

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

AGENCY: District of Columbia Public Schools
Early Childhood Education Division
CAPTION: DCPS Early Childhood Pre-Kindergarten Program Evaluation
PROPOSED CONTRACTOR: Child Trends®
CONTRACT NO. N/A

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 Specialized Instruction (OSI), Early Childhood Education Division (ECED) has an immediate need to procure the services of Child Trends® to complete a large-scale evaluation of the DCPS Early Child Education Program in SY 2015-2016 by providing the following:

- Data Analysis: Child Trends shall provide quantitative analytical support to the ECED Research Specialist for the ECED to prepare reports and conduct analysis that support the following activities:
 - Comparisons of CLASS scores at DCPS with the national averages in public schools and other early childhood settings
 - Comparisons of direct child assessments to examine the differences in student outcomes disaggregated by sub-groups of children, with a focus on race/ethnicity, gender, and dual language learners
 - Comparisons of student growth and performance data yielded from direct child assessments and the relationship between student outcomes and classroom quality
 - Longitudinal analysis of student growth and performance, CLASS scores, and IMPACT scores over time.
 - Longitudinal analysis of student performance on assessment battery in K-2 after participating in the ECE program at DCPS

3. ESTIMATED COST:

The estimated cost is \$99,986.00 from date of award through 8/31/16.

3. FACTS WHICH JUSTIFY A SOLE SOURCE PROCUREMENT:

The District of Columbia Public Schools, Early Childhood Education Division (ECED) is requesting additional services with Child Trends for the 2015-2016 school year. Child Trends has been a partner in the ECED Program Evaluation project for the past four academic years by providing data collection and data analysis services. The Program Evaluation started in SY 11-12 and concluded this past school year. With data collection completed, ECED finds itself in need of help analyzing four years' worth of data on classroom quality, curriculum implementation, and

student outcomes. Over the past four years, Child Trends has provided quantitative and qualitative analytical support to the ECED to prepare reports and conduct analysis that supports the following activities:

- Examine the relationship between student outcomes, CLASS scores, and IMPACT ratings, including the disaggregation of data by sub-groups of children with a focus on African American and Hispanic boys.
- Determine the long-term impact of early childhood exposure on student outcomes in later years by analyzing direct assessments collected on students after transitioning out of ECE at DCPS.
- Analyze longitudinal student growth and performance, CLASS scores, and IMPACT scores over time to capture changes in overall quality of the ECE program.

ECED is in need of continuing the work with Child Trends for the next school year in order to answer these questions using data collected during the 14-15 school year, as well as address the longitudinal questions using data collected across all four years. Child Trends has been a part of the project from the very beginning and already has an in-depth understanding of the program and datasets. We believe that renewing our contract with Child Trends is justifiable and necessary to best support the essential data analysis and wrap up the Program Evaluation Project by the end of SY 15-16. Results from the first three years of research have already informed program planning at both the district and school-level, such as an increased focus on fidelity to curriculum, and further analysis will allow for informed and data-driven decision-making at the student, school, and program level.

Background and history of this vendor with DCPS

Child Trends was contracted by the DCPS during 2011-12, 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015 school years to conduct a system-wide, longitudinal program evaluation of the DCPS Early Childhood program. The evaluation is concluding its fourth year and entering its fifth year. To date, early childhood classrooms have been observed for 1) quality of teacher-child interactions in the domains of emotional support, classroom organization, and instructional support, using the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS), 2) fidelity to the Tools of the Mind Curriculum, using the Head Start CARES and Make Believe Play measures, and 3) compliance with health and safety standards, using the Health & Safety Checklist. Samples of children in early childhood classrooms (PS3 and PK4) participated in direct child assessments of language and literacy, math, self-regulation, and executive function skills. Children were followed longitudinally through the fourth year of the evaluation, with the oldest children in second grade. Child Trends has provided ongoing technical assistance with data analysis to examine the interrelations of classroom factors, child characteristics and preschool experiences, and child outcomes. The goals of this evaluation are to inform continuous program improvement, and improve outcomes for children in the District of Columbia. A yearly description of work to date is included below.

