

**Request for Proposal for Residential Services for Students at  
Maine Educational Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing  
Governor Baxter School for the Deaf**

**Bidders Conference  
May 14, 2009**

Attendees: Jay Bartner (Consulting Superintendent), Lynn Schardel (Director), Nancy Connolly (Maine Department of Education), Mary Donahue (Spurwink, Grantwriter), Paul Muholland (Spurwink, Facilities)

Introductions

All attendees introduced themselves.

Background Information

An overview of the history of the Residential Program at the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf (GBSD) was given. The existing program has 16 middle school/high school students many of whom live in commuting distance. Ideally, the new residential program will be off island at a safe cottage-living style facility.

Goals of New Residential Program

- off-island location
- existing GBSD program to be replaced by an overseeing agency experienced in residential programs
- accommodations for four to six full time students within commuting distance (accurate count to be provided once the IEP meetings/process is complete)
- preparedness for full and part time residential students (proposal should address these situations)
- new residential program would work in collaboration with both an after school program on Mackworth Island that is being developed and will include components such as tutoring, clubs, classes, etc. as well as student participating in programs at Portland High School
- consistent communication between residential staff, students and parents
- housing Sunday through Thursday evenings

Questions

Q. Is it a requirement that the entire facility be ADA accessible or is it completely non-negotiable?

A. The facility should be ADA accessible to include features such as wheel chair ramps, visual signaling systems necessary for the deaf and hard of hearing such as flashing lights for smoke detection, doorbells, etc.

- Q. Does the facility need to be in Portland? What is the required geographical area?
- A. The facility should be in the greater Portland area such as in Portland, Falmouth, South Portland, etc. so that students are not in an isolating situation and are close to Mackworth Island and Portland High School.
- Q. Do sprinkler systems have to be throughout the entire building?
- A. The building should be set up with whatever requirements are needed for DHHS licensing.
- Q. Who will the school (MECDHH/GBSD) contact person be?
- A. The principal will be the administrator who would be contacted for urgent matters such as crises. For day-to-day operations, an activities coordinator will be hired. Also, each student will have a guidance counselor.
- Q. Will your residential students share rooms?
- A. Yes, that is a possibility as well as some private rooms.
- Q. Do all staff members need to be fluent in ASL (American Sign Language) or can they be working toward fluency?
- A. Yes, this is an absolute requirement during the hours that staff are with students. Situations other than when staff are not with students can be further discussed.
- Q. What are the expectations around transportation:
- to/from school
    - A. MECDHH/GBSD
  - to/from after school program
    - A. MECDHH/GBSD
  - outside of normal transportation needs such as students visiting friends, trips to the mall, etc.
    - A. residential program
  - to/from students home town

A. sending school district

Other transportation needs can be worked out with the activities coordinator.

Q. Does there have to be supervision at all times?

A. Yes, staff are required to be with students even during situations such as snow days, student illness, while being transported, etc.

Q. Please clarify about submitting more than one proposal. (Page 6 “If a bidder submits more than one (1) proposal, each must be separately packaged and labeled as required herein.”)

A. This was an error. Only one proposal is needed

Q. The proposal is to contain no more than 10 copies. What does that included?

A. The 10 pages does not include:

- the cover letter
- attachments
- bidder qualifications (can be in an attachment)
- budget page

The proposal can be single or double spaced.

Q. Would you clarify p. 9 sections 2.3.2 and 2.3.3?

A. Some sort of quarterly or midyear report is needed to present to the MECDHH/GBSD School Board showing your financial situation, how many children you serve, and positive and negative incidents. We will negotiate, organize, and define outcome measures and standards with the winning bidder.

Q. Is the statement guaranteeing a September 1, 2009 start up date (on page 9), negotiable?

A. No, that and staff fluency in ASL is non negotiable

Q. Since our staff are not needed from June to September, can the bidder use the remaining months in other ways?

A. Yes, the bidders can use the summer months, school vacations, etc., as they need.

Q. What other details need to be contained in the section about staff allocation?

- A. how many staff members will you provide
- what are their qualifications
  - include bios and resumes in the attachments
  - job descriptions
  - fluency in ASL

The choice of residential staff is critical. We are looking for assurances that our students will be safe.

Q. What details need to be provided for the outline of the team?

- A. In your staffing narrative, include job descriptions, bios, your agencies' experience relative to the RFP, how long you have been in business, how many programs you have, etc.

Q. What is needed in the three year client list mentioned in the evaluation points, page 11?

- A. Organizations you've partnered with such as DHHS and behavioral health agencies, not references from individuals

Q. Do you need every single client listed?

- A. No, just a selection of children behavioral health services, DHHS services, etc., nothing from the Department of Corrections is needed. Three excellent references would be helpful.

#### Corrections in RFP

- Page 8, under "General Requirements," Section 2.2.1 about the specifications and requirements organized by subsections, should be deleted.
- Page 10, section 3.2.6 "Proposal Organization" under B, which reads, "work plan and timelines as outlined in section 2.2.1". Section "2.2.1" should be changed to "2.2."
- Page 9, section 2.2 "a process for objective evaluation of the implementation of the plan" could be clarified by reading "specific outcomes for evaluations will be negotiated with the successful bidder".