

*New Hampshire Department of Education  
Bureau of Special Education  
101 Pleasant Street  
Concord, New Hampshire 03301*

**April 18, 2016**

## **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

**RFP #SPED-2016-5**

### **New Hampshire Preschool Special Education Professional Development Initiative**

Deadline for Receipt of Proposals: 4:00pm, Friday, May 20, 2016

Proposal Inquiries: All questions about this Request for Proposals (RFP) should be submitted in writing by e-mail or fax (include your fax number) to:

Barbara Dauphinais  
New Hampshire Department of Education  
Bureau of Special Education  
101 Pleasant Street  
Concord, New Hampshire 03301  
Fax: (603) 271-3791  
E-mail: [Barbara.Raymond@doe.nh.gov](mailto:Barbara.Raymond@doe.nh.gov)

The deadline for receipt inquires is 4:00pm, Friday, April 29, 2016. The Department of Education **(Department)** will address inquiries received by the deadline, in writing, if they are determined to be vital to the competitive bidding process, a written response will be sent no later than five (5) working days after the deadline to all who submitted inquiries. In addition, any modifications to the specifications contained in this RFP shall be made only in writing by the Department immediately following the deadline for receipt of inquiries and no other changes will be entertained after that date. All questions and responses will be posted on the New Hampshire Department of Education website ([www.education.nh.gov](http://www.education.nh.gov)). Verbal agreement or instructions from any other source are not authorized or binding on the State of New Hampshire **(State)**.

All advisory committees are encouraged to distribute this Request for Proposals (RFP) to any/all qualified individuals/organizations.

**Grant Award:** The Department expects to award a two year contract effective July 1, 2016 or upon Governor & Council approval, whichever is later, to the successful applicant. Unless there is a change in the plan requirements and/or services to be delivered, the cost for the contract not to exceed \$200,000 per year or a total of \$400,000 for the two years. Based on performance and identified ongoing need, the Department reserves the right to renew the contract for an additional two years, not to exceed \$200,000 per year or a total of \$400,000 for the additional two years.

## PURPOSE:

The purpose of this RFP is to seek proposals from individuals, agencies, or organizations (hereafter referred to as applicant(s)) to work in conjunction with the NH Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education (hereafter referred to as the (Bureau)) to develop and implement a statewide professional development (PD) system designed to increase the implementation of effective practices and enhance outcomes for preschool children with disabilities and their families. This PD system will align with the priorities of the NH Special Education State Performance Plan (SPP) relative to preschool special education, including Indicator 6: Preschool Settings, Indicator 7: Child Outcomes, Indicator 8: Parent Involvement, Indicator 12: Early Transitions and Indicator 17: State Systemic Improvement Plan.

The applicant should build on the National Professional Development Center on Inclusion (NPDCI) approaches to professional development (PD) within the proposal. NPDCI identifies PD approaches such as technical assistance, coaching, consultation, mentoring, and communities of practice. NPDCI defines professional development as “.... *facilitated teaching and learning experiences that are transactional and designed to support the acquisition of professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions as well as the application of this knowledge in practice. The key components of professional development include: (a) the characteristics and contexts of the learners (i.e., the “who” of professional development, including the characteristics and contexts of the learners and the children and families they serve); (b) content (i.e., the “what” of professional development; what professionals should know and be able to do; generally defined by professional competencies, standards, and credentials); and (c) the organization and facilitation of learning experiences (i.e., the “how” of professional development; the approaches, models, or methods used to support self-directed, experientially-oriented learning that is highly relevant to practice).*”

This project will support the Bureau of Special Education in meeting the legislative mandate to provide technical assistance based on the following:

RSA 186-C III ~ the Department shall provide technical assistance and information to the school districts so that the districts may effectively and efficiently identify, clarify and address responsibilities under State and federal special education laws. Whenever technical assistance of a specialized nature, beyond that available in the Department, is required, the Department shall assume a leadership role in identifying sources of such assistance in other State agencies, the federal government, volunteer services or the private sector.

§300.704 (4)(i) State level activities: for support and direct services, including technical assistance, personnel preparation, and professional development and training.

**1.0 Minimum Requirements:** In order to be considered for funding, the applicant must include evidence of the following minimum requirements. This may include both a written narrative as well as up to 3 letters of recommendation.

