



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING FACILITATION

Issued: November 28, 2022

Deadline for Submittal: January 6, 2023

Grand Rapids Child Discovery Center Request for Proposals for Strategic Planning Facilitation

PURPOSE

The Grand Rapids Child Discovery Center (GRCDC) has initiated a Request for Proposal (RFP) process to identify a qualified vendor to guide and implement a strategic visioning and planning process.

WHO MAY RESPOND

GRCDC seeks a vendor who has demonstrated experience in successfully developing consensus-based strategic plans, has exemplary facilitation skills with strong social-emotional awareness, proven experience with non-profit and education strategic planning and a robust understanding of the structure and purpose of non-profit, independent public school academies (charter schools).

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ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION

Grand Rapids Child Discovery Center (GRCDC) is a single building school district (SBSD) serving about 287 students in Kindergarten through 5th grade. Located in Grand Rapids, MI, GRCDC was founded in 1999, with the goal of providing a Reggio Emilia- inspired education to the children of Grand Rapids in partnership with area families and Aquinas College. As the school grew, it developed a relationship with Grand Rapids Public Schools and has been authorized by the district since the beginning.

As a public school academy, GRCDC:

- Is governed by an independent Board of Governors, approved by the Board of Education of Grand Rapids Public Schools
- Employs teachers who are employees of GRCDC and included in the Grand Rapids Education Association Bargaining agreement
- Employs one Executive Director/Superintendent who reports to the Board, while all other employees report to the ED, employs 1 Instructional Leader, 12 classroom teachers, 2 specials teachers, 1 special education teacher, 5-8 full time paraprofessionals, 2 academic interventionists, 1 full time custodian, 2 SEL Interventionists, 1 Director of Operations, 1 Administrative support, 1 part time Cleaning Aide, 1 part time lunch aide, 1 Food Service worker
- Is open to any family with children in grades K-5 who wish to attend. Families fill out an application and students are invited to enroll through a random selection process, per state law
- Has an MOU for before school/after school and summer care, as well as a GRSP preschool classroom housed in our school and run by Early Discovery Center
- Contracts with Hungerford Nichols for Business Management and Accounting services

Current Student Body Demographics:

- Currently 287 students enrolled in grades K-5
- Student body is about 64% white, 36% students of color (with two or more races and Black representing the only measurable subgroups)
- 7% of students qualify for special education services
- 38% of students qualify for free or reduced lunch

Vision and Core Values:

The Vision and mission: The Mission of the Grand Rapids Child Discovery Center is to continuously expand the potential of children, the experiences of educators and the involvement of parents within a diverse community of Grand Rapids.

The Vision of the Grand Rapids Child Discovery Center is to base all decisions on the principles of Reggio Emilia incorporating current research on learning as well as developmentally appropriate practice.

[Vision of Reggio Emilia Inspired Instruction](#)

The Common Purpose

Our common purpose is learning for all, resulting in increased life opportunities for every student who enters our school. **We always aim for personal growth, robust learning, equity, and strong relationships within our school.** Everything that we do must be aligned with this.

Our school is intentionally located at the heart of Grand Rapids, with a philosophy steeped in democracy and relationship, a signal to our community that ALL are WELCOME HERE and we will strive to ensure that ALL will LEARN and GROW HERE.

The Core Values and Belief Statements:

GRDC CORE VALUES Potential ↔ Connection ↔ Inspiration ↔ Equity	
<p style="text-align: center;">We believe in Potential...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Humans are born with the need and the right to communicate, interact, and use their energy and curiosity to construct their learning.● Children have a voice that is sought, valued, and shapes the life of the school.● Children and adults can do hard things in order to grow, and can withstand ambiguity, cognitive struggle, and challenge in order to learn.● Each person has limitless potential and we behave in ways that show that.● The school's charge is to provide a system of delivery resulting in all children learning at high levels, so that their life opportunities and access are expanded through their experience here.	
<p style="text-align: center;">We believe in Connection...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● All of us bloom by engaging with one another, sharing roles and jobs, and approaching our school with collective responsibility.● Each child has a network of relationships at school that make it impossible for them to fail.	

- At the center of our system is the triad relationship between teacher/staff, children, and family- all of these are connected within the context of the environment and community.
- Adults must build a safety net for children- our processes and procedures result in a systematic response that meets each child's social/emotional and academic needs
- When we are in conflict, we must seek mutually agreeable solutions and collaborate to solve problems.

