



Request for Proposals Safe Routes to School National Partnership

Education Consultant Sought for Development of Safe Routes to School Resource guide

Released: Thursday, December 17, 2009

Proposals Due: Friday, January 8, 2010

Project Summary and Background

The Safe Routes to School National Partnership seeks a consultant with expertise in school systems, education policy, and Safe Routes to School to research and develop a resource guide on Safe Routes to School (SRTS) targeted to education policymakers and professionals. The audience includes state-level K-12 education policymakers, local school board members, superintendents, principals and leaders at individual schools. The purpose of the guide is three-fold:

- To make the case as to why children's levels of physical activity impacts academics and other important issues for schools and school districts;
- To explain the role Safe Routes to School can play in increasing children's levels of physical activity during and outside the school time through a comprehensive "5 E's" SRTs approach; and
- To provide a series of action steps and policies—exemplified by local cases studies—that can be implemented at the state, school district, and individual school level to implement and institutionalize SRTS, particularly within the framework of efforts on school wellness, increased levels of physical activity, and physical education (P.E.) classes.

There is currently a national movement to ensure that all schools offer at least 150 minutes of P.E. per week to ensure that children get adequate levels of physical activity. However, this is only half of the recommended 60 minutes of physical activity per day. School districts are also working on school wellness efforts and policies to get kids more active and eating healthy foods. While most of these efforts focus only on what happens during the school day, Safe Routes to School programs can augment before and after-school efforts to expand physical activity and fitness. Through SRTS, schools and communities can make changes to the built environment, improve safety, and teach children safe pedestrian and bicycle skills (ideally, embedded into P.E. classes). With the changes to the built environment, community-centered schools, and safety education in place, more families will walk and bicycle to and from school.

However, education professionals and policymakers can be reluctant to fully adopt Safe Routes to School programs because of its focus outside of the school day—and because of the great demands on school systems to raise academic achievement levels. This resource guide is meant to help education policymakers and professionals understand the value of incorporating SRTS into their efforts to improve student academic performance, health and fitness.

Consultant Roles and Responsibilities

The consultant will be provided with an outline for the report, and will be responsible for several activities and deliverables:

1. Review and summarize the research on the link between physical fitness and academic performance, behavior and attendance.
2. Develop the messages and language that will be used in the resource guide that appeal to and directly address the challenges of education professionals and policymakers.
3. Make the case for how SRTS helps with physical activity levels outside of the school day—and why this would be important to schools and school systems.
4. Work with the Partnership to develop a list of action steps and policies that can be undertaken by state education policymakers, local school boards and individual schools to include SRTS in a coordinated approach on student wellness and health. This could include issues related to implementation of SRTS, PE time and curriculum standards, traffic safety measures and infrastructure improvements, siting schools in neighborhood and joint-use agreements, partnerships with law enforcement to address safety, bus transportation policies, and more.
5. Identify and interview local and state practitioners/policymakers that are including SRTS in comprehensive approaches on student wellness and physical activity (the Partnership will also help identify examples).
6. Write a first draft of a resource guide that encompasses all of the aspects discussed in items one through five. For reference, the final resource guide (with pictures and formatting added) is intended to be approximately 30 to 40 pages in length. Consultant is not responsible for graphic design or printing of the final guide. (Deliverable)
7. Revise the draft resource guide to address comments and suggestions from reviewers and the funder and deliver the final resource guide. (Deliverable).

Timeline and Deliverables

This project is on a fairly tight timeline, and has several checkpoints to ensure the project is on track. These deadlines can be discussed and finalized during the contracting process; however, the final deadline of May 10, 2010 is not negotiable. The contractor should be prepared to have conference calls with the Partnership every one to two weeks to discuss the status of the project and next steps.

Mid-January 2010	Report outline is finalized by the Partnership with the funders
January 22, 2010	Latest date at which contract is awarded and work begins
February 15, 2010	Consultant delivers detailed outline, sites to profile, and messaging framework
February 22, 2010	Partnership and funder comments due on detailed outline and messaging framework; work begins on writing the resource guide
March 29, 2010	Consultant delivers first draft of the resource guide
April 12, 2010	Comments due from reviewers; consultant revises guide
April 26, 2010	Consultant delivers second draft of the resource guide
May 3, 2010	Comments due from reviewers; consultant revises guide and does final round of proofreading and editing
May 10, 2010	Consultant delivers final resource guide (graphic design and printing to take place after May 10; this is not the consultant's responsibility)

Expertise needed

We are seeking a consultant with several competency areas:

- Outstanding writing and editing skills;
- Understanding of the various levels within the K-12 educational system and the roles and responsibilities of each;
- Familiarity with school wellness and coordinated school health movements;
- Knowledge of the Safe Routes to School program (ideally knowledge of both implementation practice and policy);
- Ability to access and synthesize in plain language research on physical fitness and academic achievement;
- Ability to interview local and state practitioners to identify promising practices and case studies; and
- Capacity to be responsive and regularly discuss progress with the Partnership.

Budget

Proposals in the range of \$10,000 to \$17,500 will be considered. Please include your hourly rate and the estimated number of hours for this project in your proposal.

Instructions for Submitting a Proposal

Please submit a proposal to Margo Pedroso, Deputy Director, Safe Routes to School National Partnership at margo@saferoutespartnership.org no later than Friday, January 8, 2010. Questions or clarifications can also be directed to Margo via email.

Proposals from individuals, firms, non-profits, or teams of individuals are all welcome. Your response should include the following:

- A brief proposal (3 to 5 pages maximum) outlining your proposed approach to developing this resource guide, your interest in this project, your experience and competencies that will result in an excellent and useful final product, proposed timeline, and budget (including hours of personnel time) for the project;
- Resumes for individuals who will be working on the project;
- At least two references each for the individuals who will be working on the project; and
- Examples of past research and writing projects demonstrating your abilities.

The Safe Routes to School National Partnership will make a decision within two weeks of the proposal deadline so that the project can begin during January 2010.