

## Request for Proposal

### Transportation

### Services

#### INTRODUCTION

Twin Cities International Schools (TCIS) uses a single provider for school bus transportation of about 950 students. TCIS requires approximately 22 passenger school buses and 15 vans of varying capacity to provide transportation for all eligible students. Enrollment and transportation needs for SY 2025- 2026 are projected to be approximately 950 students. Special education students also require specialized transportation services vans. Homeless & highly mobile (**HHM**) students must also be transported flexibly.

Proposals for transportation service will be prioritized from contractors who can demonstrate ownership and operation of a school bus fleet meeting State of Minnesota Statutes, Minnesota State Department of Public Safety Rules and Regulations, and TCIS School Board Policies (all of these relate to student transportation). A Certificate of Insurance to meet specified limits is also required to accompany such a proposal.

Alternate Proposals: TCIS views an alternate proposal as a proposal describing an approach to accomplishing the requirements of the RFPs that differs from the approach outlined in the solicitation. An alternate proposal may also be a second proposal submitted by the same proposer that differs somewhat from its basic or prime proposal. Alternate proposals may address the technical approach or other provisions or requirements outlined in the solicitation. TCIS will consider all alternate proposals submitted.

By Minnesota Statutes and except as may be provided by other applicable State and Federal law, all proposers should be aware that RFPs and their responses are public information subject to disclosure to anyone who requests it. However, the proposers are asked to identify specifically any information contained in their proposals that they consider confidential and/or proprietary and which they believe to be exempt from disclosure, citing specifically the applicable exempting law. All information becomes public after the School Board has approved the contract.

To submit a proposal, please review the attached Specifications for Pupil Transportation Services.

There is no express or implied obligation made by TCIS to reimburse responding firms for any expense incurred in preparing proposals in response to this request. TCIS reserves the right to retain all proposals submitted and to use any ideas in a proposal regardless of

whether that proposal is selected. Submission of a proposal indicates acceptance by the firm of the conditions in this RFP unless clearly and expressly noted in the proposal submitted and confirmed in the contract between TCIS and the firm.

During the evaluation process, TCIS reserves the right to request additional information or clarification from submitting firms or to allow corrections of errors or omissions. TCIS reserves the right to accept or reject in whole all proposals, to request new proposals, or to award a contract. Selection shall not be made solely on price.

In the event of identical proposals, TCIS may utilize negotiated methods as long as the low-tied price is not exceeded. In the event of a single proposal, TCIS may negotiate a lower price with the contractor.

Acceptance of a proposal by TCIS for the transportation shall be reduced to a written contract, and the successful supplier agrees to execute such contract, which will refer to and include these specifications by reference. The written contract will govern the relationship between TCIS and the contractor. The basic terms outlined in the Specifications for Pupil Transportation Services shall be incorporated into the final contract. TCIS reserves the right to negotiate extensions and modifications to the contract. A sample outline of the terms to be included in any final contract is also included in this RFP. However, these terms may change depending on the contents of the proposals in response to this RFP.

The proposal submission deadline is **March 14th, 2025, at 4:00 pm**. Proposals must be mailed in a sealed envelope to 277 12<sup>th</sup> Ave. N, Minneapolis, MN 55401 or emailed to [ismaila@iecmail.net](mailto:ismaila@iecmail.net). If you have any questions or concerns regarding this RFP, please contact Mr. Ismail Ahmed at **612-8465-8407**.

## SPECIFICATIONS FOR PUPIL TRANSPORTATION SERVICES SECTION

### 1. GENERAL CONDITIONS

**1.1 Duration of the Contract** - The services requested in these specifications shall be for the 2025-2026 school year. TCIS reserves the right to extend the contract for 2 years if they see fit. If TCIS chooses to extend the contract, a written notice will be provided to the operator 90 days before the conclusion of the 2026 contract. At that time TCIS and the Operator will negotiate how many years the extension will be and the rates that would coincide with that extension.

**1.2 Service Areas and Routes**—TCIS Transportation's "Service Area" includes the city limits of Minneapolis as well as, but is not limited to, Burnsville, Bloomington, Richfield, St. Paul, Hopkins, Eden Prairie, Minnetonka, Brooklyn Park, Brooklyn Center, St. Anthony, Columbia Heights, Blaine, Fridley, and Woodbury.

