



EVANSTON/SKOKIE
SCHOOL DISTRICT 65

Every Child, Every Day, Whatever it Takes

TO: Board of Education

CC: Dr. Angel Turner, Superintendent of Schools

FROM: Tamara Mitchell, SFO, Chief Financial Officer

DATE: February 10, 2025

RE: Phase 3 SDRP Consultant Proposal

Objective: ☐ Information ☐ Discussion ☐ Follow-up ☒ Decision

Background:

The Board awarded the contract for Structural Deficit Reduction Planning Consulting Services to Student-Centered Services, LLC on November 4, 2024 for Phase 2 of the SDRP. That contract concluded with the delivery of the scenarios presented on January 27, 2025.

Presented for approval is the proposal from Student-Centered Services for Phase 3 of the SDRP work. The proposal would extend through December 31, 2025. Please note the following:

- **Modeling Tool (Optional):** A suitable modeling tool is being developed internally. This optional fee was included in the cost proposal at the district's request.
- **Consulting Services:** Budgeted at \$200/hr for 275 hours, based on an estimated 6-8 hours of consulting per week.
- **Travel Expenses:** Estimated at \$1,000 for the term of the contract; to be billed as incurred and is not expected to exceed \$1,000.
- **Billing Structure:** As proposed, the district will be billed a flat fee of **\$5,000/month**, with final fees "settled up" toward the end of the contract term as needed.

We believe it is crucial to continue engaging and leveraging SCS in this next phase, as it will provide access to the expertise of Dr. Harkin and Dr. Fuerstenau in school consolidation, closure, and change management throughout the process.

Goal/Guiding principles:

Strategic Goal #5: **Strategic resource allocation practices that ensure long-term financial stability and the allocation of resources aligned to equity priorities (M/S).**

- Strategic Objective 5.3 - Implement and measure a systematic prioritization process to align programs and practices with available resources.
- Strategic Objective 5.5 - Continue to seek additional resources to support district operations.

Input sought/received:

N/A

Options considered:

The administration considered whether to continue engaging the services of Student-Centered Services, LLC or to proceed with Phase 3 of the SDRP work without a consultant. After careful consideration, we believe it is in the best interest of the school community to leverage the expertise of these consultants as we continue addressing the District's structural deficit and explore options for right-sizing the District's footprint.

Recommendation:

Approve the proposal as presented.

Financial Implications:

\$56,000 (not to exceed)



Cost Proposal Form

This cost proposal covers consulting services for Evanston/Skokie CCSD 65's Structural Deficit Reduction Plan Phase 3.

Company Name: Student-Centered Services
 Company Address: 3806 Alderwood Drive
 City, State, Zip: Springfield, IL 62712
 Email Address: Sharkin@student-centered-services.org
 Phone Number: (847) 774-4770
 Date: January 22, 2025

Item	Description	Cost
Consulting Services	Provide consulting services for the District’s Structural Deficit Reduction Plan Phase 3. In collaboration with the internal project team, assist in developing 3-5 draft structural deficit/school consolidation plans, update the plans to reflect the board input, and present a modified draft report to present as a final report to the board before December 31, 2025. An outline of the work is provided below.	\$55,000
Travel Expenses	Mileage reimbursement for all partners and lodging for partners would need to be physically present for any meetings that live greater than 75 miles from the meeting location. (The number listed is an estimate and a not to exceed amount.)	\$1,000
Total Cost (Not to Exceed)		\$56,000
Modeling Tool	Gather the necessary data points and develop the financial modeling tool that will be used to construct the various structural deficit reduction scenarios. (Optional)	\$25,000
Total Cost with Option 2 (Not to Exceed)		\$81,000

Payment Terms

SCS will bill D65 monthly at a rate of \$5,000. The final payment is due within 30 days after the final report is presented to the Board of Education.

Assumptions

SCS has based its cost estimate on the assumption that SCS will operate consultive roles and District 65 staff will lead the work. We estimate that SCS partners will provide approximately 6-8 consulting hours per week for a total of 275 consulting hours for the duration of the agreement. Services will be provided from February 1 to December 31, 2025.



Signature

Date

Susan Harkin

Name

Partner

Title

Structural Deficit Reduction/School Consolidation Timeline

Consolidating schools is a complex and impactful decision that requires careful planning, transparent communication, and the involvement of various stakeholders. Here's a general overview of the steps and related timeline for such a process:

Step 1: Initial Assessment and Feasibility Study

- ☐ Activities: Conduct an assessment to understand the reasons for closing the school (e.g., declining enrollment, budget constraints, building conditions).
- ☐ Data Collection: Collect relevant data (enrollment trends, financials, educational outcomes, facility conditions) to support the need for closure.
- ☐ Modeling: Utilize the data collection tools to develop a model proposed options
- ☐ Internal Review: Have discussions with district leadership and the school board to review initial findings and outline preliminary options.

