

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

AGENCY: District of Columbia Public Schools
Office of Teaching and Learning – Advanced and Enriched Instruction
CAPTION: Summer Enrichment Program
PROPOSED CONTRACTOR: University of Connecticut
CONTRACT NO. TBD

FINDINGS

1. AUTHORIZATION:

D.C. Code 2-354.04 and 27 DCMR, Section 1304 and 1701.1.

2. MINIMUM NEED:

The Office of Teaching and Learning (OTL) has an immediate need to procure the services of The University of Connecticut to develop a curriculum, train teachers and supervise a summer enrichment program. The program will run at two school sites – Kelly Miller Middle School and Hardy Middle School. Each site will host approximately 50 students, led by four Enrichment Teachers and one Site Coordinator.

University of Connecticut shall begin training DCPS teachers and developing curriculums for the summer enrichment program on June 1, 2014 and end on September 30, 2014.

The Summer Enrichment Program for students will began July 7, 2014 to August 1, 2014 (20 instructional days) and includes a culminating event during which students will present and display their work on projects to the public.

3. ESTIMATED COST:

The estimated cost is \$99,500.00

4. FACTS WHICH JUSTIFY A SOLE SOURCE PROCUREMENT:

The Office of Teaching and Learning (OTL) recommends The University of Connecticut for the required services because it is the home organization of Joseph Renzulli, the founder of the Schoolwide Enrichment Model (SEM). SEM is currently implemented at six DCPS middle grades schools and is aligned with the DCPS philosophy of providing rigorous academic programming for all students that fosters talent development. Dr. Renzulli and the University of Connecticut have supported the implementation of SEM programming in DCPS since 2012. The prospective consultants from The University of Connecticut have also developed working relationships with DCPS central office staff and the principals of the selected summer enrichment programming sites.

The following deliverables shall be provided by The University of Connecticut for the summer enrichment program, beginning on June 1, 2014 and ending on September 30, 2014.

- Summer enrichment program planning, including curricular and lesson documents for teachers, students and parents
- Two full days (six hours per day) of training workshops for Enrichment Teachers and Site Coordinators
- Marketing materials to use to promote the program to the DCPS community
- Direct coaching services to teachers during the training workshops and during the four-week enrichment program
- Plans and activities for weekly site meetings for Enrichment Teachers and Site Coordinators.
- Training for Renzulli Learning™, the online program that guides students through the exploration and research of a particular topic.
- A comprehensive, evaluative report at the conclusion of the summer enrichment program.
- Comprehensive hiring and payroll services for Enrichment Teachers and Site Coordinators.
- Stipends for teachers to use to purchase supplies specific to student projects.
- All general classroom supplies and materials for teachers and students.
- Support in planning a culminating event for each school site, during which students will have the opportunity to showcase their research projects and investigations.

Background and History:

The mission of the Office of Teaching and Learning (OTL) is to deliver high-quality instructional resources, enhance classroom practice and scale effective programs to increase DCPS student achievement and prepare all students for success in college, career and life. OTL's Advanced and Enriched Instruction department oversees programming for advanced and high-potential students. The Advanced and Enriched Instruction department works to make rigorous and engaging instructional programming available to all students in the District.

The University of Connecticut is home to the Neag Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development. Studies focusing on meeting the needs of gifted and talented youth have received national and international attention for over 40 years. The earliest research emphasized studies related to creativity, assessment, identification, programming, and evaluation. Several studies conducted by the Neag research team are considered seminal research that guides the design and development of programs and services to meet the needs of gifted and talented students. The team poses questions such as the following that are theory-based and practice relevant.

- Who are the gifted and talented students?
- How do you screen and identify potentially gifted and talented students?
- What are examples of defensible programs and services?
- How can gifted education programs and practices enrich students' learning opportunities?
- What are the most effective approaches to reading and mathematics instruction for gifted and potentially gifted youngsters?
- How can parents and educators effectively collaborate in support of gifted students?

Historical leadership in advocating a broadened conception of giftedness, and a focus on the development of potentials in groups not ordinarily included in special programs for the gifted and talented are hallmarks of the Neag Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development.

These hallmarks affect all programs and services, including campus-based graduate programs leading to the Master of Arts degree, Sixth Year Certificate, and Doctor of Philosophy degree, as well as online programs designed for students throughout the world resulting in Master's degrees and Sixth Year Certificates. Graduates hold key leadership and research roles throughout the nation and the world.

Research and teaching are further enhanced by grant-based initiatives. The only federally funded research organization, known as The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented (NRC/GT), has existed since 1990 with various university partnerships. As of 2006, the University of Connecticut partnership is with the University of Virginia. The current research studies for the NRC/GT are an integrated approach to identifying, serving, and evaluating academic outcomes. In addition, two federally funded model projects continue their acclaimed work in reading (Schoolwide Enrichment Model-Reading) and mathematics (Project M3: Mentoring Mathematical Minds).

