REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

STRATEGIC PLANNING FACILITATOR

Community Consolidated School District 181
Hinsdale, Illinois

RFP Issue Date: September 24, 2026
Submission Deadline: November 4, 2026 at 10:00 AM CST

Dr. Jim Wipke, Superintendent
jwipke@d181.org

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1. Request for Proposal

The Board of Education for Community Consolidated School District 181 ("District 181" or the "School District") is formally requesting proposals from qualified firms to facilitate and lead the School District's comprehensive strategic plan. Proposals must be received no later than **Wednesday, November 4, 2026, 10:00 AM CST**, at which time the proposal will be publicly opened. Documents may be obtained from the District website at www.d181.org.

2. Schedule

The following schedule outlines the key activities and deadlines for this RFP. The School District reserves the right to modify any part of this schedule.

RFP Activity	Proposed Date / Deadline
Public Notice Published in Newspaper & District Website:	**Thursday, September 24, 2026**
Request for Proposal is Published:	**Thursday, September 24, 2026**
Vendor Deadline for Written Request(s) for Clarification/Question(s):	**Wednesday, October 14, 2026, by 4:00 PM CST**
District Deadline to Respond to Written Request(s) for Clarification/Question(s):	**Wednesday, October 21, 2026**
Deadline for the Submission of Proposals:	**Wednesday, November 4, 2026, at 10:00 AM CST**
Proposal Opening:	**Wednesday, November 4, 2026, at 10:00 AM CST**
Vendor Interviews (if applicable):	**Tuesday, November 17 – Thursday, November 19, 2026**
Board of Education Meeting: Board Action Awarding Contract:	**Monday, December 14, 2026**

3. Description of the Organization

Community Consolidated School District 181 is an Illinois Elementary Public School District that serves early childhood through middle school-aged students from the communities of Hinsdale, Clarendon Hills, as well as portions of Burr Ridge, Oak Brook, and Willowbrook. The School District's enrollment is approximately 3,560 students across seven elementary schools and two middle schools.

The School District encompasses approximately 7.1 square miles of DuPage and Cook Counties and is located 20 miles southwest of Chicago. The School District maintains a workforce of approximately 570 full-time employees. Staffing consists of contracted administrative and exempt personnel, as well as employee groups covered by two collective bargaining agreements. The Hinsdale-Clarendon Hills Teacher's Association (HCHTA) serves as the bargaining unit for teachers and certified specialists, while the Hinsdale Education Support Staff (HESS) represents the majority of non-classified personnel, such as paraprofessionals and facilities support staff.

District 181's Annual Budget for FY26-27 consists of $97.6 million in total expenditures. A copy of the District budget is available on the District 181 web page. Firms interested in submitting a response are encouraged to visit the District 181 web page at https://www.d181.org/ to acquire more information and become familiar with the School District.

4. General Terms, Conditions, and Instructions

All costs associated with developing and submitting a response to this RFP or to provide oral or written clarification of its content shall be borne by the Vendor. The School District assumes no responsibility for these costs. This RFP does not commit the School District to pay any costs incurred in preparation or submittal of a response or in anticipation of a contract. This RFP does not commit the School District to enter into a contract.

The School District reserves the right to award one, more than one, or no contract(s) in response to this RFP. The School District reserves the right to waive informalities and irregularities in the submittals received. The School District may, notwithstanding the terms herein, negotiate the terms of any response to this RFP. The School District shall not be bound to accept the lowest priced proposal, but may accept such proposal, if any, as the Board of Education determines to be in the best interests of the School District. The School District also reserves the right to terminate this RFP at any time prior to the award of a contract for the services described in this RFP, and reissue a subsequent solicitation, and/or remedy technical errors in the RFP process.

It is the Vendor's responsibility to inform the School District of their intent to submit a proposal to receive updates before the submission deadline. This notice should be emailed to **Dr. Jim Wipke at jwipke@d181.org**.

No proposal shall be withdrawn for a period of sixty (60) days after the submission deadline without the consent of the School District.

Compliance with Federal, State and Local Law and Board of Education Policies:

The Vendor will comply with all federal, state and local laws, rules, ordinances and regulations, apply for, and obtain any required licenses and permits. The Vendor, including its employees and agents, shall be responsible for knowing the School District Board policies and administrative regulations concerning appropriate behavior of persons in schools and its facilities, including, for example, the prohibitions against sexual harassment and smoking, and shall comply with all such policies and regulations.

