



Request for Proposals

Coordination and Oversight of
Interpreting Services for

Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of
Hearing / Governor Baxter School for the Deaf
(MECDHH/GBSD)

June 2017

1. Administrative Issues

1.1 Introduction/Overview

In June of 2017, the School Board of the Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing/Governor Baxter School for the Deaf (MECDHH/GBSD) voted in favor of the budget proposed by the Executive Director and Leadership Team. The position of Interpreter Coordinator was not part of that budget as it had been in past years. As a result, MECDHH/GBSD is seeking an outside provider to coordinate and oversee ASL interpreting services associated with all aspects of the organization.

This Request for Proposal (RFP) is seeking proposals from an individual or individuals who will work collaboratively with MECDHH/GBSD to provide high quality interpreting services for students, staff, and Deaf Consumers associated with the organization. Applicants must be certified by RID (Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc.) Each applicant will provide specific descriptions about how they will address the following priorities:

- ✓ That all interpreters meet established certification and licensure requirements;
- ✓ Ensure that all interpreters maintain required certification and/licensure;
- ✓ Ensure that all interpreters contracting with MECDHH/GBSD hold a nationally recognized certification and/or are licensed and working toward that certification;
- ✓ Manage, organize and ensure ongoing scheduling of interpreters to meet organizational needs;
- ✓ Matches interpreter skills with the needs of each Deaf Consumer and/or group;
- ✓ Manage, oversee and submit interpreter invoicing;
- ✓ Work with the CDS (Child Development Services) data system, "CINC" for invoicing;
- ✓ Ensure the recruitment of highly trained interpreters who:
 - have demonstrated expertise working within an educational environment;
 - have demonstrated working as part of a team;
 - have attained a score of 3.5 or higher on the American Sign language Proficiency Interview (ASLPI);
 - have knowledge about Deaf culture and familiarity with assistive technologies for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing;
- ✓ Ensure that interstate criminal background checks and fingerprinting are completed on all staff;
- ✓ Provide oversight and informal guidance of interpreters at each site;
- ✓ Provide and/or coordinate necessary training for interpreters in conjunction with organizational administration and,
- ✓ Develop an ongoing and regular communication system with MECDHH/GBSD Administrators and Point of Contact (POC) interpreters at each site

Eligible applicants for this RFP are individuals that have a minimum of 10 years interpreting experience. A minimum of 5 years should be related to work with an educational entity. Applicants must describe how they will ensure the provision of high quality interpreting services for Deaf and hard of hearing students, staff and Deaf consumers associated with MECDHH/GBSD, in particular, how they will assess needs on an ongoing basis in order to provide well-matched, high quality

interpreting services and necessary training for interpreters.

1.2 Purpose and Scope of Services

In this Request for Proposal, MECDHH/GBSD seeks proposals for the provision and oversight of high quality ASL interpreting services. The intent of this is to ensure the best possible interpreting services for MECDHH/GBSD students, staff and associated Deaf consumers from around the State of Maine

Bidders must clearly define, in detail, the capacity necessary to address the following recommendations:

1. Hiring

- ✓ Develop a standard protocol for receiving and reviewing all employment applications from interpreters
- ✓ Develop a standard criteria to determine which interpreter applicants should be offered a contract
- ✓ Ensure criminal background checks and fingerprinting of all interpreters who are hired
- ✓ Provide and/or coordinate ongoing support and training for all interpreters on contract with MECDHH/GBSD
- ✓ Implement appropriate rules and guidelines related to discipline, curfews and behavioral expectations

2. Staff Qualifications

- ✓ Hire staff with appropriate certification(s), credentials, experience and qualifications including ASL proficiency (based on the results of the ASLPI - American Sign Language Proficiency Interview)
- ✓ Knowledge of ADA requirements and community resources
- ✓ Regular supervision of staff is ensured
- ✓ Provide orientation for new staff (including training in a trauma-based system of care and all other training required by DHHS).

