

**DETERMINATION AND FINDING
FOR A SOURCE PROCUREMENT**

AGENCY: District of Columbia Public Schools, School Improvements and Supports
CAPTION: *Whole School Whole Child Program (WSWC)*
PROPOSED CONTRACTOR: City Year, Inc.
CONTRACT NO. GAGA-2020-C-0033

FINDINGS

1. AUTHORIZATION:

D.C. Code 2-354.04 and 27 DCMR, Section 1304 and 1700.

2. MINIMUM NEED:

The District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS), Office of Contracts and Acquisitions (OCA) on behalf of the Office of School Improvements and Supports (OSIS) is seeking to engage and improve the quality in-school support, expand student achievement, and prevent dropouts in 18 schools by implementing the *Whole School Whole Child Program* principles by utilizing the services of the vendor City Year, Inc. ('City Year') for SY19-20. The support services of City Year would assist school personnel on site with students to engage students to reduce school dropouts. Currently, only 65 percent of DC students graduate from high school. This rate has remained stagnant over recent years, with particularly troubling outcomes for students who are more likely to drop out of high school, including male students (58%), at-risk students (52%), English learners (47%), and students with disabilities (44%). The schools targeted for the *Whole School Whole Child* program are in school feeder patterns where dropout rates are the highest in the District. We seek a vendor with deep experience and demonstrated outcomes serving DC's at-risk students.

3. ESTIMATED COST:

The cost of the entire program is \$6,257,113.00 with \$5,010,113.00 being provided from other federal and local sources.

DCPS' estimated cost is \$1,247,000.00 for the remaining portion of the school year contract through 6/30/2020.

4. FACTS WHICH JUSTIFY A SOLE SOURCE PROCUREMENT:

The District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS), Office of School Improvements and Supports (OSIS) recommends continued partnering with City Year to fully implement their *Whole School Whole Child (WSWC) Program* in select DCPS schools. This has been a continuous effort which DCPS has invested 13 years in partnership with City Year; prior to this proposed contract the most recent set of services were delivered under GAGA-2013-C-0036. City Year will focus predominately on the dropout prevention services which are in the following areas:

- Academic Support
- Attendance Support
- Behavioral Coaching
- Community Outreach & Enriching School Climate
- Before- and After-School Programming

These services, part of City Year's WSWC model, are delivered in schools by highly trained, diverse teams of young adult AmeriCorps members, who serve full-time for one academic year. City Year AmeriCorps members are trained to provide high quality support to students, teachers, and the wider school community to accelerate student learning and performance. WSWC leverages City Year's unique assets to provide a holistic portfolio of researched-based and data-informed academic and social-emotional interventions, extended learning programs, and activities that foster a school-wide climate of achievement. The following schools, which are included in the base year of this contract for receipt of City Year support services, are as follows:

Bancroft ES, Ludlow-Taylor ES, Moten ES, Stuart-Hobson MS, Hart MS, Kelly Miller MS, Kimball ES, Leckie EC, Powell ES, Turner ES, Garfield ES, Garrison ES, Johnson MS, Ketcham ES, King ES

5. **BACKGROUND AND HISTORY:**

City Year's overall purpose for working with DCPS schools has been to provide a continuum of care while establishing relationship and intervention services with students within selected feeder patterns so students who need help receive multiple, consecutive years of intervention and support. The services implemented focus predominantly on the dropout prevention challenge; which include services in areas of individual tutoring, whole group instruction support, behavior intervention support, small group strategic intervention, community outreach, enriching the school environment, and providing before- and after-school services from 7AM- 6PM.

City Year is the sole source provider of a comprehensive and holistic set of services designed to support students' social-emotional and academic development, the WSWC model. WSWC is based on research by Johns Hopkins University that shows that students at-risk of dropping out of school can be identified as early as the 6th grade using three Early Warning Indicators (EWIs): poor attendance, disruptive behavior, and course failure in English or math. Students who exhibit even a single off-track indicator as early as the 6th grade have a less than 25% chance of graduating from high school on time with their peers. WSWC addresses these indicators by placing diverse teams of AmeriCorps members in schools to support students for an entire academic year.

The WSWC model is designed around human development research that shows the important role that a consistent, productive, and caring adult relationship can play in a young person's life and school success. City Year provides full-time, near-peer age (e.g., ranging from 18-25) members or mentors through the nationally accredited AmeriCorps national service network; this is done intentionally as the closeness in age enables them to connect with and relate to the students they serve. In addition to receiving recruited peer-aged AmeriCorps members, City Year partners with 10 four-year accredited universities and colleges across the Washington DC Metropolitan Area and over 60 physical service partners to increase the quality, scope, and impact of service provided to DCPS students both in academic and behavioral/lifestyle development.