The School District shall use its best efforts, as reasonably requested by the Vendor, to assist the Vendor in complying with any applicable federal, state or local laws, rules and regulations.

Written Requests for Clarification/Questions:

Questions or clarifications must be submitted in writing via email to **Dr. Jim Wipke (jwipke@d181.org)** by the deadline of **Wednesday, October 14, 2026, by 4:00 PM CST**. If a written response is provided, the question and the response will be provided to all prospective responders who have informed the School District of their intent to bid and who have supplied the School District with an email address. Updates will also be posted to the School District's website on the Business & Operations page on the School District website at www.d181.org.

Proposal Submission:

All proposals shall be submitted with each space properly completed as required. Vendors will be held strictly to the proposals as submitted. Should a Vendor find any discrepancies in or omissions from any of the documents, or be in doubt as to their meanings, they shall advise the School District, which will issue the necessary clarification to all prospective Vendors by means of addenda.

The School District cannot be held responsible for failures or delays in delivery. If the proposal is not received by the specified date and time, it may be excluded. One (1) unbound marked "original" and five (5) bound copies of the proposal, including all required forms and supporting documentation must be addressed and mailed or delivered to the address listed below, which is the address to be used for all communication in connection with this project: :

Community Consolidated School District 181
Attn: Dr. Jim Wipke, Superintendent
133 E. Ogden Ave
Hinsdale, IL 60521

Proposal Opening:

Vendors are welcome to attend the proposal opening. Kindly inform **Dr. Jim Wipke (jwipke@d181.org)** of your desire to attend. Following the opening and recording of mailed proposals, a tabulation of the proposals will be prepared and can be emailed to each responder and others requesting a copy of the

tabulation.

Proposals are the Property of the School District: All proposals and supporting documentation submitted shall be the property of the School District. All supporting proposal documents shall be held strictly confidential and shall be reviewed and evaluated solely by School District employees until a contract is awarded. Such documents shall not be released for distribution under the Freedom of Information Act until such time as the Contract has been awarded.

Right to Reject Any or All Proposals:

The Board reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, in whole or in part. The Board of Education reserves the right to waive any and all irregularities and formalities with respect to proposals. All decisions of the Board shall be considered final. The Board reserves the right to reject a proposal from a Vendor who, in the Board's opinion, does not exhibit experience equal to the size and scope or who does not submit the proposal per the requirements.

Investigation of Vendors: The District will make such investigation as is necessary to determine the ability of the Vendor to fulfill the RFP requirements. The Board of Education reserves the right to reject any proposal if the determines to be in the best interests of the School District.

Insurance Requirements:

A Certificate of Insurance shall be provided to the School District within 30 days of awarding the Contract, but no later than the beginning of the Contract. The Certificate of Insurance must state the name of the insurance company, policy number and date of policy expiration for the types and limits of insurance. Said certificate of insurance shall, also, include the following coverages and provisions:

- Comprehensive general liability and property damage insurance, insuring against all liability of Contractor related to this Agreement, with a minimum combined single limit of One Million Dollars ($1,000,000.00) per occurrence and Two Million Dollars ($2,000,000.00) general aggregate.
- Professional Liability Insurance with limits in the per claim amount of not less than One Million Dollars ($2,000,000.00) and the annual aggregate of not less than Two Million Dollars ($2,000,000.00).
- Automobile liability Insurance with a combined single limit of $1,000,000.00.
- Workers' Compensation: Per Statute.
- Employer's Liability: $1,000,000.00 each accident-injury; $1,000,000.00 each employee-disease; $1,000,000.00 disease-policy.
- Such insurance shall evidence that coverage applies to the State of Illinois and provide a waiver of subrogation in favor of the School District.
- Umbrella liability insurance with a minimum combined single limit of Two Million Dollars ($2,000,000.00) per occurrence and Two Million Dollars ($2,000,000.00) general aggregate.
- Cyber Liability insurance with a minimum limit of One Million Dollars ($1,000,000.00) per claim and One Million Dollars ($1,000,000.00) general aggregate.

- Community Consolidated School District 181 shall be named as an “additional insured.” “The vendor’s insurance shall be primary, and the certificate holder's insurance shall be noncontributory.”