Child Trends' Work to Date

Year 1: Fall 2011 – Summer 2012: The evaluation was initially intended to include one year of data collection, with dual interests in obtaining quality information on all Title I classrooms and also evaluating the new Tools of the Mind curriculum implementation. Fall and Spring CLASS observations and child assessments were conducted in 90 sample Title I classrooms, with a

subset of classrooms (N=80) receiving a mid-year fidelity observation. A mid-year CLASS observation was conducted in all non-sample Title I classrooms (N=182). Data were analyzed during the summer following data collection, and a summary evaluation report was produced.

Year 2: Fall 2012 – Summer 2013: In Year 2, the evaluation became longitudinal, with an interest in evaluating the Tools of the Mind curriculum implementation. New children were recruited and former participants were sought for re-consent. Fall and Spring CLASS observations and child assessments were conducted in 111 sample Title I classrooms. A relatively small sample of follow-up children (due to low re-consent rates) was administered fall and spring child assessments. A mid-year fidelity observation was conducted in sample Title I classrooms. Data were analyzed during the summer following data collection. Numerous memos summarizing findings from analyses addressing high-priority research questions were produced.

Year 3: Fall 2013 – Summer 2014: In the third year of the evaluation, fall and spring CLASS observations were conducted in 109 sample Title I classrooms. A new cohort of children as well as follow-up children were administered fall and spring assessments. A mid-year fidelity observation was conducted in sample Title I classrooms. Data were analyzed during the summer following data collection. Numerous memos summarizing findings from analyses addressing high-priority research questions were produced.

Year 4: Fall 2014 – Summer 2015: The fourth year of the study reflected DCPS' interest in evaluating all early childhood classrooms. Data collection included a new cohort of children, and three cohorts of follow-up children and sample Title I classrooms; it also included non-sample Title I classrooms and non-Title I classrooms. Fall and Spring CLASS observations were conducted in 93 sample Title I classrooms. Children (new cohort and follow-up) were administered fall and spring assessments. For the first time, sample classrooms received written summaries of their fall CLASS observations to inform instructional coaching over the school year. In addition, sample classrooms received fall and spring Health & Safety observations. A mid-year fidelity observation was also conducted in sample Title I classrooms. Non-sample Title I classrooms (N=196) received a fall CLASS observation and fall and spring Health & Safety observations. Non-Title I classrooms (N=60) received a mid-year CLASS observation. Data analysis is being conducted during the summer following data collection and will continue into Year 5, as described below. Memos summarizing findings from analyses addressing high-priority research questions were produced.

Scope of Work for Year 5

The fifth year of the DCPS evaluation will focus on additional analysis of data collected during Years 1 – 4. As in past years, Child Trends will conduct analyses to answer questions that are of high priority to DCPS. Products will include four memos that are briefly described herein. Memo one will focus on Year 4 classroom data, including changes in classroom quality and fidelity from fall to spring and relations with classroom context (i.e., English-only, Dual language, Spanish immersion) and dosage of instructional coaching. Year 4 classroom data will be compared with previous evaluation years, and in the context of the number of classrooms using an evidence-based curriculum each year. Memo two will examine Year 4 child-level data, including changes in child outcomes from fall to spring and relations to children's demographic characteristics and years of preschool attendance. Child outcomes will be examined in relation to classroom quality and curriculum fidelity. Memo three will examine children's growth

trajectories, and relations to child and classroom characteristics. Finally, Memo four will examine the growth trajectories of dual language learners, African American boys, and children with IEPs, and associations between these subgroups, growth trajectories and classroom characteristics. Memo content will be modified as needed, pending DCPS' continued interest in these research questions and input from research team consultants. Additional memos will be included pending the amount of remaining funds. To complete the scope of work for Year five, activities will include internal, research team, and project officer meetings; entry and cleaning of Year four data; data analysis; production of memos; preliminary preparation of a report for DCPS; internal or external use; maintenance of IRB compliance; and project management activities.

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.

CERTIFICATION BY THE DCPS PROGRAM OFFICE:

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

Date

OSI – Early Childhood Education Division

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