- 1.1 Extensive knowledge of early childhood professional development systems and workforce development.
- 1.2 Expertise regarding topic areas for professional development in preschool special education.
- 1.3 Knowledge of evidenced-based practices that are designed to improve outcomes for preschool children with disabilities, including social-emotional outcomes.
- 1.4 Demonstrate capacity and willingness to participate in activities to improve outcomes for preschool children with disabilities and their families, as directed by the Bureau of Special Education.
- 1.5 Show evidence of the ability to work with representatives from State agencies, partner organizations, school districts, child care and Head Start, families, OSEP funded TA Centers, and other stakeholders.
- 1.6 Effective communication skills (oral and written).

- 1.7 Expertise in facilitation and the provision of technical assistance and professional development based on adult learning methods and strategies.
- 1.8 Alignment with and ability to leverage other initiatives, committees and agencies/organizations to enhance the project.
- 1.9 Demonstrate fiscal management capacity including the requesting of funds from the Department as well as oversight and dissemination of resources (fiscal and other) to project participants (including staff).

**2.0 Services to be Provided:** The applicant will provide the following services annually relative to this Request for Proposals and consistent with the Minimum Requirements.

2.1 Core Services:

- 2.1.1 As directed by the Bureau of Special Education, participate in State and national activities that promote the priorities of the NH Special Education State Performance Plan specific to preschool special education.
- 2.1.2 Coordinate with other Bureau of Special Education initiatives to promote a unified system to improve outcomes for preschool children with disabilities, including participation in Bureau of Special Education Preschool Special Education Leadership Team (NH Bold).
- 2.1.3 In conjunction with the Bureau of Special Education, coordinate and facilitate the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) State Leadership Team and the SSIP District Learning Collaborative for Indicator 17: State Systemic Improvement Plan.
- 2.1.4 In conjunction with the State core planning group, take a leadership role in the development and facilitation of the Pyramid Model State Leadership Team.
- 2.1.5 Develop and make public a database with contact information for key personnel, based on the questions in 2.4.1 and 2.4.2, to be updated as needed. The database will serve as a resource for citizens of the State to identify preschool special education contact people. The applicant will use the database to disseminate information, communicate with the field, and identify potential participants in project activities.
  - 2.1.5.1 The database will identify preschool special education intake and/or referral personnel for each town in NH. This database should be responsive to the family's question: "Who do I call about (educational) concerns about my preschool-age child?"
  - 2.1.5.2 The database will also identify the special education decision-makers for preschool special education for each district in NH. The database should be responsive to the question: "Who is the point person for information dissemination and preschool special education leadership within the district?" This list may include special education directors if they serve as the lead in the preschool special education program for the district, but | should not exclusively be special education directors.

2.2 Establish and implement a Professional Development (PD) system designed to enhance the capacity of personnel to improve outcomes for preschool children with disabilities and their families. This system should, at a minimum, include key PD strategies designed to:

- 2.2.1 Reduce suspension and expulsion of preschool children with disabilities in public and private early childhood programs.
- 2.2.2 Expand the needed knowledge, skills, and experience of early childhood degree faculty members to teach coursework related to early childhood special education, particularly at the associate and bachelor's degree levels.

- 2.2.3 Build the capacity of district personnel, especially the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP districts), to implement with fidelity evidence-based practices and/or programs that improve child outcomes.
  - 2.2.4 Provide opportunities for district personnel to receive peer-to-peer support, network with each other and receive universal TA regarding preschool special education. Audiences should include new preschool special education decision-makers, preschool special education coordinators, special education administrators and others as appropriate.
  - 2.2.5 Convene 2-3 focus groups that will meet for a limited time to explore issues identified by the NHDOE. Participants will bring their expertise to the conversation, be educated about the issue on the table, engage in dialog about the potential impact and solutions, and make recommendations to the NHDOE. Based on this work, information and TA will be provided to the field.
- 2.3 Develop and implement an evaluation plan to determine effectiveness of the project. The evaluation plan should assess whether activities identified in the proposal were accomplished and the impact of the project on building local and State capacity to improve outcomes for preschool children with disabilities. The applicant may provide a completed evaluation plan with the application or may provide a work plan for engaging stakeholders, identifying focus questions, establishing short and long term objectives, and assessing the formative and summative impact of the project.

### 3.0 REPORTING

The successful individual(s)/organization shall provide the Bureau of Special Education with the following:

- 3.1 Monthly Reporting:** Reports to be submitted with each invoice requesting payment will outline activities conducted and how the project met 2.0 Services to be Provided.
- 3.2 Annual Report:** Report detailing the accomplishments and challenges of the project, based on the evaluation of the project, due 30 days prior to the end of each project year. The first report will include strategies for improvement. The final report will include a comprehensive overview of the entire project. The Annual Reports will be posted on the NHDOE website.

