

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

AGENCY: District of Columbia Public Schools
Office of Instructional Practice
CAPTION: **Graduate Student Fellowship Program**
PROPOSED CONTRACTOR: Education Pioneers
Contract NO. RQ953291

FINDINGS

1. AUTHORIZATION:

D.C. Code 2-354 and 27 DCMR, Section 1304 and 1702.

2. MINIMUM NEED:

The District of Columbia Public Schools Office of Instructional Practice is seeking the services of Education Pioneers to provide the highly regarded Graduate Student Fellowship program. Education Pioneer shall provide one Graduate Student Fellow to work with the IMPACT team during Summer 2017.

The Graduate Student Fellow shall:

- Conduct, compile, and present research on educator effectiveness initiatives of interest to DCPS leadership.
- Support the development, review, and publication of the IMPACT policy guidebooks.
- Support development of training and resources for LEAP (Learning together to Advance our Practice) Leaders in anticipation of significant IMPACT changes in the 2017-2018 school year for these staff members. LEAP is about helping teachers become truly expert at teaching the DCPS Common Core-aligned curriculum – so that every student across the city experiences rich, engaging, and challenging instruction every day.

3. ESTIMATED REASONABLE PRICE:

The estimated reasonable price is \$13,000.00 for the proposed services from date of award through August, 2017.

4. FACTS WHICH JUSTIFY A SOLE SOURCE PROCUREMENT:

Background and history of this vendor with DCPS

The District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) educator effectiveness system, IMPACT, is currently in its eighth year of implementation. Each year, the IMPACT Design team identifies key areas of improvement as part of their commitment to continuous improvement. This year, the IMPACT Design team has identified programming shifts to the evaluation system, which will require additional capacity during the busiest months of the year – the summer.

In addition, DCPS made significant changes to the IMPACT system in the 2016-2017 school year, including the reintroduction of Individual Value-Added, the introduction of student surveys, and the roll-out of the DCPS Essential Practices observation rubric which will significantly increase the capacity needs on the IMPACT team over the summer. Specifically, additional capacity is needed to aggregate summative IMPACT data, compile and disseminate reports, and liaise with school-based staff as questions and training needs arise over the course of the summer. In order to support this work, the IMPACT team seeks a highly-skilled summer Fellow with strong data analysis skills, background knowledge of education policy, and experience communicating with education stakeholders.

DCPS has previously procured the services of Education Pioneers to provide fellows for mission-critical projects. The previous contract with Education Pioneers was GAGA-2011-C-0119, and the term of contract was from June 1, 2011 to August 31, 2011. Additionally, the Office of Instructional Practice has previously procured the services of Education Pioneers in the summers of 2012 and 2015. Other teams outside of the Office of Instructional Practice, such as the Early Childhood Education team in the Office of Teaching and Learning, have also procured services from Education Pioneers to support critical programming (in the summers of 2012, 2013, and 2014).

The Proposed Vendor's Unique Qualification:

As exemplified by their work, Education Pioneers have extensive knowledge and experience supporting the IMPACT team by providing highly qualified individuals with experience in the education sector, and by adding critical capacity to the team during their busiest time of the year. Education Pioneer Fellows are trained to navigate through the complex needs of DCPS, and the IMPACT team more specifically, and are able to implement key strategic initiatives in a seamless way while adding critical capacity to the team. Education Pioneer Fellows have the necessary graduate-level analytical skills, a background in education policy, strong project management skills, and are able to communicate clearly and effectively as they collaborate with central and school-based staff. While other vendors may be able to staff part-time personnel, they do not have the previous background, experience, or training that Education Pioneer Fellows hold. As such, Education Pioneers is the only vendor that would allow the IMPACT team to meet their programmatic needs, on the timeline that they require.

Education Pioneers has successfully provided highly-qualified, emerging leaders in the education field to complete DCPS' mission critical projects, and we require the procurement of these services during the summer of 2017. Education Pioneers accelerates excellence in education with top talent outside of the classroom. Education Pioneers' proven Fellowship programs place the best and brightest emerging leaders into education organizations across the country to ensure a thriving public education system. During their fellowships, Education Pioneers fellows provide focused, exceptional work on mission-critical projects. These fellows will allow the Office of Instructional Practice to accomplish mission-critical projects throughout their fellowships.

As exemplified by their work, Education Pioneers have extensive knowledge and experience with recruiting, selecting, and matching expert Fellows to mission-critical projects in the IMPACT team. This experience gives them a unique advantage, and separates them from other talent firms who do not have this specialized experience. In order to staff the IMPACT team with top quality candidates providing the required capacity for the aforementioned essential initiatives, we request a sole source for Education Pioneers. Education Pioneers meets the needs for sole source based on the following:

1. Experience and background required to support the needs of the IMPACT team through a deep understanding of the evaluation system and the work of the Office of Instructional Practice
2. Experience and background in IMPACT data analytics, project management, and education policy required to support this work.
3. Proven track record for providing high quality, specialized fellows in the education sector. This experience is necessary in adding critical capacity during the team's busiest time of the year- the summer months.
4. Demonstrated ability to meet tight deadlines

In light of the above findings a sole source award is in the best interest of the DCPS, Office of Instructional Practice and would be the most efficient and cost-effective procurement method.

CERTIFICATION BY THE DCPS PROGRAM DIRECTOR:

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

Date

Office of Instructional Practice

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 Official Code 2-354 and 27 DCMR 1304 and 1702. Accordingly, I determine that the District is justified in using the sole source method of procurement.

Date

Contracting Officer