrounding circumstances in detail.

**IV. Project Work Plan**

Submit a detailed work plan for performed services. A timeline for completion of specific work products should also be included.

**V. Fee proposal**

Please provide a fee structure that your company would propose to provide evaluation services for PPS' Community Schools initiative given the scope of services provided for your detailed work plan. Proposals must include the overall cost of all work, as well as hourly or daily rates, and must include cost estimates for travel and time associated with conference calls with PPS staff.

**Evaluation Criteria and Selection Process**

The contract will be awarded to the qualified proposer whose proposal is most advantageous to PPS - awarding a contract for consulting services to evaluate the first year of Community School implementation and develop a long-range evaluation tool for ongoing implementation based on the evaluation criteria specified below. Thus, while the points in the evaluation criteria indicate their relative importance, the total score will guide PPS in making an intelligent award decision based on the evaluation criteria.

PPS reserves the right to request an interview from those companies determined to be in a competitive range and shall use the information derived from these interviews, if any, in its evaluation.

PPS anticipates selecting one consultant using the following criteria:

<b>Evaluation of Community Schools</b>	<b>Points</b>
Qualifications and experience in evaluation and/or community schools and analysis	25
The extent to which the proposal clearly describes the scope of work	25
Background and expertise working with urban school districts	25
Cost-effectiveness of the proposal	25

Please note that PPS will not return any proposals received and will not reimburse applicants for any costs they incur in developing their proposals. Thank you!