The insurance shall include sexual abuse and molestation coverage. All insurers shall be licensed by the State of Illinois and rated A+-VII or better by A.M. Best or comparable rating service. The comprehensive general liability and property damage insurance policy shall name School District, its Board, Board members, employees, agents, and successors as an additional insured on a primary noncontributory basis with a waiver of subrogation in favor of the School District. The failure to provide acceptable insurance shall be deemed a breach of the contract entitling School District to terminate the contract immediately. Umbrella policy provides follow form coverage to underlying General Liability and Automotive Liability coverages. All policies of insurance shall provide by endorsement that no coverage may be canceled, terminated, or reduced by the insuring company without the insuring company having first given at least 30 days prior written notice to School District by certified mail, return receipt requested. The insurance provisions shall remain open for review and may be changed at any time by the School District.

Child Sex Offender and Murderer Community Notification Act:

Vendors are prohibited from bringing to any school building or school property any employee or agent who is a child sex offender or murderer as defined in the child sex offender and murderer community notification law. At least quarterly, the Vendor shall contact the local law enforcement authority where each employee or agent resides to determine if the employee is on the list of registered felons who have committed child sex offenses or murder. The contractor shall also provide the School District with the name and address of each employee who will perform work on school property and require that the employee submit to a criminal history background investigation. Any person hired by the School District, as well as any person who is an employee of a person or firm holding a contract with the School District and who works in a school building or on school property, shall submit to a criminal history background investigation according to state law and district Policy 5:30, hiring process and criteria.

Hold Harmless and Indemnification:

The Vendor shall assume all liability for, and shall protect, defend, indemnify and hold harmless, the District, its Board of Education and its members individually, their officers, employees, servants and agents, from and against all claims, actions suits, judgments, costs, losses, expenses and liabilities of whatsoever kind or nature including reasonable legal fees incurred by owner arising out of any infringement (actual or claimed) of any patents, copyrights or trade names by reason of any work performed or to be performed by the Vendor under this contract or by reason of anything to be supplied by the contractor pursuant to the Contract. The successful Vendor shall similarly protect, indemnify and hold and save harmless the District, its Board of Education, officers, employees, agents and volunteers against and from any and all claims, causes of action, costs and expenses, including but not limited to reasonable legal fees incurred by reason of such Vendor’s breach of any of its obligations under, or in default of, any provision of the Contract entered into by Vendor with the School District for such services.

Other: All Vendors are prohibited from making any contact with the District Personnel, Board of Education, Superintendent or any other administrator or employee of the District with regard to the RFP, other than in the manner and to the person(s) designated herein. Any Vendor found to have contacted the people listed above in any manner with regard to the RFP may be disqualified from consideration.

Contract

The successful Vendor awarded this project shall enter into an agreement with the School District based on such other terms and conditions as approved by the School District. This RFP, the Vendor's proposal, the negotiated agreement, and any other documents specified by the School District shall form the Contract Documents.

Request Additional Information

The School District reserves the right to request any further additional documentation that it deems necessary for the review and award process.

5. Scope of Services

The School District 181 is formally requesting proposals for a facilitator to guide and lead the Board, Superintendent, administration, staff, and community through a collaborative planning process. Vendors should address how they will execute the following key phases:

Phase I: Planning & Data Discovery
Phase II: Stakeholder Engagement & Surveys
Phase III: Core Strategy Sessions
Phase IV: Final Plan & Implementation Dashboard
Phase V: Board Presentation & Adoption

The strategic planning process is expected to start in **August, 2027** with a final Board of Education adoption by **April, 2028**.

6. Evaluation of Proposals

Initial Review: All proposals received by the deadline will be reviewed for responsiveness and compliance with RFP requirements.

Shortlisting & Interviews: Top-scoring firms based on written proposals may be invited to participate in an interview and presentation with the School District committee.

Final Selection: The School District will evaluate combined written proposal scores, interview performance, and reference checks to select the firm offering the best overall value to the School

District. Proposals will be evaluated on a 30-point matrix by a School District committee based on the following evaluation criteria:

Evaluation Criteria / Focus Area	Max Points
Firm Qualifications & K-12 Experience Demonstrated experience facilitating strategic planning specifically for public school districts; qualifications and direct experience of the designated lead facilitator(s); track record of successful outcomes in similar K-12 environments.	**5**
Stakeholder Engagement Approach Quality, breadth, and inclusivity of the proposed engagement strategy; techniques for reaching hard-to-reach populations; ability to build consensus across diverse community and district stakeholder groups.	**5**
Methodology & Customization Clarity, rigor, and flexibility of the strategic planning process; ability to tailor the framework to the District's unique size, goals, and community dynamics; realistic timeline and project management approach.	**5**
Actionability & Implementation Support Quality of deliverables; emphasis on clear metrics, KPIs, and tracking frameworks; practical handoff plan ensuring internal leadership is equipped to execute and monitor the plan long-term.	**5**
Cost Proposal & Overall Value Total cost of services, clarity and transparency of fee structure, and overall value provided relative to the scope of work and deliverables.	**5**
Interview Performance & References (Shortlisted Only) Refinement of methodology during interviews, direct response to committee questions, and performance reviews from school district references.	**5**
Total Available Points	**30**

