

**ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION (ADR)
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
Minnesota Department of Education (MDE)**

Project Overview

The Department of Education, Division of Compliance and Assistance, is soliciting proposals from **individual** contractors for mediation of special education conflict resolution and facilitators of education planning meetings. This Request for Proposals will establish a master roster of approximately 10-15 qualified, trained mediators, with dispute resolution experience that have or can acquire the necessary knowledge of special education program requirements from which the Department of Education will assign cases on a random, rotational, or other impartial basis. In order to assure the neutrality of our contractors, we do not contract with individuals who are currently on the boards of, or employed by school districts, education advocacy organizations or disability organizations.

Required Education, Training and Experience

1. Bachelor's degree.
2. Accredited training in mediation.
3. Prior experience in mediation.

Proposal Content

The following will be considered minimum contents of the Proposal:

1. A cover letter that contains the following:
 - a. Contact information, including an email address, mailing address, work and cell phone number, if applicable. An original signature must be applied in ink.
 - b. Statement that demonstrates the responder's interest in the project and understanding on the nature of the contract work.
 - c. A statement related to the responder's ability and understanding of importance to accept at least 30% of all work assignments annually.
 - d. A brief statement explaining how the responder's qualifications relate to the knowledge, skills and experience required for this type of work.
 - e. A list of all entities with which they have a relationship that could create, or appear to create a conflict of interest with the work that is outlined in this RFP. The list should indicate the names of the entities, the relationships and statements explaining the conflict or potential conflict. If there are none, the cover letter must include an affirmation.

Note: In order to assure the neutrality of our contractors, we will not contract with individuals who are currently on the boards of, or employed by school districts, education advocacy organizations or disability organizations.

2. A resume that contains **a separate section for each** of the following components:
 - a. Responder's work history including current contract obligations/current employment and membership in professional organizations.
 - b. Responder's training and education background (a minimum of Bachelor's Degree and accredited mediation training required). Include course titles, trainers, and dates of mediation training received and number of hours. The responder **must** identify the provider of the accredited mediation training.
 - c. Responder's attributes, as indicated below, relevant to increased ability to resolve special education conflicts or develop education plans:
 - knowledge of special education laws
 - ability to communicate in ASL (signing), Spanish, Hmong, Somali, Vietnamese, Russian, Laotian, Chinese, Cambodian and/or Arabic
 - cultural fluency, experience working with diverse cultures, here and abroad

- d. Highlight prior experience mediating special education conflicts.
 - e. Highlight prior experience facilitating education planning meetings.
3. Letters of Recommendation - Provide three letters of recommendation that include current contact information including email addresses and phone numbers for the entity providing the recommendation. Letters should be submitted from individuals knowledgeable about the responder's specific expertise, skills, experience and suitability related to the requirements.
 4. Table of Contents which cross-references the responder's proposal and aligns with required components in this request for proposal.
 5. Cost Information. The responder **must** indicate individually, the hourly rate they will charge for services and the hourly rate they will charge for travel time. The department has set a maximum rate of up to \$100 an hour for services with a maximum hourly rate of up to \$50 for travel time. The combined costs per hour will be a factor in the evaluation.

Selected contractors will be reimbursed for necessary travel costs up to the current maximum rates outlined in the Commissioner's Plan reflected at: <http://www.mmd.admin.state.mn.us/commissionersplan.htm>.

6. Submission of the following forms:
 - a. Affidavit of Non- Collusion (must contain original signature and notarization).
 - b. Certificate Regarding Lobbying.
 - c. Affirmative Action Certificate.
 - d. Veteran's Preference Form, if applicable, must be completed and signed.
 - e. Submission of certification for preference to Targeted Group/Economically Disadvantaged Business or Individuals, if applicable.

Proposal Evaluation

Pass/Fail: Only those proposals that reflect the requirements below will be forwarded for evaluation.

