

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

Public Relations, Community Engagement & Strategic Communications Services

RFP Reference Number: 2026-PR-01

Issue Date: August 19, 2026

Proposal Due Date: August 31, 2026 at 2:00 PM EST

Elmsford Union Free School District (EUFSD)

98 South Goodwin Avenue

Elmsford, NY 10523

Superintendent of Schools: Susan Yom

Board of Education President: David Hecht

SECTION 1: DISTRICT BACKGROUND & OBJECTIVES

The Elmsford Union Free School District (EUFSD) is centrally located within Westchester County, New York. With a median home value of approximately \$700,000, the Elmsford area remains one of the most affordable places in Westchester County to purchase a home and raise a family. The district includes the Village of Elmsford and areas of the Unincorporated Town of Greenburgh. The total population of the district is approximately 9,500 residents. Following the Princeton Plan, the K – 12 district enrollment is approximately 1,000 students across three buildings. Separate and apart from the district enrollment, approximately 150 students live within the district, but are enrolled in private and/or parochial schools at their family's sole expense.

- **Carl L. Dixon Primary School** (K – 1st Grade)
- **Alice E. Grady Elementary School** (2nd – 6th Grade)
- **Alexander Hamilton High School** (7th – 12th Grade)

The District's annual budget is approximately \$48 million and there has been a concerted effort in recent years to invest in the physical infrastructure of the district as well as the human capital. A primary focus of the Board and Administration is to elevate the quality of our communication with district stakeholders and the public in general. The objective of this RFP is to retain a highly qualified public relations agency (the "Vendor") to serve as the

District's Architect of Communications. The Vendor will ensure transparency, drive community engagement, celebrate student/staff success, and manage the highly regulated annual Budget Vote communications in compliance with NYSED mandates. The successful vendor will assist the District in creating, managing and properly organizing content for its website, social media platforms as well as any other newsletters or publications. The successful vendor will also assist the district at community meetings to improve the flow of communication. Overall, the district is desirous of establishing a reputation for delivering a high-quality student experience as well as being a stable and good employer as we look to recruit and retain outstanding professionals.

SECTION 2: DETAILED SCOPE OF SERVICES & DELIVERABLES

The Vendor shall act as an independent contractor, working closely with the Superintendent, Board of Education, and designated District administrators to assess, strengthen, and operationalize a comprehensive communications function.

The Vendor's responsibilities shall include, but are not limited to, the following areas (**creative suggestions are encouraged to be included in any responses provided to this RFP**):

A. Communications Assessment & Organizational Capacity

- **Ecosystem & Workflow Audit:** Conduct a comprehensive review of the District's existing communications ecosystem (marketing, PR, and event strategies) to understand strengths, gaps, and opportunities for alignment.
- **Benchmarking & Interviews:** Benchmark the District's digital presence and brand positioning against peer and high-performing education organizations. Conduct interviews with senior leadership to clarify strategic priorities. Conduct interviews with stakeholders such as current parents of students enrolled in the district, local residents without school age children, real estate agents doing business in the Elmsford area as well as those that do not specifically do business in Elmsford but nearby, local businesses and parents of recent former students who have recently transferred to other districts and those actively using private/parochial options rather than EUFSD.
- **Structural Communications Recommendations:** Assess staffing structures, workflows, and decision-making processes for communications. Recommend an optimal communications operating model to improve coordination between district-level and school-level communications, increasing overall efficiency, clarity, and sustainability.

B. Strategic Framework & Leadership Communication

- **Messaging Architecture:** Articulate the District's core values, mission, and vision. Develop a messaging architecture that includes core messages, audience-specific messages, and supporting proof points across strategic pillars (e.g., enrollment, staff engagement, fiscal responsibility).
- **Executive Leadership Strategy:** Act as a trusted advisor to the Superintendent and Board of Education. Conduct scenario-based media training, draft speeches and talking points, and develop a proactive strategy to elevate key leaders through targeted speaking engagements and op-eds.
- **Annual Planning & Operationalization:** Develop an overarching annual Strategic Communications Plan. Create content calendars, media pitch cycles, and workflow tools to streamline execution. Present the plan to the Board of Education by August 15th of each contract year.
- **Account Management:** Conduct weekly check-ins with the Superintendent and Cabinet. Attend events as necessary to present the district and student accomplishments, including monthly Board meetings, graduation ceremonies, and community forums.

C. Story Mining, Narrative Development & Media Relations

- **Structured Story Mining:** Design and facilitate listening sessions with students, families, alumni, and staff to gather qualitative insights. Surface authentic, human-centered stories that demonstrate the District's impact and values.
- **Story Bank Creation:** Translate qualitative insights into clear narrative themes and create a repeatable framework (story bank) for ongoing story collection to be deployed across earned media, digital content, and community engagement.
- **Proactive Media Relations:** Serve as the primary media liaison, maintaining active relationships with regional media. Develop pitch ideas and media lists grounded in the district's impact, guaranteeing a minimum of one (1) proactive, positive external media placement monthly.

D. Annual Budget & Election Communications The Vendor must express the ability to adhere strictly to the NYS Education Law timeline for the May Annual Budget Vote and Board Election. Deliverables include:

- **Budget Newsletter:** Write, design, and manage the translation (English/Spanish) and layout of a comprehensive 8-to-12-page budget newsletter or as recommended to be most effective, delivered to the mailhouse 14 days prior to the vote.

- **Six-Day Budget Notice:** Draft, design, and ensure compliance for the state-mandated 6-Day Budget Notice postcard, mailed directly to all registered voters.
- **Presentations:** Assist the district in designing presentations for required Budget Hearings, Budget Meetings, Capital Projects, and Referendums.