We believe in Inspiration...

- Each of us possesses a unique combination of 100 languages- for expressing, communicating, absorbing and experimenting with the world around them.
- The 100 languages must be honored and recognized in our experiences with one another.
- Curiosity, creativity, and flexibility are necessary ingredients in the human condition.
- Children thrive where adults thrive and vice versa.
- Joy, fun, and celebration are essential to our life together at school.

We believe in Equity...

- Each community member is whole, just as they are.
- Learning, wellness, nutrition, and access to experiences and opportunities are rights that all people have.
- We have a responsibility to constantly ask, "what am I missing?" "whose voice is missing?" "Are we all here?" "Are we all heard?" in order to elevate the voices of members of oppressed or marginalized groups.
- Each person in our community belongs; this is reflected in our interactions with one another, our physical space, our events and curricular choices.
- We have a responsibility to disrupt the status quo and seek equity, reject oppression, and create social justice.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Since 2017, GRCDC has stabilized and achieved our goal of full enrollment. We own our current building and maintain a healthy financial position for a school our size. GRCDC came out of the pandemic stable as an institution, with some wonderings about how to use what we learned during this time to reimagine what school could be for both staff and families. To capitalize on our solid fiscal and organizational foundation, now is the time to look to the future and determine what is next for us through a comprehensive and engaging strategic planning process.

SCOPE OF WORK

High level, we expect the project to include the following:

- Project management and coordination
- Design and execution of a strategic visioning and comprehensive planning process
- Development of an actionable strategic plan with budget for implementation
- All of the above completed with human-centered design processes and principles

Successful applicants will address some or all of the following:

- How the vendor will learn about our SBSB and collaborate with our Executive Director, Board, staff, students, families, and community stakeholders
- Phases of the project with timeline and plan for updates to ED and the Board
- The vendor's alignment with our current common purpose and values and approach to renewing our articulation of our vision and mission
- Knowledge of and experience with incorporating effective practices for K-5 public school academies within the planning process and plan itself

The Proposal must include the following:

- Organization of firm, including whether the firm is BIPOC and/or women-owned and/or led
- The consultant's experience with public school districts, SBSBs, and public school academies
- The consultant's specific interest in working with GRCDC
- Support that GRCDC would be expected to provide
- Risks that could take the process off track
- List of deliverables GRCDC can expect
- Options of continued engagement through implementation. All proposals must include a 6 month and 1 year follow up opportunity.
- Comprehensive, all-inclusive budget not to exceed \$20,000

- Lead consultant and any team members along with resume and bios
- Proposed project timeline

ESTIMATED TIMELINE

11/28/2022 Issue Strategic Plan RFP

1/6/2023: Deadline to submit Proposals, 5pm EST

Late January: Notify Vendors Selected for Interviews

Mid February: Select/Notify Vendor

CONTENTS FOR PROPOSALS AND FORMAT

- Consultant qualifications** to conduct the scope of service activities, expertise, knowledge and experience. To successfully accomplish the scope of service, the consultant should have the following qualifications:
 - Experience in collaborative vision and mission development
 - Experience in successfully developing mission-aligned strategic plans
 - Strong adult facilitation skills
 - Experience soliciting input from various stakeholder groups
 - Knowledge of budgeting, marketing and communications
 - Experience in inspiring others to think about the future of an organization
 - Project management skills

If more than one person will be working on the project, the proposal should include which activities each person will conduct and how it aligns with their expertise

- Work Plan-** A detailed description of the activities to be conducted broken into stages or phases, a timeline for the activities in each stage or phase, milestones/deliverables in each stage or phase, a detailed budget and payment schedule tied to milestones. (Name, Relationship, Address, Phone, Email Address)
- References-** At least 3 references of individuals who can speak to their experienced with the consultant in conducting projects of a similar nature
- Previous Work Product-** At least 2 examples of similar work as that requested within the RFP.

SELECTION

- Qualifications
- Scope
- Work Plan
- Budget

PROCESS FOR SUBMISSION

Proposals should be submitted in PDF format via email to nuyensl@childdiscoverycenter.org by 5pm on January 6, 2023. If the file is too large for email, a link to the file can be provided. The subject line of the email should read "Response to RFP".

Late submissions will not be accepted. All submissions must follow the Policies for vendors and conflict of interest guidelines per Board Policy. Board Policies can be found at childdiscoverycenter.org