The Operator shall furnish equipment and personnel sufficient to provide daily transportation of students within the Service Area during the duration of the contract to all TCIS schools according to a schedule and over routes determined or approved by TCIS. Generally, transportation will include going to school in the morning and returning to school in the afternoon.

**1.3 Routes** - TCIS will furnish student data and enrollment information upon which the Operator shall determine efficient routes, with TCIS' final approval. The Operator shall describe each route to TCIS each school year. A preliminary route description will be given to TCIS by August 1st of each year. Each route description will include the school bus number, driver, route mileage, bus stop locations, bus stop times (morning and afternoon), bus capacity, number of passengers, and a route map. TCIS may establish regulations to be observed by the Operator in connection with all details incidental to the operation of the routes, including starting times, bus stops, transfers, discipline on the buses, and any situation that may, from time to time, arise in the performance of this contract. Once routes have been approved, there shall be no change in bus routes or schedule without the consent of the TCIS. TCIS may change the routes, time schedules, or designated stops. A high-quality GPS System must be available to TCIS once both parties approve and sign the contract.

**1.4 Regular and City Transportation** - Transportation will be a round trip to and from school. Route miles shall be the length of the Route and shall be determined

as the total number of miles from the school (or other point of discharge as determined by TCIS), thence once around the designated route and back to the point of origin. Such route length shall be reported to TCIS within 10 days of the opening of school. Route length shall be rounded to the nearest whole mile. Transportation shall be provided to maximize efficiency and minimize the number of vehicles and mileage.

**1.5 Special Education Transportation**—TCIS reserves the right to assign an aide to any vehicle should it deem such an aide necessary. The operator must furnish equipment that is acceptable to TCIS to meet the needs for special education transportation. The Operator shall comply with all applicable state and federal rules and regulations.

**1.6 Field Trips and Extra-curricular Trips** - Field trips mean excursions for educational purposes and usually take place during the school day (there are occasional exceptions). TCIS will provide supervision of students. These may be within TCIS' regular transportation or outside the regular boundaries. Extra-curricular trips are usually associated with some extra-curricular or co-curricular activity and typically occur after school hours. TCIS provides the chaperone.

**1.7 Contract and Performance Bond**—The Operator shall enter a formal contract based on the conditions and specifications. Before commencing service, the operator may be required to supply a performance bond for up to 100% of the anticipated contract award and shall also provide liability and property damage insurance as herein described. If required, the performance bond shall comply with the provisions of Minnesota Statutes Section 574.26. The Operator shall be advised if a performance bond and the amount at the time the contract is awarded will be required.

**1.8 Assignment**—The services contemplated under this Agreement are deemed to be personal services. Operator shall not assign this Agreement without the prior consent of TCIS. The parties agree that the assignment by Operator of any sums due and owing Operator under this Agreement shall not constitute an assignment of the Agreement.

**1.9 Award** - TCIS may elect to make its award based upon proposals as received, or TCIS may elect, in its sole discretion, to enter into direct negotiations with those entities submitting proposals. If TCIS chooses to enter into talks, each entity submitting a proposal shall be notified of the time and place. Negotiations will be conducted utilizing the rules and procedures established by TCIS. TCIS reserves the right to accept, reject, or negotiate any quotation and to award transportation services deemed most favorable and advantageous to TCIS.

**1.10 School Operating Hours and Calendar**—The Operator will agree to deliver students to the school at 7:15 a.m. Monday through Thursday and pick them up at 3:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday; and 12:30 p.m. Friday. The Operator will also agree to follow the TCIS 170-day school calendar approved by the board.

## **2. SPECIFIC CONDITIONS**

### **2.0 Vehicles**

2.1 All vehicles must be maintained in safe operating condition and have a current inspection by the State of Minnesota. The Operator shall ensure that the exterior and interior cleanliness of the vehicles will be maintained.

2.2 All vehicles used shall comply with all road and safety regulations as set forth by any Federal, State, and Municipal policy, law, statute, or ordinance as it may relate directly or indirectly to the safe operation of a vehicle used in public transportation of students.

2.3 All vehicles used in transportation service shall be made available for inspection from time to time as deemed necessary by a TCIS agent or any state or federal authority.

