

**DETERMINATION AND FINDING
FOR A SOURCE PROCUREMENT**

AGENCY: District of Columbia Public Schools
Office of Youth Engagement (OYE)
CAPTION: Consulting Services (Truancy Reduction/Attendance Improvement)
PROPOSED CONTRACTOR: MM Hook and Consultants
CONTRACT NO. TBD

FINDINGS

1. AUTHORIZATION:

D.C. Code 2-354.04.5 and 27 DCMR, Section 1304 and 1700

2. MINIMUM NEED:

The District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS), Office of Youth Engagement, has an immediate need to procure the services of MM Hook and Consultants to support truancy reduction, attendance improvement and re-engagement work. The Consultant shall provide research and program development support to the Student Attendance and Support Services team.

3. ESTIMATED COST:

The estimated cost is \$37,000 from date of award through 9/30/15.

3. FACTS WHICH JUSTIFY A SOLE SOURCE PROCUREMENT:

A. The District of Columbia Public Schools, Office of Youth Engagement (OYE) recommends MM Hook and Consultants to provide research and program development support for truancy reduction, attendance improvement, and re-engagement recommendations and analysis for the targeted DCPS population.

The OYE DCPS Program Director believes it is necessary to utilize the services of MM Hook and Consultants in order to accomplish the following goals:

- Design a pilot program for truancy reduction/attendance improvement for high schools in the District of Columbia Public Schools;
- Research evidence-based attendance engagement best practices that are cost-effective and flexible for DCPS; and
- Conduct four focus groups with students based on criteria including accumulating an agreed upon number of unexcused absences and being below a specific grade point average threshold (to be determined by Director of Student Attendance and Support Services prior to initial meeting).

B. Background and History:

The Office of Youth Engagement's goal is to ensure that all students are able to engage fully and effectively in the academic curriculum. DCPS/OYE works towards this goal by focusing on five major initiatives:

1. Increase student attendance,
2. Improve student behavior,
3. Enhance positive school culture,
4. Ensure student health and wellness, and
5. Provide intensive support for our most disengaged youth.

DCPS has expanded its focus from reducing truancy, to increasing in-seat attendance and reducing chronic absenteeism. Gaining a better understanding of students' barriers to attendance and how DCPS can help alleviate these woes will poise us to achieve better academic outcomes for our disengaged youth. This work aligns with the Chancellor's Capital Commitment to improve achievement rates, increase the graduation rate, and improve student satisfaction.

Immediate consulting services are required, in order to assist OYE school year 2015 – 2016 implementation/planning.

C. The Proposed Vendor's Unique Qualifications:

MM Hook and Consultants led by Melissa Hook is an independent consultancy providing technical assistance and program development expertise to government agencies and not-for-profit organizations on issues related to criminal victimization, juvenile delinquency, chronic truancy, reentry from incarceration and professional ethics.

Melissa Hook is a nationally recognized leader in the field of government and non-profit grants administration and program development, public policy development, and collaborative initiatives that support services that address the needs of victims of violent crime, at-risk youth and juvenile delinquents, and justice involved citizens. She is a noted author, curriculum developer, training and technical assistance provider, and editor on topics related to victims' rights and services, organizational development, and professional ethics.

As Director of the Office of Justice Grants Administration (JGA), and the Office of Victim Services, Melissa Hook has a considerable amount of experience working with District agencies and building coordinated community response with local organizations. Melissa Hook developed and led the *Show Up Stand Out* (SUSO) Initiative to establish programs and interventions at DCPS and Charter Schools for families and youth to address chronic truancy and improve in seat attendance. SUSO is present in 58 elementary and middle schools in the District. Hook has worked extensively to generate a viable process evaluation for the elementary school initiative and middle school case management system. She is well placed in the community of youth engagement specialists to bring innovative programming to high school students that have prohibitive numbers of unexcused absences and require individual interventions to re-engage them in their education.

As a result of proposed vendor’s expertise, the Office of Youth Engagement anticipates the following outcomes:

1. Feasibility study of evidence-based re-engagement strategies that have been proven in other Districts;
2. Detailed pilot program for re-engagement of high school students with excessive absences in DCPS;
3. Focus groups of students within target population, with thorough analysis and identified next steps;
4. Analysis of DCPS collected student data and qualitative data collected from DCPS leaders, community partners and collaborators on student attendance and barriers; and
5. Identification of key levers related to re-engagement that DCPS can address such as school climate improvement and broadening of existing successful interventions

In light of the above findings a sole source award is in the best interest of DCPS and would be the most efficient and cost-effective procurement method to provide the required services.

CERTIFICATION BY THE DCPS PROGRAM:

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

Date

Office of Youth Engagement

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 1700.

Date

Chief Procurement Officer