### 4.0 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:

The successful individual(s) will inform the Department of any conflicts of interest (appearance of, or actual) prior to accepting the contract or while engaged in the contract.

### 5.0 TERMS & CONDITIONS:

- 5.1 The State shall not be responsible for or pay any costs incurred by the bidder in the preparation of the proposal submitted in response to this RFP.
- 5.2 The NHDOE reserves the right to seek clarification of any information contained in a proposal submitted in response to this RFP.
- 5.3 The NHDOE reserves the right to reject any and all proposals submitted in response to this RFP. In addition, the distribution of this RFP shall not commit the State to issue a contract.
- 5.4 If the NHDOE chooses to award a contract in response to this RFP, the successful bidder shall be notified by letter. The NHDOE shall then develop a contract for Governor and Council approval. The contract shall incorporate, by reference, all provisions of this RFP and the successful bidder's proposal. In preparing a contract with the successful bidder, the NHDOE reserves the right to clarify any terms and conditions contained in the proposal.
- 5.5 Public announcements or news releases pertaining to the award of a contract shall not be made until approved by the Governor and Council.
- 5.6 The State shall not be responsible for any work performed by the successful bidder prior to the effective date of a contract approved by Governor and Council.

- 5.7 All obligations of the State, including the continuance of payments under an approved contract shall be contingent upon the availability and continued appropriation of State, federal or other funds and in no event shall the State be liable for any payments in excess of such available appropriated funds. In the event of a reduction or termination of those funds, the State shall have the right to withhold payment until such funds become available, if ever, and shall have the right to terminate or amend the contract immediately upon giving the contractor notice of such termination or amendment.
- 5.8 When delivering services under an approved contract, the contractor shall work under the broad supervision of the NHDOE Contracting Officer for this project.
- 5.9 Unless otherwise deleted or modified by mutual agreement between the State and the contractor, all general provisions contained within the Form P-37 (see **Attachment A**) shall be incorporated into the contract.
- 5.10 The NHDOE expects to award a contract to the successful bidder. Unless there is a change in the program requirements and/or services to be delivered, the cost for this contract shall not exceed the amount bid in response to the **Services to be Provided** section of this RFP. The maximum contracted cost that will occur shall not exceed the amount bid in response to the **Services to be Provided** section of this RFP. The successful bidder will be required to provide the Department with the following information:
- A recent financial statement, and
  - A Certificate of Existence from the Secretary of State's Office
- In addition, the successful bidder will need to submit a Certificate of Authority authorizing the company to do business with the State of New Hampshire, Department of Education at the time the contract is signed.
- 5.11 **"Any information submitted as part of a bid in response to this request for proposal (RFP) (or request for bid (RFP) or request for information (RFI) may be subject to public disclosure under RSA 91-A. In addition, in accordance with RSA 9-F:1, any contract entered into as a result of this RFP (RFI, or RFB) will be made accessible to the public online via the website Transparent NH (<http://www.nh.gov/transparentnh/>). Accordingly, business financial information and proprietary information such as trade secrets, business and financials models and forecasts, and proprietary formulas may be exempt from public disclosure under RSA 91-A:5, IV. If you believe any information being submitted in response to a request for proposal, bid or information, should be kept confidential as financial or proprietary information, you must specifically identify that information in a letter to the agency."**
- 5.12 **Audit**  
 §200.501 Audit requirements.
- (a) *Audit required.* A non-Federal entity that expends \$750,000 or more during the non-Federal entity's fiscal year in Federal awards must have a single or program-specific audit conducted for that year in accordance with the provisions of this part.
- (b) *Single audit.* A non-Federal entity that expends \$750,000 or more during the non-Federal entity's fiscal year in Federal awards must have a single audit conducted in accordance with §200.514 Scope of audit except when it elects to have a program-specific audit conducted in accordance with paragraph (c) of this section.
- (c) *Program-specific audit election.* When an auditee expends Federal awards under only one Federal program (excluding R&D) and the Federal program's statutes, regulations, or the terms and conditions of the Federal award do not require a financial statement audit of the auditee, the auditee may elect to have a program-specific audit conducted in accordance with §200.507 Program-specific audits. A program-specific audit may not be elected for R&D unless all of the Federal awards expended were received from the same Federal agency, or the same Federal agency and the same pass-through entity, and that Federal agency, or pass-through entity in the case of a subrecipient, approves in advance a program-specific audit.