7. Submission Requirements

Proposals must be submitted in the following order:

1. **Executive Summary**
    a. Name, Address, Contact Person, Phone, Email & Web Address;
    b. General Background;
    c. Service Offerings; and

d. Evidence of Insurance coverage in accordance with Section 4 of this RFP.

2. Qualifications & Experience

a. State experience in completing comprehensive strategic plans.

b. Provide examples of projects completed by firm.

c. Description of creative samples used in development of comprehensive strategic plans.

d. Description in scope and size of completed projects with other school districts.

3. Proposed Methodology & Timeline

a. Description of the approach your firm would use to meet the expectations of the comprehensive Strategic Plan and what the desired outcomes of the approach. Describe typical sequence of work, milestones, key dates and number of meetings.
b. Include examples of tools, approaches, systems, and controls that your firm would use to complete the comprehensive Strategic Plan.
c. Describe communication methods that your firm will use to ensure project timelines, milestones and overall expectations are met.
d. Provide a brief description or list of current projects and associated workload of your firm.
e. Explain what you feel distinguishes your firm from others in the field and what makes your firm a good candidate to work with the School District.

4. Cost Proposal & Pricing Structure

5. Standard Certifications (Completed and signed)

6. Vendor Designation Form (Completed and signed)

7. References (Minimum of 5 K-12 school districts of similar size)

8. Notice of Freedom of Information Act

After award of the agreement, all responses, documents, and materials submitted by respondents pertaining to this RFP will be considered public information, subject to inspection.

By submitting a proposal or otherwise responding in any way to this RFP, each Vendor acknowledges the following:

a. The School District is subject to the Freedom of Information Act, 5 ILCS 140/1, et seq. ("FOIA"), and any and all information submitted by the respondent to the District is subject to disclosure to third parties in accordance with FOIA.

b. If a Vendor intends for the School District to withhold the respondent's trade secrets, commercial information, or financial information from disclosure to a third party in response to a FOIA request, the respondent must include with its proposal submittal a written notification specifically identifying such information, along with a statement that disclosure of such information will cause competitive harm to the respondent, as provided by FOIA Section 7(1)(g), 5 ILCS 140/7(1)(g). Any content not so marked by the respondent at the time of proposal submittal will be presumed to be open to public inspection. The respondent may be required to substantiate the basis for its claims at a later time.

c. Notwithstanding timely notice received from a respondent in accordance with Section 7(1)(g), the School District reserves the right, in its sole discretion and subject only to applicable law, to withhold or release the subject information in response to a FOIA request.

Name of Firm: _____

Address: _____

Authorized Signature: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

9. Vendor Designation

In order to comply with the Illinois School Code [105 ILCS 5/10-20.44], school districts are required to disclose vendors with whom we have entered a contract or purchased goods in the amount equal to or greater than $25,000.00.

In addition, school districts are required to specify which of the vendors are owned by a person with disabilities, female, minority, and/or locally owned. Please indicate any of the following that apply to your business:

- [ ] Owned by a Person with Disabilities
- [ ] Female Owned
- [ ] Minority Owned
- [ ] Locally Owned (within School District boundaries)
- [ ] None of the Above

Company Name: _____

Name of Firm: _____

Address: _____

Authorized Signature: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

10. Reference Listing

List at least five (5) school districts of similar size and population that have worked with the company.

1. School District: _____
   Address: _____
   City/State/Zip: _____
   Name of Representative to contact: _____
   Phone: _____ Email: _____

2. School District: _____
   Address: _____
   City/State/Zip: _____
   Name of Representative to contact: _____
   Phone: _____ Email: _____

3. School District: _____
   Address: _____
   City/State/Zip: _____
   Name of Representative to contact: _____
   Phone: _____ Email: _____

4. School District: _____
   Address: _____
   City/State/Zip: _____
   Name of Representative to contact: _____
   Phone: _____ Email: _____

5. School District: _____
   Address: _____
   City/State/Zip: _____
   Name of Representative to contact: _____
   Phone: _____ Email: _____