1. Inclusion of the Table of Contents
2. Minimum of Bachelor's Degree
3. Accredited Mediation Training (must identify provider of this training)
4. Received by the Due Date and Time
5. Responder not Suspended or Debarred
6. Three letters of recommendation. (Letters of recommendation written by an MDE employee will not be considered).

Note: Any proposals found to reflect subcontracting for the mediation services instead of responder directly providing the services themselves will be disqualified from consideration.

Evaluation Factors: 200 Points Possible

A 195 point scale will be used to evaluate the proposals based on qualitative factors. Five (5) points will be used to evaluate the responder's hourly rates for travel time and services. The factors and weights upon which proposals will be evaluated are detailed below. The evaluation points for qualitative factors I, II, and III assigned by each evaluator will be summed and divided per the number of evaluators to compute an average score for each proposal. Then, cost information, Section IV, will be considered and points added to the average scores that were computed based on qualitative factors. Preference points of 12 additional points (or 6% of 200 points) will be added, if applicable, for targeted vendors: economically disadvantaged businesses and individuals, veteran's business-owned preference, if applicable and certified.

The top scoring entities will be identified and approximately 10-15 vendors will be considered for master contract offers resulting in the master contract work orders.

QUALITATIVE FACTORS	POSSIBLE POINT VALUE
I. Cover Letter – must clearly respond to the following:	
a. Contact information, email, work and cell phone numbers, if applicable, along with mailing address and original signature in ink applied by contractor.	0
b. Statement demonstrating responder’s interest and understanding of the nature of the contract work.	10
c. A statement from the responder outlining their ability and understanding of the need to accept a minimum of 30% of work assignments annually.	10
d. A brief statement explaining how the responder’s qualifications relate to the knowledge, skills and experience required for this type of work.	20
e. The responder will provide a list of all entities with which they have a relationship which could create, or appear to create a conflict of interest with the work that is outlined in this RFP. The list should indicate the names of the entities, the relationships and statements explaining the conflicts or potential conflicts. <u>If there are none</u> , the cover letter must include an affirmation. Note: In order to assure the neutrality of our contractors, we do not contract with individuals who are currently on the boards of, or employed by school districts, education advocacy organizations or disability organizations. Total Points Possible: 45	5
II. Resume – Responses to the following must be provided in separate sections	
a. Responder’s work history experience including current contract obligations/current employment and membership in professional organizations.	15
b. Responder’s training and education background (a minimum of a Bachelor’s Degree is required as well as accredited mediation training). Include titles of coursework, trainers, dates of mediation training received, the number of hours and providers of the trainings.	20
c. Responder’s additional attributes relevant to enhancing their conflict resolution skills: *Knowledge of special education law	10
d. *Ability to communicate in ASL (signing), Spanish, Hmong, Somali, Vietnamese, Russian, Laotian, Chinese, Cambodian and/or Arabic	10
e. *Cultural fluency, experience working with diverse cultures, here or abroad	10
f. Highlight prior mediation experience with special education conflicts	30
g. Highlight prior experience with facilitation of education planning meetings. Total Points Possible: 100	5
III. Interviews <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responder’s general communication skills • Responder’s answers to questions that relate to their proposal submitted, the requirements in MDEs request for proposal solicitation document and expected contract work Total Points Possible: 50	50
IV. Cost Factors – Responder must indicate the hourly rate they will charge for the services to be and must identify the hourly rate they will charge for travel time. Rates per hour may not exceed \$100 an hour for services and \$50 an hour for travel time. Total Points Possible: 5 points (to responder with lowest hourly rates based on a combined hourly rate for services and travel). Each of the other proposals is given a percentage of the 5 points	5

based on a ratio of the total combined hourly rates for services and travel as divided into the lowest hourly rate (based on combined rates for services and travel).	
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Total Points Possible: 5

First consideration will be given to the responders with the highest points.

It is anticipated that the evaluation and selection will be completed by April, 2012. All Responders will be notified of the results.