(d) *Exemption when Federal awards expended are less than \$750,000.* A non-Federal entity that expends less than \$750,000 during the non-Federal entity's fiscal year in Federal awards is exempt from Federal audit requirements for that year, except as noted in §200.503 Relation to other audit requirements, but records must be available for review or audit by appropriate officials of the Federal agency, pass-through entity, and Government Accountability Office (GAO).

(e) *Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDC).* Management of an auditee that owns or operates a FFRDC may elect to treat the FFRDC as a separate entity for purposes of this part.

(f) *Subrecipients and Contractors.* An auditee may simultaneously be a recipient, a subrecipient, and a contractor. Federal awards expended as a recipient or a subrecipient are subject to audit under this part. The payments received for goods or services provided as a contractor are not Federal awards. Section §200.330 Subrecipient and contractor determinations sets forth the considerations in determining whether payments constitute a Federal award or a payment for goods or services provided as a contractor.

(g) *Compliance responsibility for contractors.* In most cases, the auditee's compliance responsibility for contractors is only to ensure that the procurement, receipt, and payment for goods and services comply with Federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of Federal awards. Federal award compliance requirements normally do not pass through to contractors. However, the auditee is responsible for ensuring compliance for procurement transactions which are structured such that the contractor is responsible for program compliance or the contractor's records must be reviewed to determine program compliance. Also, when these procurement transactions relate to a major program, the scope of the audit must include determining whether these transactions are in compliance with Federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of Federal awards.

(h) *For-profit subrecipient.* Since this part does not apply to for-profit subrecipients, the pass-through entity is responsible for establishing requirements, as necessary, to ensure compliance by for-profit subrecipients. The agreement with the for-profit subrecipient must describe applicable compliance requirements and the for-profit subrecipient's compliance responsibility. Methods to ensure compliance for Federal awards made to for-profit subrecipients may include pre-award audits, monitoring during the agreement, and post-award audits. See also §200.331 Requirements for pass-through entities.

[78 FR 78608, Dec. 26, 2013, as amended at 79 FR 75887, Dec. 19, 2014]

#### 5.13 Debarment and Suspension

Organization/Individual submitting a proposal will comply with the provision of the US Code of Federal Regulations 34 CFR 364 and the following US Circular if applicable: Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-110 "Uniform Administrative Non-Profit Organizations.

The bidder/offer or certifies, by submission of this proposal or acceptance of this contract, that neither it nor its principals is presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any federal department or agency. It further agrees by submitting this proposal that it will include this clause without modification in all lower tier transactions, solicitations, proposals, contracts, and subcontracts. Where the bidder/offer or/contractor or any lower tier participant is unable to certify to this statement, it shall attach an explanation to this solicitation/proposal.

#### 5.14 Copyrights

The Department reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable license to reproduce, publish or otherwise use, and to authorize others to use, for Department of Education purposes:

- (a) The copyright in any work developed under a grant, subgrant, or contract under a grant or contract under a grant or subgrant; and
- (b) Any rights of copyright to which a grantee, subgrantee or a contractor purchases ownership with grant support.

### 6.0 LIMITATIONS ON AMOUNT AND CONTRACT PERIOD

6.1 The Department expects to award a two year contract effective July 1, 2016 or upon Governor & Council approval, whichever is later, to the successful applicant. Unless there is a change in the plan requirements and/or services to be delivered, the cost for the contract shall not exceed \$200,000 per year or a total of \$400,000 for the two years. Based on performance and identified ongoing need, the Department reserves the right to renew the contract for an additional two years, not to exceed \$200,000 per year or a total of \$400,000 for the additional two years.

### 7.0 Evaluation Procedures

7.1 An original and four (4) identical hard copies of a formal proposal must be received at the Department of Education no later than 4:00pm, Friday, May 20, 2016. Proposals received after this deadline will not be considered for review. Each application shall include a narrative or other directly relevant material as needed to address the areas described in 1.0 through 2.0 of this RFP. The original documents must be submitted unbound and in such a manner as to facilitate photocopying.

7.2 Proposals will be evaluated to determine if the applicant meets or exceeds the **1.0 Minimum Requirements** and has the ability to accomplish the **2.0 Services to be Provided**. This evaluation will be based on the applicant's ability to provide evidence of the following criteria:

7.2.1 *Significance of Proposal:* Description of applicant's capabilities to deliver the services, including a brief description of their personal experience and/or company's experience in developing and implementing a program of this type, to include references as applicable. Please identify the specific subsections of 1.0 as they are addressed (see 1.0 Minimum Requirements). (10 points);

7.2.2 *Quality of Services:* Describe how you will accomplish the **Services to be Provided**, including activities and strategies that will achieve the purpose of this Request for Proposals. Please identify the subsection(s) of the **Services to be Provided** as you address them in your narrative.

