

## **DETERMINATION AND FINDING FOR A SOURCE PROCUREMENT**

**AGENCY:** District of Columbia Public Schools  
Office of Teaching & Learning  
**CAPTION:** High Functioning Autism Professional Development  
**PROPOSED CONTRACTOR:** Ivymount at the Stevens School, Inc.  
**CONTRACT NO.** GAGA-2015-C-0053

### **FINDINGS**

#### **AUTHORIZATION:**

D.C. Code 2-354.04 and 27 DCMR, Section 1304 and 1702

#### **MINIMUM NEED:**

The District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) Office of Teaching & Learning (OTL), which now includes part of the office formerly known as the Office of Specialized Instruction (OSI), requires a contractor to provide school and central office based DCPS staff members with job-imbedded professional development, technical assistance, and specialized training on how to successfully implement special education services for students with high functioning autism (HFA). Required areas of focus include the following:

- Design and management of public school learning environments for students with HFA
- Implementation of the Unstuck and On Target social skills curriculums for students with HFA
- Implementation of social learning curriculum for students with HFA
- Effective utilization of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) strategies and supports with students with HFA

#### **ESTIMATED COST:**

The estimated cost is \$310,000.00.

#### **FACTS WHICH JUSTIFY A SOLE SOURCE PROCUREMENT:**

##### **Background and History:**

Beginning in 2006, DCPS was put under a consent decree as a result of Blackman Jones, a consolidation of two class action lawsuits related to special education. One of the primary concerns of the Court throughout the course of the lawsuit was ensuring that students with disabilities have access to supports and services in a timely manner. The Blackman Jones Consent Decree authorized the waiver of the District of Columbia procurement laws to support the need for flexibility for DCPS to be able to procure services and materials for students with disabilities in a rapid manner. Upon assessment of our students who were identified with HFA and assessment in the market place, it was determined that DCPS should enter into a service relationship with Ivymount School for School Year 2013-2014 which became part of the genesis of Ivymount at Stevens School. Given the special nature of the equipment or services needed to support our students with disabilities, Ivymount was the only vendor with capacity and expertise to provide those services or materials to support students with HFA.

The Office of Teaching & Learning (OTL) seeking a contractor to provide professional development and training to identified teachers, paraeducators, and central office staff supporting one self-contained special education classroom for an estimated eight students with High Functioning Autism. The contractor shall assist the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) in building internal capacity to best meet the needs of these students through embedded coaching and targeted professional development opportunities. DCPS deemed it necessary to implement the Unstuck and on Target an executive function curriculum to improve flexibility (social skills) for children with autism spectrum disorders research as developed by: Lynn Cannon, M.Ed. (The Ivymount School, Rockville, Maryland), Lauren Kenworthy, Ph.D. (Children's National Medical Center, Washington, D.C.), Katie C. Alexander, M.S., OTR (The Ivymount School, Rockville, Maryland),

Monica Adler Werner, M.A. (The Ivymount School, Rockville, Maryland), and Laura Anthony, Ph.D. (Children's National Medical Center, Washington, D.C.).

**The Proposed Vendor's Unique Qualifications:**

- Expertise and extensive experience implementing school programs to support the unique needs of students with HFA.
- Expertise and extensive experience implementing the Unstuck and On Target social skill curriculums.
- Experience providing professional development to special education teachers and school staff who provide instruction to students with HFA.
- Ivymount Corporation staff created both curriculums curriculum for teaching social emotional learning for students with deficits in social skills, executive functioning and pragmatic language deficits called Unstuck and on Target. This curriculum offers a framework for teaching student social and emotional learning skills which are essential to both social and academic growth. Many programs across the country use Unstuck and On Target to frame their instruction for students with High Functioning Autism.
- Since 2006 the Ivymount School has operated a special education program for students with HFA known as The Model Asperger Program.
- Since 1961 The Ivymount School has provided specialized services to students with disabilities and was named by the United States Department of Education twice as blue ribbon school of excellence for utilizing best practices in special education to support students to achieve their social, emotional, and academic potential.

**Adverse Impact:**

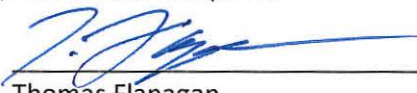
Students on the Autism spectrum require an increased level of consistency in their daily lives to be able to function at their full potential. Changing the vendor and programming in their classroom would cause a large disruption to their learning that would be difficult to gain back in a reasonable amount of time. Continuing the partnership is of the utmost importance to their success.

In light of the above it is a necessary governmental function and in DCPS best interest to continue the services with The Ivymount Corporation dba as Ivymount at the Stevens School and the Ivymount School, Inc. to prevent disruption and adverse impact on the students and staff who require services as initiated under the Blackman Jones Court Order.

**CERTIFICATION BY OFFICE OF TEACHING & LEARNING**

I hereby certify that the above findings are true, correct and complete.

8/10/15  
Date

  
Thomas Flanagan  
Deputy Chief, Inclusive Programming

**CERTIFICATION AND DETERMINATION**

Based on the above certified findings in accordance cited authority, I hereby determine that it is not feasible or practical to invoke the competitive bidding process under Section 402 or 403 of the District of Columbia Procurement Practices Reform Act of 2010 (D.C. Law 18-371; DC Code 2-354 and 27 DCMR 1304 and 1702.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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Glorious Bazemore  
Chief Procurement Officer