E. Crisis Communications & Issues Management

- **Crisis Playbook Development:** Audit and update existing protocols to create a comprehensive, step-by-step crisis communications plan tailored to various potential rapid-response situations.
- **24/7 Rapid Response:** Provide 24/7/365 emergency on-call support. Draft immediate stakeholder communications (i.e., public statements, robocalls, SMS texts, and web pop-ups) within 45 minutes of a triggering event.
- **Reputation Management:** Monitor media and social media sentiment during and after a crisis to advise leadership on necessary follow-up communications and long-term reputation repair.

F. Digital Footprint & Translation Services

Digital Strategy & Content Creation: Develop and execute a comprehensive, data-driven digital strategy that elevates the District's brand identity and maximizes stakeholder engagement. Key responsibilities include:

- **Content Production:** Produce a minimum of six (6) high-quality, feature articles monthly, showcasing District milestones, academic achievements, and community impact.
- **Social Media Management:** Maintain an active, strategic presence on all official channels with a minimum cadence of four (4) posts per week. Responsibilities include drafting, scheduling, proactive community engagement, and strict enforcement of District Acceptable Use Policies.
- **Website Governance & CMS Management:** Manage day-to-day content updates via the Content Management System (CMS). Ensure all copy is search engine optimized (SEO), maintains a consistent brand voice, and meets current web accessibility (WCAG) standards. Conduct ongoing audits to ensure all information is accurate, up-to-date, and aligned with current messaging.
- **Translation Services:** Provide rapid, human-verified translation of all major communications into Spanish, ensuring appropriate educational terminology.

SECTION 3: STATUTORY & LEGAL REQUIREMENTS (NEW YORK STATE)

To be considered responsive, Vendors must agree to and provide documentation for the following NYS municipal procurement mandates:

- **NYS Education Law Section 2-d Compliance:** The Vendor must sign the District's Parents' Bill of Rights for Data Privacy and Security. If the Vendor has access to any student or staff Personally Identifiable Information (PII) (e.g., through a mass emailing system), they must provide a detailed Data Security and Privacy Plan.
- **Non-Collusive Bidding Certification:** Pursuant to General Municipal Law §103-d, the Vendor must submit a notarized statement certifying that the proposal was developed independently and without collusion.
- **Sexual Harassment Prevention Certification:** Pursuant to State Finance Law §139-l, the Vendor must certify that they have implemented a written policy addressing sexual harassment prevention and provide annual training to their employees.
- **Iran Divestment Act:** Certification that the Vendor is not on the NYS Office of General Services (OGS) list of entities engaged in investment activities in Iran.
- **Insurance Requirements:** * Commercial General Liability: \$1,000,000 per occurrence / \$2,000,000 aggregate.
 - Professional Liability (Errors & Omissions): \$1,000,000 per claim.
 - Workers' Compensation & NYS Disability: Statutory limits (Forms C-105.2 and DB-120.1).
 - *Elmsford UFSD must be named as an Additional Insured.*

SECTION 4: PROPOSAL FORMAT & REQUIRED TABS

Proposals must be bound or submitted in a single digital PDF, indexed with the following tabs:

1. **Tab A: Executive Summary & Letter of Intent.** Signed by an officer authorized to bind the firm.
2. **Tab B: Firm Qualifications & K-12 Experience.** Specifically highlight experience with successfully representing public or private schools / districts, experience with New York State school districts is preferred but not required, demographic diversity, and bilingual communications.
3. **Tab C: Key Personnel.** Resumes of the specific Account Executive and back-up coverage personnel assigned to EUFSD.

4. **Tab D: Work Samples / Portfolio.** * One (1) NYS public school budget newsletter or comparable communication.
 - One (1) example of a crisis communication statement.
 - One (1) feature story/press release.
5. **Tab E: Client References.** Three (3) current or recent public or private school references, not-for-profit, municipal or higher education may be substituted for one (1) of the required references, including names, titles, and phone numbers.
6. **Tab F: Cost Proposal.** (See Appendix A format).
7. **Tab G: Executed Legal Affidavits.** (Non-Collusive, Ed Law 2-d, etc.).
8. **Proposals may be submitted to the above address to be delivered to:**
 - Todd Currie
Assistant Superintendent of Finance
tcurrie@eufsd.org

SECTION 5: EVALUATION CRITERIA

The District reserves the right to interview the top-scoring firms before making a final award. Proposals will be evaluated by a selection committee based on the following weighted criteria:

Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Points
K-12 Educational PR Experience	30
Quality, Creativity & Relevance of Portfolio Samples	25
Cost Proposal & Overall Value to the District	20
Qualifications of Assigned Account Team	15
References from Comparable Organizations	10

Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Points
TOTAL	100 Points

APPENDIX A: COST PROPOSAL FORM

Vendors must complete this exact table to allow for an apples-to-apples comparison of costs.

Service Category	Proposed Fee	Fee Type (Monthly/Hourly)
Base Monthly Retainer (Includes account management, attendance at monthly Board meetings, 24/7 crisis communications, routine media, monthly newsletter, social media, & regular copywriting)	\$	Per Month
Annual Budget Newsletter Creation (Writing, editing, and design. <i>Excludes printing/postage</i>)	\$	Flat Fee (Annual)
Crisis Communications / Emergency Response (Outside of standard business hours)	\$	Per Hour
Graphic Design Services (For special projects outside the retainer scope)	\$	Per Hour

Service Category	Proposed Fee	Fee Type (Monthly/Hourly)
Videography / Video Editing Services (For special projects outside the retainer scope)	\$	Per Hour

Authorized Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name & Title: _____