7.2.2.1 Core Services (2.1). Provide a detailed explanation of how you will address the core services of the proposal. (10 points);

7.2.2.2 Professional Development System (2.2). Provide a detailed explanation of how you will accomplish each of these subsections to develop and implement a professional development system. (20 points);

7.2.2.3 Evaluation Plan (2.3). Describe your comprehensive plan for the evaluation of the proposed project's activities, effectiveness and impact. (10 points)

7.2.3 *Management Plan:* Provide a work-plan that includes a timeline, persons responsible and milestones or benchmarks in accordance with the activities to carry out **Services to be Provided**. (15 points);

7.2.4 *Personnel and Partners:* Provide a listing of the individuals who will have responsibilities within this proposed project, their titles, qualifications and duties, and the amount of time each will devote to the project. Identify key partners, describe their anticipated participation and provide documentation of their commitment. (10 points);

7.2.5 *Adequacy of Resources*: Provide a detailed budget, including budget notes/justification, which clearly explains the relationship between proposed activities and expenditures. The budget should be broken down into two (2) fiscal year; FY'17 (July 1, 2016 - June 30, 2017) and FY'18 (July 1, 2017 - June 30, 2018), and not exceed \$200,000 for each year. Indirect costs may not exceed 8%. (25 points)

- 7.3 In order to provide bidders with the opportunity to present a comprehensive response to this RFP, no page limit has been established. Applicants are reminded that successful applications are typically clear, concise, and well organized. It is strongly recommended that applications be organized around the elements listed in subsection 2.0 and further addressed in the information packet. Supplementary materials may be submitted as part of the application, however, these should be limited to items that substantively explain or expand upon information presented in the basic application. All supplementary materials should be referenced with the basic application. Four (4) sets of any supplementary material should be submitted.
- 7.4 Qualified applicants may be asked to provide the Department with additional written materials or documentation of qualifications, and may be asked to meet with Department Administrators or their designee to discuss their proposal.
- 7.5 Each bidder shall submit, along with the formal proposal, a completed/signed "Alternate W-9 Form" (**see Attachment B**).
- 7.6 Each bidder shall submit, along with the formal proposal, a completed/signed "Cover Page" (**see Attachment C**).
- 7.7 An original and four (4) identical copies of a formal proposal shall be submitted by 4:00pm, Friday, May 20, 2016 to:

Barbara Dauphinais  
New Hampshire Department of Education  
Bureau of Special Education  
101 Pleasant Street  
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

All proposals will be reviewed and rated by an evaluation team appointed by the Commissioner of Education. The Department shall be under no obligation to contact bidders for clarification of their proposals, but it shall reserve the right to do so at any time prior to the award of the contract(s). All proposals received by the deadline will be evaluated based on the Bid Procedures outlined in this RFP.

The Department reserves the right to interview applicants with the highest average scores for their proposal, but the Department shall be under no obligation to interview applicants. If the Department conducts an interview, it will be done so by a team who will develop structured questions and scoring criteria that will clarify the applicant's ability to fulfill this RFP.

If the Department chooses to award contract(s) relative to this RFP, it shall be to the responsive and responsible bidders that receives the highest total rating as a result of the proposal evaluation and/or interview process.

Upon conclusion of final negotiations with the successful proposer, all proposers will be notified in writing of their status, upon final approval of a contract by Governor & Council.

## **8.0 Post Submission Deadline**

After the submission deadline, the Department will post, on its website, the number of proposals that it received from vendors.

After the Department's review and selection of a vendor, it will post all vendor names and their rank or score five days prior to submission of the Governor and Council contract packet to the Department of Administrative Services.

A vendor questioning the Department's identification of the selected vendor may request that the Department review its selection process. The request shall be in writing and be submitted to the Department within five (5) business days of the posting of the bid results, rank or score.

The Department has five (5) business days to review the request and issue a written response either affirming its initial selection of a vendor or cancelling the RFP. No hearing shall be held as part of the review. The outcome of the Department's review is not subject to appeal.

Enclosures:

Attachment A: P-37 Contract Form

Attachment B: ALT W-9 Form

Attachment C: Cover Page