

**DETERMINATION AND FINDINGS
FOR AN EMERGENCY CONTRACT**

REQUISITION NO.: RK196631
CAPTION: Long-Term Substitute Teachers
AGENCY: District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) Office of Resource Strategy (ORS) Employee Services Division
PROPOSED CONTRACTOR: SmartStart Education, LLC

FINDINGS

1. AUTHORIZATION:

D.C. Official Code § 2-354.05; 27 DCMR § 1702 (Emergency Procurements)

2. MINIMUM NEED:

The District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS), Office of Resource Strategy (ORS), Employee Services Division, has an immediate need for a Contractor to provide long-term substitute teachers to support DCPS. Substitute teachers are routinely used to provide coverage for teachers and aides who are absent. Currently, the ORS Staffing Team manages the hiring process for substitute teachers, including issuing offer letters to new hires.

3. ESTIMATED COST:

The estimated cost is \$4,695,360.00 for the proposed period of performance (November 30, 2021 – June 22, 2022)

4. FACTS THAT JUSTIFY AN EMERGENCY PROCUREMENT:

Due to widespread teacher absences and a national teacher shortage, many DCPS schools have experienced significant difficulty securing teachers to fulfill crucial roles within their school buildings. Likewise, lingering effects of the pandemic and upcoming vaccination mandates have created even more hesitation for recruitment and placement within the current DCPS substitute pool. Because of these concerns, recruiting candidates for substitute teaching positions has been difficult. The ORS Staffing Team is now actively working to secure additional substitutes so that schools can continue to educate DC students in a safe, efficient, and effective manner

The Proposed Vendor's Unique Qualifications:

The Office of Resource Strategy's Employee Services Division recommends the services of SmartStart Education, LLC for the required services to ensure that one (1) long-term substitute teacher will be assigned to each DCPS (116 schools total) on all school days from November 30, 2021 through June 22, 2022.

SmartStart Education is a diversified provider of educational services that partners with districts and schools to help ensure that all students have the academic skills they need to succeed in the global community. Additionally, SmartStart offers academic services that help students make academic progress in traditional classrooms, individualized instruction that addresses students' learning gaps, and professional development for teachers at various stages of their careers. Finally, SmartStart offers parent workshops that get parents more involved in school improvement.

SmartStart's track record of success is built on a foundation of high-quality school administration, teaching, learning, and producing measurable results for partner schools and students. Students have seen accelerated increases in reading proficiency, writing skills, and mathematics. Further, they are better prepared for state assessments and college.

DCPS has used local contractors for similar projects in the past; however, SmartStart Education is a company that is strictly focused on academic solutions and is led by experienced educators who provide results-driven K-12 instructional solutions. SmartStart Education teachers have a bachelor's degree and one year of teaching experience with students similar to those with whom they will be placed. In accordance with DCPS regulations, all teachers undergo criminal background checks. In addition, SmartStart Education teachers are all Covid-19-vaccinated and follow all DCPS regulations regarding Covid-19.

Additionally, SmartStart's company vision aligns with DCPS's core values and educational philosophy. The vision of quality education incorporates the following seven pillars:

- A multi-dimensional approach to teaching and learning that includes effective use of technology in order to engage students.
- Exceptional teachers with subject matter expertise and the ability to connect with students from diverse backgrounds.
- Setting high standards and expecting excellence from all students.
- Parental involvement and leadership in child(ren)'s education.
- Quality leadership from district officials, principals, and teacher leaders.
- A global, digital perspective that helps students understand their role in the world and who they will be competing with in a global economy.
- An interdisciplinary approach to instruction that helps students contextualize their academic knowledge and understanding in terms of real-world challenges and opportunities.

Lastly, funding for this procurement will come from the Mayor's initiative to mitigate COVID-19 and enhance critical operations and critical support staff. Some procurement rules are relaxed in conjunction with this funding, including exceptions to the sole source requirement. In this case, the Office of Resource Strategy team leaders have identified SmartStart Education as the best vendor to provide the critical substitute teacher support as quickly as possible.

CERTIFICATION BY THE OFFICE OF DATA SYSTEMS AND STRATEGY:

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

Date

Sharon Gaskins
Resource Strategy Officer

CERTIFICATION AND DETERMINATION

Based upon the authorities, findings and in accordance with D.C. Official Code § 2-354.05; 27 DCMR § 1702 (Emergency Procurements), I hereby determine that the proposed emergency procurement is in the best interest of the District of Columbia.

Date

LaVeta Hilton
Contracting Officer