

**Department of Materials Management
Procurement Unit
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
45 W. Gude Drive, Suite 3100
Rockville, Maryland 20850**

June 20, 2019

NOTICE TO BIDDERS

**The following are questions and responses regarding
RFP No. 1063.6, Speech & Language Services for Students with Disabilities**

Question 1: What is the duration of the contract?

Answer: The original contract term will be for one year, but cannot begin until one day after Board approval. The contract allows for up to three addition terms of one year each. See section 4.0 Contract Term in the RFP.

Question 2: How will vendors be notified of award?

Answer: Vendors are notified of award through an official letter that is sent by email and U.S. mail to the contact person listed in the proposal.

Question 3: Who are the current vendors providing Services & their hourly rates?

Answer: The current vendors are: EBS Healthcare Inc; National Speech Language Therapy Center; Progressus Therapy LLC; Speech Rehab Services LLC; Staffing Operations & Solutions LLC.

Hourly rates are confidential and cannot be disclosed. However, last year the Board awarded \$500,000 spend authority for the contract.

Question 4: Can we submit rates for CF and bilingual SLP?

Answer: No

Question 5: Will you take CF's?

Answer: SLPs must be fully licensed by the state of Maryland. Any exceptions must be reviewed in advance and approved in writing by the supervisor of Speech and Language Services.

Question 6: What is the anticipated number of FTE this contract seeks to fulfill?

Answer: There is no specific number of FTEs to be fulfilled. We typically hire a minimum of five contractors each calendar year. Some of the contractors have been full-time and some have been part-time. We use contractors primarily for child care leaves and we usually have approximately 15 child care leaves each year.

Question 7: Do you require that therapist resumes and/or licenses be submitted with the proposal?

Answer: Submission of SLP resumes is not required. However, submissions of resumes of possible staff to be assigned to the contract are preferred. Licenses do not need to be submitted with the proposal.

Question 8: How many hours are in a typical school day (i.e. How many hours are therapists allowed to be on-site and billing?)

Answer: The workday will consist of 7 hours. Please see section 3.6.3, Workday.

Question 9: How many work days are they assigned for the school year?

Answer: The number of work days will depend on the length of the assignment/vacancy and whether the assignment is full time or part time.

Question 10: What is the average caseload by discipline in your District?

Answer: The average caseload is approximately 45 students at the preschool level, 55 students at the elementary level, and 65 students at the secondary level for full-time assignments.

Question 11: Do you anticipate awarding to one or multiple vendors? If Multiple, how many?

Answer: Historically we have awarded to multiple vendors, based on their qualifications. A certain number is unknown.

Question 12: Will assigned therapists have access to therapy materials, supplies, equipment, evaluation kits, and protocols provided by the schools?

Answer: Yes

Question 13: Will assigned therapist have access to computers/ laptops and printers provided by your schools?

Answer: Yes

Question 14: Is the contracting agency able to bill for both direct and indirect treatment time (paperwork, meeting, teacher consultation, etc.)?

Answer: Yes

Question 15: Are you looking for information on our management staff that will supervise this project or information on specific SLPs expected to work on this project?

Answer: Yes, we are looking for information on both.

Question 16: Do you require vendors to guarantee the provision of therapy services or is it understood that we will begin recruiting on a best effort basis?

Answer: Best effort basis

Question 17: Does your historical use of contract therapists indicate that they typically remain employed throughout the school year? Or that they are replaced during the school year if the district is able to locate a direct hire?

Answer: We typically have a sequence of assignments for the contractor such that they are employed throughout the school year. If the district is able to locate a direct hire, the contractor is replaced but usually moves to another vacancy.

Question 18: Are we required to submit redacted copies?

Answer: It is preferred that a redacted copy of the submission be provided as MCPS often received Freedom Of Information Act (FOIA) requests which could require us to share your submission with the public.

Question 19: Is there a preference for binding the bids? (Binder, tabs, staple, binder clips, etc.)

Answer: It is preferred that submissions be in binders with tab clearly labeling each section. Please see section 9.0 Mandatory Submission.

Question 20: Can we submit our electronic copy as a PDF?

Answer: Yes

Question 21: How many vendors do you anticipate selecting to cover the needs in this bid?

Answer: See Question 11.

Question 22: Who is currently providing services requested in the bid?

Answer: See Question 3.

Question 23: What are the rates currently paid for the services in the bid?

Answer: See Question 3.

Question 24: Who is your current Speech Therapy Contractor?

Answer: See Question 3.

Question 25: How many students are in Speech Therapy in the District?

Answer: Approximately 9,500 students

Question 26: Are your current SLP's District Employees or Contractors?

Answer: District employees

Question 27: How many service hours do Speech Therapy students average per week?

Answer: The average is 1 hour of service per week

Question 28: How many school operation days annually?

Answer: The school calendar for students is 180 days plus eight professional days (FY 19).

Question 29: Will the District consider Individualized SLP Driven Digital Speech Therapy?

