

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

**AGENCY:** District of Columbia Public Schools  
Office of Specialized Instruction – Early Childhood Education  
**CAPTION:** Chronic Absenteeism Study  
**PROPOSED CONTRACTOR:** Urban Institute  
**CONTRACT NO.** N/A

**FINDINGS**

**1. AUTHORIZATION:**

D.C. Code 2-354.04.5 and 27 DCMR, Section 1304 and 1702

**2. MINIMUM NEED:**

The District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS), Office of Specialized Instruction (OSI) – Early Childhood Education (ECE) has an immediate need to procure the services of the Urban Institute to continue the work of analyzing trends in chronic and non-chronic absenteeism in PK3 & PK4 classrooms for SY 2014-2015.

**3. ESTIMATED COST:**

The estimated cost is \$299,946.00 for the proposed date of award to September 30, 2015.

**4. FACTS WHICH JUSTIFY A SOLE SOURCE PROCUREMENT:**

The District of Columbia Public Schools, Office of Specialized Instruction recommends the services of Urban Institute to continue the work of analyzing trends in chronic and non-chronic absenteeism in PK3 and PK4 classrooms using data trends from SY 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014. The goal of this work would be to look at longitudinal patterns of absenteeism in order to help the ECE understand why children in the early childhood program are chronically absent, and to develop interventions and policies that can improve the attendance rates for these children.

The continuation of the work on this study which began three years ago by the same vendor is incredibly important as they have the best grasp of the data we've collected so far and have worked with OSI to create this next phase of the project. OSI also believes they are the best vendor for this work because of their unique relationship with DCPS over the past few years.

**Background and history of this vendor with DCPS**

The Urban Institute knows DCPS schools, DCPS data systems, and the city; OSI believes using The Urban Institute for this research would parallel the work already being done in the District and help the District take a coordinated and comprehensive approach to combating issues of truancy and attendance problems. These issues are important to goals laid out in DCPS' 5-year plan, which are focused on improving student achievement and graduation rates, which are

directly related to attendance. By addressing issues in the early grades, DCPS will be better able to meet the goals in the 5-year strategic plan.

On January 29, 2015, Urban Institute released its latest report on absenteeism in DC Public Schools. The findings indicate that: in early childhood education programs can be an important stepping stone to higher educational achievement, particularly for low-income children. This report examines the extent of absenteeism in the District of Columbia Public Schools' school-based Head Start program in the 2013–2014 school year (SY). Absence rates and the share of students with satisfactory attendance improved between SY 2012–2013 and SY 2013–2014. Rates of absences declined from 9 percent to 8 percent, and the share of students with satisfactory attendance increased from 36 percent to 44 percent between the two years.

**The Proposed Vendor's Unique Qualifications:**

Specifically, the Urban Institute is in a position to carry out this project because they bring depth and breadth in a range of areas, including:

- barriers that low-income families face in participating in early childhood programs;
- instability in family contexts;
- housing instability and links to school;
- health challenges facing low-income children and their families, and the contextual factors that affect their health status; and
- child development, family functioning and engagement, and early childhood programs.

Urban Institute was founded in 1968 to understand the problems facing America's cities and assess the programs of the War on Poverty, and since that time Urban's objective analysis and expertise has informed policy debates — in city halls and state houses, Congress and the White House, and emerging democracies around the world. It's research portfolio ranges from the social safety net to health and tax policies; the well-being of families and neighborhoods; and trends in work, earnings, and wealth building.

In light of the above findings a sole source award is in the best interest of the DCPS, Office of Early Childhood Education 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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Office of Specialized Instruction, Early  
Childhood Education

**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 1702.

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Chief Procurement Officer