

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

CONTRACT NO.: N/A
CAPTION: Teacher Recruiting, Selection and Training
PROPOSED CONTRACTOR: Teach For America (TFA)
PROGRAM AGENCY: Office of Talent and Culture

FINDINGS

1. AUTHORIZATION:

D.C. Code § 2-354 and 27 DCMR, Section 1304 and 1700

2. MINIMUM NEED:

The District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS), Office of Talent and Culture has an immediate need for Teach For America to provide consulting services with respect to the recruitment and selection of new teachers to DC Public Schools, as well as professional development for first and second year corps members already teaching in the District.

3. ESTIMATED REASONABLE PRICE:

The estimated reasonable price is \$175,000.00 from 10/1/16-9/30/17, with four option years in FY18, FY19, FY20, and FY21.

4. FACTS WHICH JUSTIFY SOLE SOURCE PROCUREMENT:

I. Background and History

Teach For America is a premier education non-profit organization dedicated to ensuring that all students have the opportunity to attain an excellent education. Since its founding in 1990, the organization has specifically focused on improving outcomes for students growing up in low-income communities and has developed a unique expertise in recruiting, training, and developing new teachers in high-need schools.

DCPS began hiring Teach for America corps members in 1992 and has continued to leverage this pipeline since then. Teach For America has placed and supported hundreds of successful teachers in District of Columbia Public Schools – reaching tens of thousands of students.

Additionally, TFA continually develops its corps members as educational leaders, who are now widely contributing to DCPS leadership in principal and central office staff positions. An active base of 2,600 TFA alumni live and work in the D.C. region.

II. Vendor's Unique Qualifications

Teach For America is the only teacher recruitment pipeline of its scale with access to an alumni network of over 42,000 alumni. Additionally, they bring in at least 4,000 new corps members into the teaching profession annually across their 52 active regions. Nationally, few organizations can claim to equal Teach For America's reach in terms of teacher recruitment. TFA has extensive experience in developing marketing strategies for high volume teacher recruitment. Over the past 25 years, TFA has pioneered unique strategies to attract high quality recent college graduates, as well as professionals and veterans to the teaching profession. Overall, their high-impact marketing campaigns have recruited over 50,000 new teachers to work in high needs schools across the country.

Teach For America has the credentials necessary to develop a nationally impactful marketing and direct recruitment campaign, since they operate in 52 cities across the country. Their experience in target markets for DCPS such as New Orleans, Illinois, Tennessee and Pennsylvania give them a unique perspective on what draws teachers from across the nation – a credential of paramount importance to DCPS to continue to attract outstanding teaching talent from across the country, particularly for our high-need subject areas.

Teach for America attracts over 170 new teachers to the D.C. region annually, representing a significant and essential pipeline of high-quality teaching candidates for DCPS. They target candidates of diverse backgrounds through practices like recruiting from HBCUs, as well as marketing to post-college professionals, which brings an essential element to our force.

Additionally, a partnership with Teacher for America gives us access to their local network of 2,600 local alumni who have two or more years of teaching experience, as well as a growing network of over 42,000 experienced educators nationwide. These strong veteran teachers are also able to be recruited by DCPS. No other vendor has this sort of alumni network available for strategic sourcing and networking of experienced teachers, which is a key focus of the district. Teach For America will be expanding its services in future fiscal years to allow districts to contract for services related to direct recruitment of alumni corps members by Teach For America.

III. Adverse impact of not choosing this vendor or completing this project

If Teach For America is not retained as a vendor, DCPS will not be on track to meet its ambitious recruitment targets for the 2017-2018 school year and beyond. DCPS principals benefit from hiring Teach For America corps members, especially when there are last minute resignations of teachers in the summer. Teach For America corps members are available to fill positions in these crucial instances and over half of incoming corps members are rated Effective or Highly Effective in their very first year in the classroom. Students benefit from access to strong teachers, who would not otherwise be available, especially late in the hiring season.

This work is necessary because teacher recruitment remains a critical human resources function at DCPS. With IMPACT, the district has spent the past four years focusing on evaluating teacher performance. Ultimately, however, we lose many teachers every year through some combination of voluntary and forced attrition. Teacher retention efforts are only so effective as a stop gap measure.

The Chancellor has mandated a clear focus on teacher recruitment, one that will ensure that every teacher coming into the District is predicted to be rated at least Effective on the DCPS IMPACT performance system. Teacher quality is widely recognized as the most important factor in raising student achievement. Without great teachers like those we intend to recruit to the district, DCPS cannot achieve the bold goals set out for students in the *Capital Commitment*.

Additionally, as part of its existing scope of work with DCPS, Teach For America provides professional development services to first and second year corps members in DCPS classrooms. These services include classroom observations, ongoing training workshops, as well as collaboration with school leaders to improve corps members' teaching skills. It is essential that there is a continuity of service through TFA so that first and second year corps members receive full support in the fall of 2016, as they are beginning a new school year with students. Otherwise, the contract would expire on September 30, 2016, jeopardizing essential supports for our teachers at a critical juncture in the school year. Additionally, Teach For America plans on using CBE-approved vendors from DC when purchasing food for events for corps members.

Teach For America is the only service provider that hits the intersection of having the national marketing and direct recruitment approach to meet our needs in high-need content areas combined with the access to an alumni network of over 40,000 veteran educators. Additionally, their focus on training future educational leaders has served the district well since 1992 and has led to many strong educators and district leaders – including our 2014 DCPS Teacher of the Year. Teach For America also focuses on the retention of its corps members to the teaching profession. In 2015, 85% of its second-year corps members plan on teaching past their two-year commitment.

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 DCPS PROGRAM DIRECTOR:

I hereby certify that the above findings are true, correct and complete to the best of my knowledge.

Date

Director, Teacher Recruitment and Selection
Office of Talent and Culture

DETERMINATION

Based on the above findings and in accordance with the cited authority, I hereby determine that it is not feasible or practical to invoke the competitive bidding process under Section 402 and 403 of the District of Columbia Procurement Practices Act of 2010 (D.C. Law 18-371; D.C. Official Code § 2-354) and 27 DCMR 1304 and 1700. Accordingly, I determine that the District is justified in using the sole source method of procurement.

Date

Contracting Officer