Through use of the WSWC model, DCPS students will receive:

1) **Academic Support:** City Year works in partnership with school staff and administration to increase student performance in English Language Arts (ELA) and math. AmeriCorps members use research-based instructional strategies to help students develop the skills necessary to engage in grade-level content through whole-class instructional support and one-on-one/small group tutoring. AmeriCorps members work closely with teachers and administrators to identify students who are off-track in math and ELA/literacy. Over the course of the year, AmeriCorps members

provide these students with at least 15 additional hours of targeted one-on-one or small-group intervention time during school.

2) **Attendance Support:** City Year supports regular student attendance through a mix of school-wide initiatives and individual coaching. School-wide initiatives include a daily morning greeting during which AmeriCorps members energetically welcome students to school as they enter the building or support morning school-wide initiatives. AmeriCorps members also provide targeted attendance coaching to chronically absent students, with included as well as incentive and recognition programs for improved regular attendance. Additionally, each morning, AmeriCorps members collaborate with school administration to communicate with parents/guardians the importance of good attendance and look for solutions to issues that keep kids out of schools.

3) **Behavior Coaching:** City Year’s behavior initiatives include school-wide programs to encourage positive behavior and small-group or one-on-one behavioral interventions. AmeriCorps members support students whose behaviors reflect a growing disengagement from school, their teachers, and their schoolmates. Through weekly small-group coaching sessions and SEL progress monitoring using the DESSA skill inventory, AmeriCorps members promote social-emotional skill development and encourage positive behavior and interactions among a subset of students identified by school leaders as at-risk for behavioral challenges. AmeriCorps members develop strong near-peer relationships with these students, allowing them to discuss student challenges, highlight positive behaviors, and build self-esteem.

4) **Positive School Climate:** City Year assists administrators in fostering an environment in which students are excited about coming to school and want to engage in learning. AmeriCorps members play an active role in helping the school community strengthen, enhance, and build the culture and climate of their school. Community building activities include school-wide enrichments and service opportunities, teacher appreciation events, initiatives based on school priorities, structured recess, positive phone calls home, and parent engagement. All of these activities offer safe and enjoyable ways for students, parents, and teachers to connect with the school community.

5) **Before- and After-School Programming:** City Year adds capacity to DCPS afterschool programming and supports existing providers in the building. When more programming options are needed, AmeriCorps Members support teacher or after-school partner curriculum. AmeriCorps members support activities after school that reinforce the academic and social skills important to student success and active learning. City Year AmeriCorps members support programs emphasizing homework completion, leadership development, teamwork, and community building. AmeriCorps members use this extended learning time to provide homework assistance and tutoring, as well as engage students in community service, academic enrichment, and social justice programming.

Market Analysis

City Year’s primary competitors fall into two categories, organizations focused on “Integrated Student Supports” or “Social-Emotional Learning”.

Integrated Student Supports

These organizations focus on building multi-tiered systems of support, identifying students in need of tier II and III support and aligning them with interventions that meet their needs. These organizations often select and train additional staff members for the school to manage these systems and coordinate intervention programs. These organizations may offer a different array of services than what has been identified as the DCPS need, although there may be some overlap. These organizations share a strong focus on high poverty schools, but often focus on grades 6 through 12; some elementary models are known.

- Communities in Schools
- City Connects
- Success for All Foundation

Social-Emotional Learning

These organizations center on student-focused programs that are dedicated to developing social-emotional skills and mindsets. Delivery models often include mandatory staff training and implementation support. Integration support regarding issues of schoolwide discipline, learning climate and academic topics are still in the early stages of development:

- Compassionate Schools
- Second Step
- PATHS

The Office of School Improvement and Supports believes that City Year’s history working with DCPS, demonstrated outcomes in student testing and attendance, and the suite of school climate services described above makes them uniquely qualified as a partner for our District and schools. Over the past 13 years, we have seen significant improvements in the graduation rates of the schools affected by City Year’s operations – and while the growth cannot be directly attributed to City Year only – we believe we have built a powerful, positive relationship with our students and the community that has affected the rise in a positive manner. Considering the above findings above, a sole source award is in the best interest of DCPS and would be the most efficient cost-effective procurement method for these required services.

5. **CERTIFICATION BY THE OFFICE OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENTS AND SUPPORTS:**

I hereby certify that the above findings are correct and the anticipated cost to DCPS is fair and reasonable.

Date

Bren Elliott
Chief, OSIS

6. **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 2-354.04 and 27 DCMR 1304 and 1702.

Date

Candace Butler
Chief Procurement Officer