

**DETERMINATION AND FINDINGS
(BROAD - SERVICED- BASED)
SOLE SOURCE PROCUREMENTS**

AGENCY: District of Columbia Public Schools, Office of School Improvement and Supports
CAPTION: Middle School Partnerships and Integrated Student Supports (ISS)
PROPOSED CONTRACTOR: Communities in Schools (CIS)
RK NOS: Rk173901

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 School Improvement and Support has an immediate need to procure the services of the Communities in Schools of the Nation’s Capital (CIS). The CIS model includes all the key components of a community school:

- (a) Annual needs assessment
- (b) School support plan
- (c) Coordination of partners
- (d) Integration into the school framework of teams and initiatives to implement the DCPS Connected Schools model at Cardozo Education Campus.

The work will be based on individual School Support Plans and will include a number of goals related to the Comprehensive School Plan. The DCPS Office of School Improvement and Support’s main goal is to increase student performance through the Connected Schools model. As such, DCPS has identified the following to assist with meeting those goals – and supporting the students’ needs:

- A. Work with recommended Contractor at Cardozo Education campus to:
 - Increase access to services
 - Increase in family engagement and family satisfaction
 - Increase students responding favorable to “Loved, Challenged and Prepared”
 - Reduce chronic absenteeism

- B. Contractor shall maintain implementation, coordination, and daily monitoring of the **Integrated Student Supports (ISS) and the DCPS Connected Schools Model** at each DCPS location identified.

- C. The Contractor shall provide individual School Support Plans at each site location, and the School Support Plans shall include goals such as an increase in available student enrichment opportunities, implementation of alternatives to suspension, increased efforts for family engagement, and development of new student leadership platforms.
- D. As implementation of the ISS model, the Contractor shall place a full-time, highly trained site coordinator to act as a Connected Schools Manager, he will work with DCPS school staff, CBO partners, volunteers and the local community to provide students with the supports identified as needed to achieve educational goals.
- E. The Contractor shall develop and implement a plan for site coordinators to provide tailored case management services for up to forty (40) students. The students will be referred by DCPS school leadership, social workers, or designated key DCPS personnel.
- F. The Contractor shall implement the ISS model that provides the integration of three tiers of supports, aligned with public health best practices, which addresses individual and environmental intervention strategies simultaneously. Specifically, the three tiers are:
 - (ii) Tier 1: School-wide services
 - (iii) Tier 2: Targeted programs
 - (iv) Tier 3: Individualized support
- G. In addition to the services being procured on a sole source basis, the Contractor shall provide the following services:
 - (i) Strategic Collaboration for District-wide Connected Schools Initiative, including bi-weekly planning to develop and oversee the Connected Schools Model at 10 sites; advise on best practices and provide the required tools for Model Implementation; conduct on-going research for Model Improvement; and collaborate with DCPS on communications and marketing efforts to share stories of program impact with the broader DC Community.
 - (ii) Provide Case Management services for up to 60 students throughout the duration of the DOE Grant period, including intake assessments; weekly goal setting; regular progress monitoring, and family engagement.

3. ESTIMATED COSTS:

The estimated costs of the services for these specific requirements are \$80,000 from the date of award thru September 30, 2021.

4. FACTS WHICH JUSTIFY SOLE SOURCE PROCUREMENT:

Communities in schools of the Nation’s Capital (CIS) is the local affiliate of the national network of organizations whose mission is surrounding students with a community or support, empowering them to stay in school and achieve life. CIS has been doing this in the District of Columbia since 2004 and now partners with eleven DC Public Schools.

The CIS model includes all the key components of a community school:

1. Annual needs assessment
2. School support plan
3. Coordination of partners
4. Integration into the school framework of teams and initiatives
5. Whole-school initiatives to improve attendance, behavior and academic performance

Additionally, CIS provides case-management of students in need of individual support, especially in the area of attendance, behavior, social-emotional learning and sense of belonging.

The District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS), Office of School Improvement and Support (OSIS) recommends a continued partnership with Communities in Schools (CIS) to implement their successful model of Integrated Student Supports (ISS) as well as the Connected Schools Model in DCPS.

I. Background and History

Communities in Schools (CIS) implements the model of **Integrated Student Supports (ISS)**, which is a data-driven, evidence-based solution to remove barriers to student success. ISS improves the delivery of services by enabling students to be linked to a broad set of community resources that address numerous needs in a coordinated way. By eliminating barriers to student success, CIS helps students enter the classroom ready to learn. Communities in Schools began partnering with DCPS schools in 2004 to provide this model. The partnership began with five (5) schools and grew to include to eleven (11) schools.

Communities in Schools – Integrated Student Supports

To implement the model of ISS with high fidelity, Communities in Schools places a full-time, highly trained site coordinator in the school to work with school staff, CBO partners, volunteers and the local community to provide students with the supports they need to succeed. The site coordinator assesses the needs at the school and develops an annual school support plan in conjunction with the principal and administration. The effectiveness of the CIS model stems from the integration of three tiers of supports, aligned with public health best practices, which address individual and environmental intervention strategies simultaneously. By differentiating the supports, CIS has the ability to offer services to all students in the school including focusing attention on specific students with significant needs.