2.4 TCIS will analyze all State and Federal vehicle inspection records for any Operator wishing to submit a proposal. Operators shall be in good standing with the MN State Patrol and all Federal agencies pertaining to student transportation.

### **2.5 Equipment**

2.5.1 All vehicles used in transporting students must be equipped with an operating two-way radio with a frequency capable of communicating with TCIS office(s).

2.5.2 All vehicles transporting students must be equipped with crossover mirrors, crossing gates, an interior working public address system, and fully functioning windows and emergency exits.

2.5.3 All vehicles used to transport students must be equipped with a security camera. Video footage must be available within 12 hours of TCIS's request.

2.5.4 Each vehicle used to transport students will have identifying unit numbers on the four corners of the car and alongside the loading door. The identifying number

shall correspond to the route number assigned to the vehicle. All vehicles will have a method of applying a unit number for substitute and/or emergency vehicle use. The temporary number should be able to cover the regular vehicle number alongside the loading door.

2.5.5 To improve safety and student management, TCIS recommends that all new buses purchased and placed in service be equipped with full-length acoustic roof panels.

2.5.6 All vehicles shall be washed and cleaned inside and out at least monthly. Daily attention should be given to sweeping the floors, trash removal, and inspection and removal of any graffiti.

### **3. Drivers and Staffing**

3.1 The operator must employ a sufficient number of drivers and a reasonable number of standby drivers to ensure that services are provided reliably and continuously.

3.2 Operator shall ensure that all drivers meet the minimum state requirements for transporting students.

3.3 Operator shall comply with all employee background checks and screening requirements under federal, state, and local law.

3.4 Operator shall have a comprehensive training program accessible for drivers operating their vehicles, which will conform to the School Bus Training requirements in state law.

### **4. Insurance**

4.1 The Operator shall maintain during the life of the contract public liability, property damage, and excess liability in with minimum amounts as follows:

4.1.1 Bodily injury \$1,000,000 per person, \$2,000,000 per accident.

4.1.2 Property damage \$100,000 per accident.

4.1.3 Excess liability, body injury \$1,000,000 per person.

4.2 Certificates of insurance coverage shall be filed with TCIS when the contract is executed and shall carry the following endorsement:

"It is agreed that such insurance as is afforded by the policy applied subject to the following provisions: Under the Bodily Injury Liability and Property Damage Liability Coverage.

The Company agrees that it will not use, either in the adjustment of claims or in the

defense of suits against the insured from tort liability, any legal immunity the insured may possess solely because of its sovereign status unless requested in writing by the insured to interpose such defense."

4.3 Operator shall furnish and maintain during the life of the contract Worker's Compensation coverage for the protection of its employees in amounts required by law.

4.4 No liability resulting from a vehicular accident or any driver or operational negligence will be assumed by TCIS or its officers, employees, or authorized representatives.

4.5 All certificates of insurance coverage furnished to TCIS shall show TCIS as an additional insured under the policy, and such certificates shall be in force at all times under contract.

## **5. Service Condition**

5.1 - The number of students transported shall not exceed the rated manufacturer's vehicle capacity. If passenger vehicles are used, i.e., private cars, the number of passengers shall not exceed five or the rated capacity of the vehicle, exclusive of the driver. Scheduling of the students for arrival at the various school locations shall conform to school schedules or the schedule established by TCIS.

5.2—Special education students shall be picked up immediately in front of or as near as possible to their homes. A student shall load or unload at home or school only from the right side of the vehicle, except on a one-way street, where the non-traffic side of the vehicle may be used. Type III vehicles may be used only upon the Operator's request and the TCIS's approval.

5.3 - No unauthorized person shall be allowed in any vehicle while engaged in the transportation of students for TCIS. TCIS reserves the right to assign attendants to any car in the best interest of any student.