Step 2: Develop Preliminary Proposal

- ☐ Proposal Drafting: Develop a draft proposal for the school closure. Outline affected schools, potential relocation plans, budgetary impacts, and educational considerations.
- ☐ Stakeholder Identification: Identify key stakeholders, including parents, students, teachers, local government, community groups, and businesses.

Step 3: Initial Stakeholder Engagement

- ☐ Announce Proposal: Publicly announce the preliminary proposal for school closure, emphasizing transparency and the desire for community feedback.
- ☐ Engagement Activities: Hold town hall meetings, distribute surveys, and establish focus groups with parents, teachers, and students to gather feedback.
- ☐ Gather Feedback: Collect and analyze feedback from all stakeholders, addressing their concerns and suggestions.

Step 4: Revision of Proposal

- ☐ Refine Proposal: Based on stakeholder feedback, modify the initial proposal to clarify relocation plans, budget use, and the impact on educational quality.
- ☐ Draft Final Proposal: Prepare a final draft, ensuring all concerns and suggestions are considered.

Step 5: Formal Approval Process

- ☐ Board Review: Present the refined proposal to the school board and local government officials for review.
- ☐ Public Hearing: Host public hearings to allow community members to voice opinions on the revised proposal.
- ☐ Decision Vote: Conduct a school board or governmental vote on the proposed closures.

Step 6: Implementation Planning

- ☐ Relocation Plan: Develop a detailed transition plan for students and staff, including new school assignments, transportation, and support services.
- ☐ Staff Redeployment: Identify options for affected staff, including transfers, reassignments, or severance options as needed.
- ☐ Communication Plan: Clearly communicate the final decision and timeline to all stakeholders.

Step 7: Closure Execution and Transition

- ☐ Closure Execution: Finalize closures at the end of the school year, if possible, to minimize disruption. For mid-year closures, ensure smooth transitions.
- ☐ Student and Staff Support: Provide resources and support for affected students, parents, and staff members during the transition period.

Total Timeline

Typically, the process spans 9–12 months from initial feasibility to final closure, ensuring all feedback is integrated and minimizing disruption for students and families.

Tentative Timeline

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|---|--------------------|
| 1. Months 1–3: Initial Assessment & Feasibility Study | Jan–March |
| 2. Month 4: Develop Preliminary Proposal | April |
| 3. Months 5–6: Initial Stakeholder Engagement | May–June |
| 4. Month 7: Revise Proposal | July–August |
| 5. Months 8–9: Formal Approval Process | August–September |
| 6. Months 10–11: Implementation Planning | September–December |
| 7. Month 12: Closure Execution and Transition | January–June |

Key Considerations

- **Transparent Communication:** Maintain open and honest communication with all stakeholders throughout the process.
- **Community Involvement:** Actively involve parents, teachers, and community members in decision-making.
- **Staff Support:** Provide support services for affected staff, including job training and placement assistance.
- **Student Well-being:** Prioritize the academic and emotional well-being of students during the transition.
- **Financial Planning:** Develop a detailed financial plan to manage costs and potential savings from consolidation.

By following a well-structured timeline and addressing the key considerations, school districts can effectively implement school consolidation while minimizing disruption to students, staff, and the community.

School Consolidation Detailed Phases

Phase 1: Initial Assessment and Feasibility Study

- ☐ Conduct a comprehensive needs assessment, including enrollment trends, facility conditions, and financial analysis.
- ☐ Identify potential schools for consolidation and develop initial closure scenarios.
- ☐ Establish a project team to oversee the consolidation process.
- ☐ Present preliminary findings and recommendations to the school board and district leadership.
- ☐ Develop a communication plan to inform stakeholders about the potential consolidation process.

Phase 2: Stakeholder Engagement and Proposal Development

- ☐ Conduct community outreach through town hall meetings, surveys, and online forums.
- ☐ Establish focus groups with parents, teachers, and community members.
- ☐ Analyze stakeholder feedback and refine closure scenarios.
- ☐ Develop a detailed proposal outlining the rationale, timeline, and impact of the consolidation.

Phase 3: Formal Approval Process

- ☐ Submit the formal proposal to the school board for review and approval.
- ☐ Schedule public hearings to gather input from the community.
- ☐ Address public concerns and revise the proposal as needed.
- ☐ Obtain final approval from the school board and any necessary regulatory agencies.

Phase 4: Implementation Planning and Execution

- ☐ Develop a detailed implementation plan, including:
 - ☐ Student reassignment plans
 - ☐ Staff reassignment or layoff plans
 - ☐ Transportation logistics
 - ☐ Facility consolidation and repurposing
 - ☐ Communication strategy
- ☐ Implement the transition plan, including:
 - ☐ Notifying affected families
 - ☐ Coordinating student transfers
 - ☐ Reassigning staff
 - ☐ Closing and securing school buildings

Final Phase

- ☐ Conduct a post-consolidation evaluation to assess the impact on student achievement, staff morale, and community satisfaction.

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