The CIS ISS model’s three tiers are:

Tier 1: School-wide services

i.e. new afterschool programs, family engagement & attendance initiatives, college and career access opportunities

Tier 2: Targeted programs

i.e. student leadership clubs, college tours, small-group mentoring

Tier 3: Individualized support

i.e. access to basic needs (transportation, uniforms, food, etc.), 1:1 mentoring, individual goal setting

Project Goals:

The work at each school will be based on individual School Support Plans, including goals such as an increase in available student enrichment opportunities, implementation of alternatives to suspension, increased efforts for family engagement, and development of new student leadership platforms. In order to support this effort, DCPS and CIS will aim to achieve one or more of the following in each Connected School site:

- Increase in student “Loved, Challenged and Prepared” index
- Increase in access to services and in the participation rate in enrichment activities offered at the school
- Increase in family engagement and family satisfaction
- Decrease in chronic absenteeism

Program Highlights & Accomplishments:

In School Year 2018-2019, CIS partnered with 8 DCPS schools

Full-time, highly trained site coordinators are placed in each school (a) School leadership is involved in hiring decision for the coordinator; (b) Ongoing training and development is provided to each coordinator; (c) Coordinator, responsible for conducting a needs assessment, and developing the individual School Support Plan in collaboration with the DCPS leadership, the Coordinator leading the implementation of Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 supports

Focus on middle school success: In SY18-19, CIS supported middle grades at Cardozo EC, Hart MS, Johnson M, and Stuart Hobson MS by meeting or exceeding core goals, such as:

- Cardozo MS: Reduce suspensions (ISS/OSS) supporting the full implementation of Restorative Justice
- Hart MS: Ensure at least 25% of students participated in an afterschool /enrichment activity
- Johnson MS: Support improvement of climate and culture (student satisfaction scores).
- Stuart Hobson MS: Reduce truancy by at least 3%. Which DCPS desires to expand to the other schools.
- Alignment to DCPS: CIS develops School Support Plans based on each school's DCPS Comprehensive School Plan
- CIS received DCPS data each quarter (attendance, truancy, behavior referrals, suspensions, course grades, assessment metrics) and uses this to inform each quarter's objectives
- Site Coordinators sit on key school-based teams to support school initiatives (attendance, climate and culture, RTI, etc)
- In SY18-19, CIS served over 3,200 students in DCPS through the coordination of resources with 135 partners -- 85% students served improved their academics; more than 85% students served improved their attendance; and 96% students served were promoted to the next grade level

II. Vendor's Unique Qualifications

DCPS recommends Communities in Schools (CIS) is the sole source partner for the intense level of expertise and philanthropic partnership necessary to provide DCPS students with the resources, partnerships and three tiers of supports critical to middle school success. CIS is uniquely positioned as the sole source organization in the country for this partnership with DCPS.

CIS is a national expert in the work of integrated students supports. This approach has been rigorously tested nationally and proven both to reduce dropout and increase graduation rates. A five-year study was conducted by **ICF International**, including randomized controlled trials (the gold standard of evaluation research) and results showed that students receiving case managed support during critical transition years had more favorable outcomes than non-case managed students. These outcomes included, on average, more course credits toward graduation and higher-grade point averages during their 9th grade year. In addition, case managed students were less likely to be retained in the 6th grade. ICF also found that surveyed teachers reported

that CIS site coordinators helped to increase students' engagement in and attitude towards learning and they connected students to resources needed for learning.

Additionally, a report from Child Trends on the effectiveness and cost efficiency of ISS programs such as Communities in Schools found that ISS programs increase math achievement and student attendance and lower dropout rates; and are cost effective with a positive return on investment yield, ranging from \$4.39 to \$14.89.

To implement ISS, CIS provides full-time site coordinators in each partner school. CIS also provides weekly training and support to their full-time site coordinators and has built a network so that each coordinator can share resources and best practices with one another. The site coordinator assesses the needs at the school and develops an annual school support plan in conjunction with the principal and administration.

CIS regularly collaborates with existing DCPS staff to ensure all programming and supports are strategically aligned to DCPS priorities and initiatives.

Communities in Schools also has a robust progress monitoring system. CIS regularly assesses DCPS provided data to inform their programming, and has the support of national data experts, as well as their own data management system – CISDM.

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

Communities in Schools (CIS) had demonstrated successful outcomes and this partnership is a cornerstone of the Connected School strategy. CIS aligns all school goals with the core goals of each school's Comprehensive School Plan; and offers additional resources that would not otherwise be available. Going forward, CIS will intentionally set goals with the school principal and instructional superintendent to ensure further coordination of programming.

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 for these and other requirements with similar services, in order to ensure strategic goals at the district and school level are met.

CERTIFICATION BY DCPS PROGRAM DIRECTOR:

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

2/9/2021

Date

Carla M Mike

Carla Mike, Manager Connected Schools Initiative
Office of School Improvement and Support

DETERMINATION

Based on the above certified 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 or 403 of the District of Columbia Procurement Practices Reform Act of 2010 (D.C. Law 18-371; D.C. Official Code §2-354.04 and 2-354.13) 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