5.4 - The Operator shall be highly selective in employing its drivers. The Operator will be required to utilize only those drivers with a valid Class A or Class B license and a school bus endorsement who have been thoroughly checked for ability, character, integrity, and fitness and are acceptable to TCIS. TCIS reserves the right to comment on the performance of any Operator employee, and the Operator shall take appropriate steps to improve services. The Operator must agree to provide a minimum of eight hours of in-

service time for all bus drivers utilized in the performance of the contract, including substitute drivers or additional drivers for routes, which may be added during the year. Each driver must have a current criminal history background check to the satisfaction of TCIS. A qualified mechanic working in the School Bus Transportation industry for at least three years must be onsite for all repairs and general equipment maintenance. The operator shall provide satisfactory evidence of the good health of each driver before each school year (or during the school year for new drivers) based on a physical examination as required by law. Such examination shall indicate that the driver complies with the minimum health standards required by the rules and regulations of the State Board of Education or any other state agency for school bus drivers. The Operator shall pay the expense of the physical exam for all drivers, other than that paid by insurance. The Operator must comply with all state and federal laws governing the mandatory drug and alcohol testing of school bus drivers.

5.5- The operator shall handle complaint calls per TCIS's procedures and policies.

5.6 - The Operator shall ensure the following:

5.6.1 All buses are operated with safe and reliable equipment, including an operable two-way radio. TCIS must communicate consistently with the base during service hours or as needed.

5.6.2 All drivers will comply with the rules and regulations of the U.S. Department of Transportation, The Federal Highway Administration, and the State of Minnesota and its subdivisions (including the Department of Transportation, the Motor Vehicle Department, and the Minnesota Department of Education).

5.6.3 All bus operators and drivers control students' behavior on the buses according to TCIS procedures and policies.

5.6.4 All buses are driven by licensed drivers who can perform required duties (including following established schedules on a timely basis and controlling student behavior on the buses).

5.6.5 In rural areas, when students are transferred from one bus to another, no student shall be left unattended (the bus must wait until the transfer bus arrives).

5.6.6 All accidents, physical injuries, emergencies, or other unusual student



transportation occurrences must be reported on time to the Business Manager on a school accident.

## **6. Facilities**

6.1 Vehicle and equipment storage and maintenance shall be the Operator's responsibility and shall occur per the terms of the Transportation Services Contract.

## **7. REIMBURSEMENT RATES AND BILLING**

7.1 - Mileage for extracurricular trips shall be computed from the departure point of the trip at the school to the destination of the trip and return to the departure point.

TCIS will not be charged mileage from the Operator's base to the departure point, and it will not reimburse mileage for using the bus for purposes unrelated to the school event.

7.2 - The Operator agrees to submit bills for services rendered to TCIS in a format prescribed by TCIS and according to the billing schedule established by TCIS.

7.2 - TCIS may withhold or reduce payment if, in its reasonable view, services are not adequately performed or rendered in accordance with the contract specifications.

## **8. INCLUSION BY REFERENCE AND APPLICABILITY OF LAWS**

8.1 - Anything herein notwithstanding, the successful Operator shall comply with applicable provisions of State and Federal Laws, including the Motor Vehicle Code, State Board of Education, or any other state agency rules and regulations relating to student transportation, the construction, design, operation of equipment, and safety accessories for equipment, vehicle codes and other applicable laws, rules, and regulations prescribed by the State or any political subdivisions thereof relating to the transportation of regular and special education students.

8.2 - TCIS shall require strict adherence to the terms and specifications of the contract to be awarded to safeguard the comfort and safety of the students and ensure the orderly operation of its program.

## BID WORKSHEETS

### Item 1 Bid to Provide Special Student Transportation

Daily fee per bus/per day based on a minimum of 4 hours (live time) and 60 miles (live mileage).

Bus Type:

12-18 passenger School Bus Proposal Amount: \$\_\_\_\_\_

19-36 passenger School Bus Proposal Amount: \$\_\_\_\_\_

2 w/c + \_\_\_\_\_ passenger Lift Bus Proposal Amount: \$\_\_\_\_\_ 4 w/c +  
passenger Lift Bus Proposal Amount: \$\_\_\_\_\_ 6 w/c + \_\_\_\_\_ passenger Lift Bus  
Proposal Amount: \$\_\_\_\_\_

Other (please specify capacity):

\_\_\_\_\_ w/c + \_\_\_\_\_ passenger Bus Proposal Amount: \$\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ w/c + \_\_\_\_\_ passenger Bus Proposal Amount: \$\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ w/c + \_\_\_\_\_ passenger Bus Proposal Amount: \$\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ w/c + \_\_\_\_\_ passenger Bus Proposal Amount: \$\_\_\_\_\_