Answer: No

Question 30: What is the current hourly rate you are paying for Speech Therapy Contracted Services? Does the current rate include admin, travel, holiday pay, etc. or is that billed separately? If billed separately approximately how many hours were billed non-speech therapy services expenses?

Answer: See Question 3 and 14.

Question 31: Do Speech Therapy students participate in ESY?

Answer: Yes

Question 32: Do you allow the usage of SLPA under SLP supervision?

Answer: No

Question 33: How many total days per year do contract staff work (including planning days)?

Answer: It varies depending on the assignment. A full-time assignment for the entire year would be 188 days.

Question 34: Who are your incumbent vendors and their current rates?

Answer: See Question 3.

Question 35: Do you have an anticipated need for the coming school year?

Answer: Yes

Question 36: Will you accept CF's and/ or SLPA's?

Answer: See Question 5 and 32.

Question 37: Are you open to tele-therapy?

Answer: No

Question 38: While all therapists will be licenses and located in Maryland, is it your preference for the vendor to have an office in the State of Maryland?

Answer: No preference.

Question 39: Since on an as needed, what would be the average weekly hours of service to assist in our cost proposal for SLP? For Example: Full-Time 35 hours per week (7 hours/day) up to 36 weeks (180 days) billable.

Answer: The example given would be an appropriate estimate for a full-time assignment.

Question 40: How many SLPs do you currently foresee needing?

Answer: We hire a minimum of five contractors each calendar year. Some of the contractors have been full-time and some have been part-time. We use contractors primarily for child care leaves and we typically have approximately 15 child care leaves each year.

Question 41: Would you consider certified therapy assistance such as SLPA or CFY?

Answer: See Question 5 and 32.

Question 42: Would MCPS consider online tele-therapy for speech therapy services?

Answer: See Question 37.

Question 43: What are the titles of sections required for the tabs within the binders based on the instructions on page 6, under "Complete Response must include"?

Answer: The response should be in the same format as the RFP is structured. The labeling of the tabs can be by RFP section/ sections, attachments, required documents, etc.

Question 44: Would the district consider the electronic copy via a PDF format instead of a MS word format?

Answer: See Question 20.

Question 45: Since the proposal response should be submitted in separate sealed envelopes, is it acceptable for the vendor to submit the separate sealed envelopes in the same package OR do you prefer the separate submittals not packaged together?

Answer: The original, redacted, and request copies can all be placed in the same package.

Question 46: To confirm, are resumes required at the time of proposal submission OR only upon award?

Answer: See Question 7.

Question 47: Do you require vendors guarantee the provision of therapy services OR is it understood that vendors will begin recruiting on a best effort basis upon contract award?

Answer: See Question 16.

Question 48: Can the vendor incur in any penalties or be liable for any damages for not having a contracted provider available upon your school's request in a timely manner OR would your school terminate the RFP contract with the vendor?

Answer: If an agency is unable to provide services at the time a request is made, MCPS reserves the right to utilize another vendor.

Question 49: Will your school provide laptop/computers and/or an email account to the contracted providers during their assignment?

Answer: See Question 13.

Question 50: Who will be the representative from MCPS to determine which materials/equipment are required for the therapy services?

Answer: Per RFP Section 3.7, MCPS Project Contact; Ms. Pamela DeFosse, Supervisor, Speech and Language Services will be the main point of contact for the contract and determining what materials/ equipment are acceptable for services.

Question 51: Will therapist have access to internet capabilities, computer/laptops/iPads, office supplies, fax/copy machine at MCPS?

Answer: See Question 13.

Question 52: Can you provide the current incumbent vendor(s) names and fee rated providing SLP services? Has the current vendor(s) been able to satisfy your needs?

Answer: See Question3.

Question 53: Will MCPS consider an all-inclusive hourly rate range depending on the candidates' level of experience OR does the district only want a fixed flat hourly rate for services?

Answer: Fixed flat hourly rate

Question 54: What is the annual expenditure available or projected for this RFP contract?

Answer: See Question 3.

Question 55: Does MCPS wish to utilize a price proposal document for pricing or want a specific format?

Answer: MCPS does not have a pricing document, however, pricing should be a fixed flat hourly rate.

Question 56: In section 9.0 “Mandatory Submission” MCPS states that a complete proposal must provide copies of licenses for the speech pathologists that they wish to utilize. If a contractor does not have a specified list of Speech Pathologist’s that have agreed to work on the contract if awarded by would be actively recruit if awarded, would MCPS encourage the contractor to place a bid?

Answer: Yes.

Question 57: Do you require that the Minority Business Enterprise is certified? It does not specifically state “certified.” We are currently in the process of applying but haven’t received certification yet.

Answer: Minority Business Enterprise information is for statistical purposes only and the company is not required to provide proof of certification.

Question 58: How many students with MCPs receive special education services?

Answer: Approximately 16,800 students

Question 59: Of those students, how many students receive Speech Therapy?

Answer: Approximately 9,500 students

Question 60: Who are the incumbent contracting agencies servicing this contract?