3. Collaboration with MECDHH/GBSD Leadership Team

- ✓ Works with MECDHH/GBSD Administrators to review feedback related to interpreting services
- ✓ Works with MECDHH/GBSD Executive Director to prepare annual budget for interpreting services
- ✓ Works with MECDHH/GBSD Administrators to assess organizational and departmental interpreting needs
- ✓ Works with MECDHH/GBSD Administrators to ensure ongoing and open communication regarding student/staff interpreting concerns
- ✓ Works with MECDHH/GBSD Administrators to ensure ongoing and open communication regarding concerns of interpreters contracting with MECDHH/GBSD
- ✓ Works with MECDHH/GBSD Administrators to ensure site-based access to work space and professional working environment

4. Scheduling and Invoicing

- ✓ Develops a standardized and timely protocol/process for reviewing, reconciling and auditing interpreter invoices
- ✓ Works with business office personnel to develop a standardized protocol/process to bill and document all invoices related to CINC (the Child Development Services data base) and student extra-curricular activities
- ✓ Ensures that each interpreter is contracted with and compensated according to the established MECDHH/GBSD Interpreter hourly rate, tiered scale
- ✓ Develops, oversees and manages all interpreter requests, including changes and cancellations
- ✓ Ensures adherence with the ASL Interpreter Cancellation Policy
- ✓ Works with MECDHH/GBSD Administrators to adjust interpreting schedule as needed in times of higher demand
- ✓ Works with MECDHH/GBSD Administrators to determine any necessary limits to interpreting requests during high demand times

5. Professional Support and Development

- ✓ Work with Administrative Team and Point of Contract Interpreters to design and implement professional training and development for interpreters on contract with MECDHH/GBSD
- ✓ Provide/Coordinate staff training based on needs assessments done with interpreters, administrative team, and MECDHH staff
- ✓ Provide “linguistic feedback” to interpreters on contract with MECDHH/GBSD
- ✓ Ensure adherence with Interpreter Code of Professional Conduct
- ✓ Provide support to new and/or developing interpreters
- ✓ Implement protocol(s) and provide training and information for crisis/emergency management developed by MECDHH/GBSD
- ✓ Convene regular meetings with Point of Contact (POC) interpreters from each site
- ✓ Attends site-based meetings as necessary and/or at the request of MECDHH/GBSD administrators

1.3 Procurement Timeline

Public Advertisement	June 12, 2017
RFP Published.....	June 12, 2017
The deadline for bidder submitted questions.....	June 19, 2017.
Proposals Due	June 23, 2017 (no later than 4:00 p.m.)

1.4 Administrative Information

a. The RFP Administrator is:

David Sherry
1 Mackworth Island
Falmouth ME 04105
E-mail: david.sherry@mecdhh.org

- b. From the date on which this RFP is released and during the period up to and including the date on which a notice of intent to award is issued, prospective bidders shall contact only the RFP Administrator above with regard to this procurement. Direct or indirect attempts by a prospective bidder, its employees, agents or representatives, to contact other representatives of MECDHH/GBSD to obtain information or for other purposes regarding this RFP or the procurement process may result in the disqualification of a bidder's proposal.
- c. In NO CASE shall verbal communication override written communication. Only written communications are binding on MECDHH/GBSD.
- d. MECDHH/GBSD assumes no responsibility for representations concerning this RFP or procurement, which are, or may not be made by its employees, agents, or representatives prior to the execution of an Agreement, unless such representations are specifically incorporated into this RFP in writing. Any information provided by a bidder verbally shall not be considered part of that bidder's proposal. Only written communications from a prospective bidder within established timelines and received by MECDHH/GBSD shall be accepted.
- e. Bidders may submit questions regarding this RFP in writing (via email or letters) to the RFP Administrator.* All answers that are given to the questions asked in this RFP are subject to verification. Misleading and/or inaccurate answers will be grounds for disqualification at any stage in the procurement process.

***The deadline for bidder submitted questions is June 16, 2017.**

1.5 Preparation of the Proposal

The "Official Proposal" must be typewritten.

Bidders shall follow the proposal instructions given in Section 3 of this RFP.

The "Official Proposal" containing the signed, original response to this RFP, six (7) paper copies, one (1) unbound copy and one (1) copy in electronic format using Microsoft Word in Times New Roman 12-point font must be delivered in sealed package(s) no later than 4:00 pm on June 21, 2017, without exception. The Proposal must be sealed in one envelope. The envelope containing the entire proposal (no more than 10 pages) must be submitted together. All envelopes must be clearly labeled with the following information.

- A. David Sherry
Executive Director
MECDHH/GBSD
1 Mackworth Island
Falmouth ME 04105
- B. Proposal for Interpreting Services Bidder's Name(s) and Address(es)
- C. Name of Contact Person, Telephone Number, Fax Number, Email Address and Project Title

D. Proposal Due no later than 4:00 pm June 23, 2017

The original proposal must be clearly labeled "Official Proposal" and all copies must bear the labels "Copy 1" through "Copy 7"

If a bidder submits more than one (1) proposal, each must be separately packaged and labeled as required herein.