A Charge for each additional hour (live time) a route exceeds 4  
hours (live time) per day: Per hour/bus/day \$\_\_\_\_\_

B. Charge for each additional mile (live mileage) a route exceeds 60  
miles (live mileage) per day:  
Per mile/bus/day \$\_\_\_\_\_

c. Total number of buses the contractor is willing to provide for this bid: \_\_\_\_\_

B. Proposed cost per hour to provide a Bus Assistant for an assigned route: \$\_\_\_\_\_

c. List any deviations from  
bid specifications:

- 1.
- 2.

3.

4.

## Item 2 Bid to Provide Regular Student Transportation

Daily fee per bus/day based on a minimum of 4 hours (live time) and 60 miles (live mileage).

Bus Type:

70-72 passenger School Bus Proposal Amount:

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_ 76-78 passenger School Bus Proposal Amount:

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_ 82-84 passenger School Bus Proposal Amount:

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_ 88-90 passenger School Bus Proposal Amount:

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

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Other (please specify capacity):

\_\_\_\_\_ w/c + \_\_\_\_\_ passenger Bus Proposal Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ w/c + \_\_\_\_\_ passenger Bus Proposal Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ w/c + \_\_\_\_\_ passenger Bus Proposal Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ w/c + \_\_\_\_\_ passenger Bus Proposal Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

A Charge for each additional hour (live time) a route exceeds 4 hours (live time) per day: Per hour/bus/day \$ \_\_\_\_\_

B. Charge for each additional mile (live mileage) a route exceeds 60 miles (live mileage) per day:  
Per mile/bus/day \$ \_\_\_\_\_

c. Total number of buses the contractor is willing to provide for this bid: \_\_\_\_\_

B. List any deviations from

bid specifications:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Item 3 Charter Bus Transportation (Field & Athletic Trips)

Daily fee per bus/day based on a minimum of 2 hours (live time) and 40 miles (live mileage).

Bus Type:

70-72 passenger School Bus Proposal Amount:  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_ 76-78 passenger School Bus Proposal Amount:  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_ 82-84 passenger School Bus Proposal Amount:  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_ 88-90 passenger School Bus Proposal Amount:  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Other Types of units available for Charter Trips (please specify capacity):

\_\_\_\_\_ w/c + \_\_\_\_\_ passenger Bus Proposal Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ w/c + \_\_\_\_\_ passenger Bus Proposal Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ w/c + \_\_\_\_\_ passenger Bus Proposal Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ w/c + \_\_\_\_\_ passenger Bus Proposal Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

A Charge for each additional hour (live time) a route exceeds 2 hours (live time) per day: Per hour/bus/day \$ \_\_\_\_\_

B. Charge for each additional mile (live mileage) a route exceeds 40 miles (live mileage) per day:  
Per mile/bus/day \$ \_\_\_\_\_

c. Additional charge for "Prime Time" trips (if any): \$ \_\_\_\_\_

M-F AM Hours:                      am to                      am  
M-F PM Hours:                      pm to                      pm

\_ Please designate what constitutes "Prime Time."

Late cancellation charge (if any): \$\_\_\_\_\_

Notes:

D. List any deviations from bid specifications:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Item 4 Short Term Point to Point Transportation (6 students or less per run)

Note - these trips can be short-term (30-90 days) but can also run through the entire school year and are subject to cancellation at any time with 48 hours ' notice from TCIS. These trips typically involve students in programs outside of TCIS or homeless students who must be transported to TCIS from various metro-wide locations. Still, TCIS uses these rates for any necessary short-term, temporary arrangements. Proposed trips will be subject to the contractor's availability when they are instituted, but upon acceptance, the contractor will be expected to continue transportation until TCIS terminates the trip.

A Daily fee per trip - one rider (Ride Charge): Proposal Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Miles included in base Ride Charge (if any): # of miles \_\_\_\_\_

B. Additional Mileage Charge per trip (if any): Proposal Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

C. Last minute cancellation charge - no show upon arrival (if any): Proposal Amount: \$\_\_\_\_

D. List any deviations from bid specifications:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Notes: