



**Wayne N. Walters, Ed.D. Superintendent of Schools**

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Parent Hotline: 412-529-HELP (4357)

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

### **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)**

### **YOUTH COURT – STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

**Issue Date: February 24, 2023**

**Submission Deadline: March 16, 2023**

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## **Introduction**

The School District of Pittsburgh is seeking proposals from qualified consulting firms to implement a youth-led trauma-informed, restorative youth court disciplinary program. The successful contractor will be selected based on the criteria below and will benefit students across the district, especially African American students, by providing support around school disciplinary policies and procedures.

The selected proposal should implement best practices and promising new interventions, and provide technical assistance to deliver effective, equitable, and restorative interventions that reduce referrals, suspensions, and expulsion rates.

This program is funded by the District's Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER III) funds. No contracts will be extended beyond September 30, 2024. Proposals must have a strong sustainability model and be clear about what specific expectations school leaders, staff, and students must agree upon to ensure successful implementation. Due to the explicit need to adhere to the model with fidelity, training of trainers, and time constraints, we recommend serving no more than ten middle and high schools (proposals are not limited to ten schools).

## **Additional Background**

On May 26, 2021, the Pittsburgh School District Board of Directors unanimously passed a resolution to establish a 21-member ad-hoc Public Stakeholder Advisory Committee (PSAC) to advise on the use of ESSER III funding. The district's final proposal has a brief description and high-level budget for a youth court program. However, federal regulations require that a Request for Proposals is launched and that a qualified firm(s) be selected based on the process described below.

## **District Mission**

The Pittsburgh Public Schools will be one of America's premier school districts, student-focused, well managed, and innovative. We will hold ourselves accountable for preparing all children to achieve academic excellence and strength of character, so that they can succeed in all aspects of life.

## **District Vision**

All students will graduate high school college, career and life-ready prepared to complete a two-or four-year college degree or workforce certification.

## **District Beliefs**

- All children can learn at high levels.
- Teachers have a profound impact on student development and should have ample training, support, and resources.
- Education begins with a safe and healthy learning environment.
- Families are an essential part of the educational process.
- A commitment from the entire community is necessary to build a culture that encourages student achievement.
- Improvement in education is guided by consistent and effective leadership.
- Central office exists to serve students and schools.

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### District Theory of Action

If PPS (Pittsburgh Public Schools) **CULTURE** values clear and collaborative relationships and **SYSTEMS** are in place that support system-wide improvement and effective leadership, then quality and equitable teaching and learning practices utilizing culturally responsive practices and standards-based **INSTRUCTION** with a belief that all students can learn, will ensure high expectations and **STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**, so all students successfully graduate college, career and life-ready.



### Priority Goals

The superintendent's five priority goals articulate key strategies aimed at improving Culture, Systems, and Instruction in the School District of Pittsburgh. The implementation of these priority goals will begin with inquiry and serve as steppingstones to outline a collaborative and strategic approach to solve our challenges with student outcomes and experiences.

1. Invest in culturally responsive, evidence-based training, tools, and resources.
2. Construct safety, health, and wellness protocols.
3. Expand stakeholder communication and partnerships.
4. Design effective organizational systems.
5. Strategically allocate resources to ensure equity, excellence, and efficiency.

Please click [here](#) to learn more about the superintendent's five priority goals.

### District Demographics and Other Information

As the largest of 43 school districts in Allegheny County and the second largest in Pennsylvania, the School District of Pittsburgh serves over 20,000 students in Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 12 in 54 schools. The student population is 53% African American, 33% White, and 14% Other, with 95 languages spoken, representing 57 countries. There are 4,192 employees and a general fund budget of 685 million dollars.

### Scope of Services

The successful contractor must create a sustainable program in alignment with the School District's Mission, Vision, Beliefs, Theory of Action, and Priority Goals to increase restorative spaces that will allow students to become decision-makers in the school discipline process.

- Provide a program where youth who commit minor infractions appear before their peers and receive a ruling from their peers.
  - Ruling Design will be created with the goal of repairing the harm done to individual victims and the broader school community.

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- Define and outline policies and procedures, roles and responsibilities, and define how the youth court will fit within the school structure.
- Training for students and staff should cover topics including disproportionate discipline; the school-to-prison pipeline; discipline disparities at the intersection of race, gender, and special needs; and individual and institutional strategies.
- Materials and support should be provided to increase student voice/empowerment, social and emotional learning, civic engagement, and socialization skills development.
- Additional training content will be customized by the Office of Student Support Services, coordinating with the contractor, to ensure alignment with other District initiatives and efforts and that it meets the district's needs.
- A successful proposal will result in a youth court program that can be sustained for at least three years. Provide a detailed sustainability plan that includes:
  - A clear set of expectations that schools must adhere to implement a successful program.
  - Describes the implementation manual, including training school leaders, staff, and students.
- The successful contractor will collaborate with the Office of Student Services and other vested community partners.