The Schoolwide Enrichment Model and its predecessor, The Enrichment Triad Model, have led to the development of an exciting new technology-based learning system. The Renzulli Learning System is an on-line program matching students' interests and learning styles to enrich and challenge their learning opportunities.

DCPS has been implementing the Schoolwide Enrichment Model (SEM) since SY2012-13. Currently, six DCPS schools are implementing SEM and plans are in place to expand SEM programming to four more schools in SY14-15. OTL currently has a contract with Creative Workshop Associates (CWA), an organization affiliated with The University of Connecticut and the Neag Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development, to provide coaching and professional development services to Enrichment Resource Teachers (who serve the role of SEM Coordinator within each DCPS SEM school).

The Proposed Vendor's Unique Qualifications:

Dr. Joseph Renzulli is the leading member of the team at the Neag Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development at the University of Connecticut. The Schoolwide Enrichment Model (SEM) (Renzulli, 1977; Renzulli & Reis, 1985, 1997) is widely implemented as an enrichment program used with academically gifted and talented students and a magnet theme/enrichment approach for all schools interested in high-end learning and developing the strengths and talents of all students. The major goal of the SEM is the application of gifted education pedagogy to total school improvement. The SEM provides enriched learning experiences and higher learning standards for all children through three goals; developing talents in all children, providing a broad range of advanced-level enrichment experiences for all students, and providing advanced follow-up opportunities for young people based on their strengths and interests. The SEM focuses on enrichment for all students through high levels of engagement and the use of enjoyable and challenging learning experiences that are constructed around students' interests, learning styles, and preferred modes of expression.

Separate studies on the SEM have demonstrated its effectiveness in schools with widely differing socioeconomic levels and patterns of program organization. Information about this research is provided at this web site. The SEM has been implemented in over 2,500 schools across the country and programs using this approach have been widely implemented internationally. The effectiveness of the model has been studied in over 20 years of research

and field-testing about: (a) the effectiveness of the model as perceived by key groups, such as principals, teachers, students, and parents; (b) research related to student creative productivity; (c) research relating to personal and social development; (d) the use of SEM with culturally diverse or special needs populations; (e) research on student self-efficacy; (f) the use of SEM as a curricular framework; (g) research relating to learning styles and curriculum compacting; and (h) longitudinal research on the SEM.

This research on the SEM suggests that the model is effective at serving high-ability students in a variety of educational settings and in schools serving diverse ethnic and socioeconomic populations. These studies also suggest that the pedagogy of the SEM can be applied to various content areas resulting in higher achievement when implemented in a wide variety of settings, and when used with diverse populations of students including high ability students with learning disabilities and underachievers.

The most recent research on the SEM has focused on the application of instructional communication technology to enrichment learning and teaching. Information about this Internet based application of the SEM can be found at www.renzullilearning.com. Individual computer generated student profiles are used as the basis for matching personalized resources from a data bank that contains thousands of carefully selected enrichment resources. These resources and students' electronic portfolios can be used for curriculum planning, differentiating instruction, and individual and small group project based learning.

DCPS anticipates the following outcomes:

University of Connecticut to develop a curriculum, train teachers and supervise a summer enrichment program. The program will run at two school sites – Kelly Miller Middle School and Hardy Middle School. Each site will host approximately 50 students, led by four Enrichment Teachers and one Site Coordinator

The University of Connecticut shall provide several expert consultants to partner with the Advanced and Enriched Instruction (AEI) team within OTL to design and implement the summer enrichment programming. The consultants include Dr. Joseph Renzulli (the creator of the Schoolwide Enrichment Model), Nicole Waicunas (who provided direct coaching services to DCPS Enrichment Resource Teachers in SY13-14) and Lisa Muller (the Executive Director of the Neag Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development). Together, the consultants will partner with AEI to design the instructional framework for the 20-day (4 weeks) summer enrichment program. The University of Connecticut team shall also design and facilitate training workshops for the DCPS Enrichment Teachers and Site Coordinators prior to the start of the summer programming.

The summer enrichment program will require students to design their own project or investigation related to a particular enrichment topic. Students will then execute their project/investigation and display and present the results at a culminating event for parents and community members. Students will utilize teacher expertise, as well as Renzulli Learning™, an online program that guides students through the exploration and research of various topics.

The University of Connecticut shall work with the AEI team to appropriately modify its instructional program to meet the needs of enrolled DCPS students, as well as the professional

development and pedagogical needs of the teachers and site coordinators that will be running the program.

In light of the above findings and the use The University of Connecticut tools a sole source award is in the best interest of the DCPS Office of Teaching and Learning and would be the most efficient and cost-effect procurement method.

5. CERTIFICATION BY THE OFFICE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING:

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

Date

Matthew Reif, Director,
Advanced and Enriched Instruction

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; D.C. Code 2-354.04 and 27 DCMR, Section 1304 and 1701.1.

Date

Chief Procurement Officer