

# **REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS**

## **Manual High School Renewal Project**

**Commissioned by:** Denver Public Schools

**Submittal Deadline:** Wednesday, May 31 2006

### **Background**

On February 16, 2006, the Denver Public School (DPS) Board voted to temporarily close Manual High School for a year because of low academic performance, low enrollment, and high attrition rates. The district plans to design a strong new Manual High School that reflects the needs and priorities of the northeast Denver community and enhances the broader educational landscape of DPS. Manual is slated to reopen in the fall of 2007 with a 9<sup>th</sup> grade class, and will add one grade level each of the next three years. DPS's commitment to reopen Manual as a premier high school will be a considerable undertaking and will require a constructive, thoughtful, and results-oriented process to ensure the success of the school and future high school reform efforts.

### **Goals**

This project has three main goals: 1) Design of a premier high school reflecting the diverse academic and programmatic needs and priorities of the community to be opened at the Manual High School campus for the 2007-2008 school year; 2) Creation of an authentic community process that sets a strong academic foundation for Manual as a school that the district, neighborhood, and the greater Denver community can support; and 3) Identification of best practices/processes in order to build DPS's capacity to reform other district secondary schools.

### **Project Details**

Specifically, a firm is needed to help lead and manage the community renewal process for the redesign of Manual High School from June 2006 - February 2007. This process should engage Manual stakeholders, including area residents, parents, students, educators, alumni, community and faith-based organizations, business leaders, and others to help:

- Articulate and embrace a shared vision for Manual;
- Select a school design; and
- Develop a strong academic program for the school that aligns with the "Denver Plan."

The selected firm will be asked to contract with education experts to assist with educating and communicating with community stakeholders about effective school designs and best practices. The firm will also be encouraged to contract with local community experts to ensure effective communication, outreach, and engagement.

At the outset of this process, the district is committed to a fair and open process that results in the best possible choice for the future of Manual High School. The district will, however, provide a framework for the construction of these decisions. This decision-making framework for the new Manual High School will include:

- A *rigorous* course of secondary school instruction for all students, which must be aligned with the "Denver Plan" and informed by the report of the Denver Public Schools High School Reform Commission, *Not a Moment to Lose*,

- Adherence to the current Denver Public Schools/Denver Classroom Teachers Association Master Agreement (the teacher union agreement),
- Selection of the school principal and key staff according to DPS procedure that reflects and understands the academic and programmatic priorities of the community,
- Priority enrollment for neighborhood students, and
- Consideration of the community context of northeast Denver, including neighborhood history, demographic trends, quality and condition of school buildings, schools of choice in the area, and sustainability of Manual High School within the context of school choice.

### **Anticipated Project Needs\***

- **Project Manager** – Manage the design process for Manual High School, ensure that the design takes into consideration the broader educational and community context of northeast Denver, and manage all the components of the project including project evaluation.
- **Change Management** – Coordinate stakeholders, facilitators, education experts, and others to create a shared vision for the new Manual High School.
- **Strategic Communications** – Provide communications for the project, including outlining primary communication goals, describing main themes and key messages for the project, tracking effective communications, and coordinating all communications and community engagement activities.
- **Technical Assistance/Administrative Support** – Focus on document management, scribing community meetings, research, and analysis.

\*The roles described above are initial ideas about potential staffing needs for the Manual renewal project. Firms are encouraged to work outside the scope of this list and build the team it believes is most appropriate for the project. Firms are also expected to work with the community to contract out for appropriate services during the process, e.g. community outreach, expertise in school design, facilitation. Firms may collaborate and apply as a team to handle the various project responsibilities.

### **Project Deliverables**

The selected firm will work with DPS to outline a comprehensive work plan that clearly identifies roles, responsibilities, tasks, deliverables and timelines.

### ***Tentative Project Schedule***

<b>June 20:</b>	Firm selected, ready to begin work
<b>August 1:</b>	School vision articulated
<b>September 1:</b>	School design chosen
<b>September 5:</b>	Superintendent and Board affirm vision and school design
<b>November 1:</b>	Principal for new Manual High School selected
<b>January 1:</b>	Overall program and school opening description complete
<b>February 1:</b>	Consulting firm completes scope of work including analysis, best practices, capacity building, etc...

## Submittal Requirements

Proposals should be limited to 10 pages and should contain the following information:

- A proposed work plan outlining the tasks to be completed by the firm.
- A proposed structure and design for the Manual High School community renewal process and for building DPS's capacity to pursue secondary reform across the district.
- The firm's experience: 1) leading a design process, 2) managing the politics of working with diverse stakeholder groups, and 3) contracting with experts and specialists (i.e. around best practices) to successfully reach project goals.
- Ability to demonstrate cultural competence that reflects the diverse neighborhood in which Manual High School is situated.
- A brief description of the firm and the proposed project team – identifying each key member, their qualifications and respective responsibilities and the anticipated percentage of their time on the project.
- An estimated cost for the scope of work outlined by the firm.
- A list of three professional references including addresses and phone numbers.

## Selection Process

Generally, the selection process for this project will be based primarily on qualifications, work history, references, and the overall "best fit" for DPS. An advisory committee of community leaders has been selected and will work with the superintendent to recommend a firm for this project. Their recommendation will be submitted to the Denver School Board for final approval.

## RFQ Timeline

<b>May 12:</b>	RFQ Published
<b>May 24:</b>	One day briefing hosted in Denver for interested firms. The RFQ briefing will include the opportunity to meet with senior DPS staff, the advisory committee, and community stakeholders
<b>May 31:</b>	Proposals due by 5pm
<b>June 9 and 10:</b>	Finalists interview in person with the advisory committee and superintendent, and participate in community review
<b>June 13:</b>	Finalist chosen by the advisory committee and superintendent; sent to School Board for approval

Questions regarding this solicitation may be submitted via email to Kim Knous Dolan at [RFQManual@dpsk12.org](mailto:RFQManual@dpsk12.org) or by phone at 720-932-1544 or 720-273-8993 (cell).

**Please provide 10 sealed copies of your submittal (due by 5pm on Wednesday, May 31) to the following address:**

**Denver Public Schools – Manual RFQ  
c/o Sarah Hughes  
900 Grant Street, Suite 702  
Denver, CO 80203**