Answer: See Question 3.

Question 61: How many SLPs do each incumbent vendor staff with MCPS?

Answer: In FY 19:

National Therapy – 8 part-time over the course of the year
Staffing Options and Solutions – 1 part-time for part of the year
Speech Rehab – 1 full-time for part of the year
EBS – none in FY 19
Progressus – none in FY 19

Question 62: What are their current fees for Speech?

Answer: See Question 3.

Question 63: Will MCPS take Clinical Fellows?

Answer: See Question 5.

Question 64: Is the SLP required to hold ASHA Certification?

Answer: The ASHA certification is not required, but a full license by the state of Maryland is required.

Question 65: How many agency therapists do you anticipate hiring for the 2019-2020 school year?

Answer: See Question 40.

Question 66: How many SLPs do you anticipate hiring for the 2019-2020 school year?

Answer: See Question 40.

Question 67: Does MCPS provide laptops or computers for therapists to utilize throughout the school year?

Answer: See Question 13.

Question 68: Will MCPS entertain quotes for telespeech services?

Answer: See Question 37.

Question 69: Will ESY services be requested?

Answer: Contractors are not typically used to provide ESY services.

Question 70: Does MCPS provide therapy materials and evaluations for therapists to utilize?

Answer: See Question 12.

Question 71: Will therapy services be provided to the public schools only? Or may a therapist also be assigned to HCPS Private Schools for service delivery?

Answer: It is not likely, but it is possible that an SLP will be assigned to a private school in Montgomery County.

Question 72: What is a typical caseload for an SLP?

Answer: See Question 10.

Question 73: Does MCPS provide a preferred template for invoicing?

Answer: No

Question 74: Are criminal background checks processed through MCPS or is the contracting company responsible for completing the background checks and providing a 365-day form to MCPS?

Answer: Once a contractor is considered for award information will be sent regarding the background check process. The contractor is responsible for having the employees fingerprinted. If employees have been fingerprinted within the last year, it is possible to submit the 365-day form.

Question 75: Approximately how many schools does each SLP service?

Answer: Typically two schools, but can vary.

Question 76: How many full-time and how many part-time therapists in MCPS looking for?

Answer: The equivalent of approximately five full-time SLPs will be needed for coverage each year.

Question 77: Is travel time between school sites included as part of the therapists day and working hours?

Answer: Yes

Question 78: Can vendors use online timekeeping systems, and if so, will MCPs supervisors be willing to sign-off on time records online?

Answer: MCPS supervisors will not sign off on time records online.

Question 79: How many work days per school year?

Answer: See Question 9.

Question 80: Will therapists work at one school or multiple schools per week?

Answer: See Question 75.

Question 81: Can you provide the hyperlink for the Maryland On-Line IEP training that is required to be completed prior to the start of therapy services?

Answer: This will be provided to agencies that are selected for the contract.

Question 82: Is there a mandatory number of students that an SLP should see for direct therapy each day?

Answer: This varies depending on the total number of students on the caseload and how many students are scheduled for service on a particular day.

Question 83: Is an SLP compensated for IEP meeting prep and documentation?

Answer: See Question 14.

Question 84: How many professional days are scheduled per year?

Answer: There were eight professional days on the FY 19 calendar.

Question 85: Does an SLP have to log "other" activities on their timesheet in addition to direct service? (e.g., documentation, meetings, evaluations)

Answer: Evaluations and meetings should be documented on the timesheet.

Question 86: Are sample resumes sufficient or must a vendor provide resumes of actual staff they are looking to present to MCPS upon award?

Answer: Sample resumes are sufficient, but it is also helpful to see actual staff resumes when available.

Question 87: What serves as sufficient documentation to prove a permanent place of business?

Answer: Proof of a permanent place of business can be a company's W9, or license to do business.

Question 88: Section 9.0 Mandatory submission

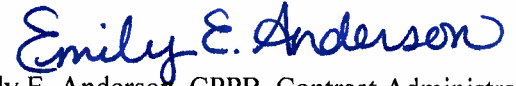
A: Please clarify how RFP is to be submitted. Bid page says one original and three separate copies of the proposal; however, Section 9.0 states one original, one electronic, and redacted response.

B: Page 6, as we do not yet know MCPS' need for SLPs, how are we to provide resumes and licenses for staff? Are you seeking a sample of qualified staff? Or, is this a requirement after receiving the contract?

Answer: Part A. We are looking for the following hard copies: 1 Original, 1 Redacted, and 3 copies of your submission. In addition, we request an electronic copy of your original and redacted submissions. These can simply be PDF of your hard copy documents.

Question 89: Section 21.0 Contract- Do you mean SLPs and not “private duty nurses”?

Answer: Yes.



Emily E. Anderson, CPPB, Contract Administrator
Procurement Unit

EA

Please indicate your receipt of this notice my signing below and returning with your proposal or under a separate cover.

Accepted By: _____
(Name & Title)

Name of Company: _____

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