1.6 Terms of RFP

- a. The term of any agreement resulting from this RFP will be for one (1) year with an anticipated relationship of three (3) years.
- b. In the event it becomes necessary to revise any part of this RFP prior to the scheduled submittal date, an amendment or an addendum shall be issued to all potential bidders who have received this RFP.

1.7 Rejection of RFP

MECDHH/GBSD reserves the right to accept or reject any part of any proposal, and to accept or reject any or all proposals without penalty for any one of the following reasons:

Section 1

Failure to deliver the proposal by the deadline, June 23, 2017 at 4:00 pm,

Section 2

Failure to include a copy signed by the individual bidder(s) or organization

Section 3

Failure to follow the proposal format instructions as specified

1.8 Certification of Independent Price Determination

By submission of a response to this RFP, the bidder certifies, and in the case of a joint proposal, each party thereto certifies, that in connection with this procurement:

- a. The prices in this proposal have been arrived at independently, without consultation, communication, or intention for the purpose of restricting competition, as to any matter relating to such prices with any competitor.
- b. Unless otherwise required by law, the prices, which have been quoted in this proposal, have not been knowingly disclosed by any prospective bidder and shall not knowingly be disclosed by the bidder prior to the notice of intent to award, directly or indirectly to any competitor.
- c. No attempt has been made, or shall be made by a bidder to induce any other person or firm to submit, or not to submit a proposal for the purpose of restricting competition.
- d. Each person signing this proposal certifies that:
 - 1. He/she is the person responsible for the decision as to the prices being offered herein;
or,

2. The offer is made by the submitted proposal and the bidder shall sign any clarifications to that proposal

1.9 Withdrawal of Proposals

Proposals may be withdrawn, modified, and resubmitted at any time prior to the time set for the receipt of proposals (June 22, 2017 by 4:00 PM)

1.10 Disposition of Proposals

Written proposals submitted in response to this RFP become the property of MECDHH/GBSD. The proposals shall not be returned to bidders, except as specified in this RFP.

1.11 Clarifications and Releases

MECDHH/GBSD may, but is not required to, request a bidder to clarify in writing any and all aspects of a proposal; however, bidders will not be allowed to alter or amend their proposals through the clarification process. MECDHH/GBSD reserves the right to contact and to discuss a bidder's performance with the bidder's other clients and former clients.

1.12 Proposal Evaluation and Award

All proposals submitted shall be evaluated in accordance with the requirements set forth in Section 4 of this RFP. Any Agreement resulting from this RFP and the subsequent evaluation process shall not necessarily be awarded to the bidder with the lowest price. Instead, the Agreement shall be awarded to the bidder who has accumulated the most points in accordance with the evaluation criteria outlined in Section 4.

This RFP, as well as the successful bidder's response to this RFP, together with all addenda and clarifications shall become part of the contractual obligation and shall be incorporated by reference into the ensuing Agreement with the successful bidder.

1.13 Gratuities

The laws of Maine provide that it is a felony to offer, promise, or give anything of value or benefit to an employee with the intent to influence that employee's acts, opinion, judgment, or exercise of discretion with respect to that employee's duties. Evidence of violations of this statute will be reported to the appropriate prosecuting attorney.

1.14 Conflicts between Terms

- a. MECDHH/GBSD reserves the right to accept or reject any exception taken by a bidder to the terms and conditions of this RFP. Should a successful bidder take exception to the terms and conditions required by the MECDHH/GBSD, the bidder's exceptions may be rejected and the entire proposal declared non-responsive.
- b. These exceptions should be noted conspicuously and noted as exceptions to the RFP. MECDHH/GBSD may elect to negotiate with the successful bidder regarding Agreement

terms that do not materially alter the substantive requirements of this RFP.

1.15 Costs of Preparation of Proposal

No payments shall be made to cover direct, indirect or associated costs incurred by a prospective or successful bidder in the preparation of its proposal(s) in response to this RFP or any other submission made under this RFP.

1.16 Miscellaneous

- a. MECDHH/GBSD reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals without penalty.
- b. MECDHH/GBSD reserves the right to waive minor deficiencies and informalities if, in the judgment of MECDHH/GBSD, its best interests will be served. Failure to comply with a mandatory requirement is not a minor deficiency or informality that will be waived.