**Timetable/Response Submittal**

The Office of the Superintendent requests proposals from experienced and qualified individuals/companies. The consultant will be selected based on the proposals and an interview if needed. A timetable for the selection process is provided below:

- |                     |                                |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|
| ● February 23, 2023 | Release of RFP                 |
| ● March 16, 2023    | Receipt of Proposals           |
| ● March 20-21, 2023 | Interview Dates (if necessary) |
| ● March 22, 2023    | Legislative Approval by Board  |

**Upon the release of this 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 the School District of Pittsburgh 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.**

All proposals shall be submitted to PPS as follows:

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Mrs. Errika Fearbry Jones  
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Proposals can be submitted electronically via: [superintendentsoffice@pghschools.org](mailto:superintendentsoffice@pghschools.org) by **11:59 PM on March 16, 2023**. Proposals should not exceed 30 pages on 8 ½" X 11" paper 11" paper (including the cover letter, budget narrative, references, and all attachments), single-spaced, using a minimum font size of 10 pt. Any questions regarding this RFP should be addressed to Mrs. Jones.

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

Responses should address the following questions or requests for information:

**I. Letter of Transmittal**

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

**II. Experience and Qualifications**

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

Please describe relevant experience with strategic planning projects, including previous work with other school districts. Please provide three references.

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

- A. Describe your company's equal employment opportunity policies and programs.
- B. Has your company or any of its employees, or anyone acting on its behalf, ever been convicted of any 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 ever been convicted of any crime or offense, i.e., financial misconduct, fraud or child abuse? If so, please describe any such convictions and surrounding circumstances in detail.

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- C. Has your company, or any of its employees, or anyone acting on its behalf, been indicted or otherwise charged in connection with any criminal matter arising directly or indirectly from the conduct of your company's business which is still pending 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 the completion of specific work products should also be included.

#### **V. Fee Proposal**

Please provide a fee structure that your company would propose to provide strategic planning services for the Office of the Superintendent, given the scope of services in your detailed work plan. Proposals must include the overall cost of all work, any hourly or daily rates, and cost estimates for travel and time associated with communicating with the School District of Pittsburgh staff.

Proposals should not include a budget for logistical support for engagement sessions and focus groups, audio-visual needs, meeting space rental, refreshments, and mass printing and distribution of the strategic plan. School District of Pittsburgh staff will assist with invitations, registration, and on-site logistical support for engagement sessions, as needed.

#### **VI. Evaluation Criteria and Selection Process**

The contract will be awarded to the qualified proposer whose proposal is most advantageous to the School District of Pittsburgh based on the evaluation criteria specified below. Thus, while the points in the evaluation criteria indicate their relative importance, the total scores will not necessarily determine the award. Rather, the overall scores 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><u>Youth Court Services</u></b>	<b><u>Points</u></b>
Background and experience in the Operation and Implementation of Youth Courts	20
Background and experience in working with urban school districts	5
Program design (including curriculum) and concepts	20
Sustainability Plan	20
Evaluation Plan for Measuring Effectiveness of the Program	15
Cost-effectiveness of proposal	20

The contractor will be selected by March 22, 2023.



## **Eligible Business Enterprise (EBE) Participation**

### **1. EBE Goal**

An aspirational Eligible Business Enterprise (EBE) goal of 10% for business diversity spending, has been assigned for this contract opportunity. An EBE is a collective of firms that are certified in one or more of the following business diversity categories, registered in our online EBE directory, and used to track the district's diversity spend:

- Minority Business Enterprise (MBE)
- Women Business Enterprise (WBE)
- Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE)
- U. S. Small Business Administration 8(A)

### **2. Proposed Business Diversity Utilization**

Is your firm a certified MBE, WBE, DBE, or 8(A) firm? If so, please provide proof of current certification from a certifying entity. Self-certification is not accepted.

Please also provide detailed information regarding any additional business entity that will assist in completing the scope of work defined by this solicitation. This should include the following:

- Company Name
- Company Contact (including title, email, and phone number)
- Scope of Work
- Dollar Amount & Percentage of Contract
- Company Diversity Type (provide proof for each certified firm)
  - MBE, WBE, DBE, 8(A), Diverse but not certified, N/A

### **3. Good Faith Effort**

If no portion of this contract will be awarded to a diverse business, specifically \$0 or 0% diversity spend, please provide detailed information addressing your firm's culture for business diversity & inclusion.

- Diversity Spend: How much money did your company spend with certified MBE, WBE, DBE, or 8(a) firms last year? What was the diversity percentage based on your total spending?
- Diversity Count: What is the total number of MBE, WBE, DBE, or 8(A) firms your company contracted with last year? Please itemize by each diversity type as well.
- Membership: Are you a member of any supplier/business diversity organizations? If so, please share the organization's name and provide details concerning your involvement with that organization.

For additional documentation related to EBE policies, the proposer should visit the district's website at: <https://www.pghschools.org/mwbe> or contact Paula B. Castleberry, Minority/Women Business Coordinator, at [pcastleberry1@pghschools.org](mailto:pcastleberry1@pghschools.org).