2. General Requirements

2.1 Work Plans and Timelines

The work plan must include:

- a. The steps required to implement the proposal
- b. Detailed descriptions of how each step will be implemented
- c. Proposed timeframes
- d. Bidder staff requirements
- e. How the bidder will provide the necessary interaction with MECDHH/GBSD staff to ensure the effective implementation of the plan
- f. A process for objective evaluation of the implementation of the plan.

2.2 Additional Requirements

Applicants agree to meet the following additional requirements:

2.2.1 Have knowledge of and experience in:

- a. Data collection and preparing the types of reports requested by MECDHH/GBSD
- b. Financial skills to adequately respond to the financial aspects of the project
- c. A proven track record in providing quality interpreting services within an educational setting
- d. Experience with and/or detailed knowledge of interpreting services provided for MECDHH/GBSD programs and services
- e. A proven track record in working cooperatively and collaboratively with a variety of groups including education professionals
- f. A knowledge of ethics, regulations, philosophy, strategies and current research related to interpreting for students who are Deaf and hard of hearing, and;
- g. The ability to start providing the services by July 1, 2017 upon approval of the proposal by MECDHH/GBSD.

2.2.2 Provide

- a. budgeting and expense documents
- b. all necessary fiscal documentation for interpreting services as requested
- c. fiscal documentation in the timeframes required by MECDHH/GBSD
- d. an annual report that includes an analysis to data, an evaluation of program/service efficacy and recommendations
- e. ongoing list of sub-contracted interpreters

3. Instructions for Submitting Proposal

3.1 Cover Letter

Provide a cover letter to the proposal that includes the following:

Name and Address

Provide the name and address of the prime bidder(s)

Guarantee

Provide a statement guaranteeing that the bidder can and will meet the July 1, 2017 implementation date for the project.

Signature of the prime bidder(s)

3.2 Bidder Qualifications

- a. Provide a brief history of the bidder's experience with ASL interpreting, especially as it relates to educational programs and services.
- b. If this is to be a joint bidder proposal, or the bidder intends to utilize the services of a subcontractor or subcontractors, please include a narrative description of the considerations and benefits of such an approach.

3.2.1 Project Capacity

Describe the project and the total number of hours you believe it will take to meet the project goals.

3.2.2 Cost Proposal

Bidders are required to give a firm, hourly rate quotation, not to exceed 25 hours per week, for the work to be done to complete this RFP.

3.2.3 Bidder Comments

Bidders are encouraged to include any comments that might further clarify their proposal.

3.2.4 Proposal Organization

To ensure consistency of presentation, MECDHH/GBSD requests that proposals be organized as follows:

- a. Cover Letter as described in Section 3.1
- b. Work Plan and Timelines as outlined in Section 2.2.1
- c. Bidder Qualifications as outlined in Section 3.2

4. Proposal Evaluation Process

An Evaluation Committee, consisting of MECDHH/GBSD personnel, will evaluate all responses to this RFP.

- a. Accepted proposals will be reviewed to initially determine if minimum submission requirements have been met.
- b. The review will verify that the proposal was received by the date and time specified in Section 1.1 (Preparation of the Proposal) with the correct number of copies and the presence of required signatures, and that the proposal is sufficiently responsive to the needs outlined in the RFP to permit a complete evaluation of the proposal itself.
- c. Failure to meet minimum submission requirements could result in the proposal being rejected and not included in the evaluation process.
- d. Upon receipt, the proposal information will be disclosed to the Evaluation Committee members only.
- e. Bidders may not contact members of the Evaluation Committee except at the request of the MECDHH/GBSD RFP Administrator.

4.1 Evaluation of Proposals

- a. Accepted proposals will be evaluated by the Evaluation Committee based on the bidders' responses to the requirements detailed in Sections 1, 2 and 3.
- b. Selections will include information obtained by reviewing the bidder's proposal documents, and by contacting references.
- c. The Evaluation Committee shall be under no obligation to contact bidders for clarification of proposals, but shall reserve the right to do so at any time prior to the Agreement award.
- d. Each proposal will be evaluated based on the criteria outlined in section 3.2 of this RFP
- e. Based on the results of the evaluation, the proposal determined to most appropriately address the interpreting coordination needs of MECDHH/GBSD, taking into account all of the evaluation factors, will be selected by MECDHH/GBSD.

4.2 Evaluation of Proposals

Accepted proposals will be evaluated by the Evaluation Committee