



Association of Alaska School Boards
111 West 9th St., Juneau, AK 99801
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www.aasb.org

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Strategic Plan for Alaska's Mixed Delivery System of Early Childhood Care and Education for Ages Prenatal through Eight

August 13, 2019

Contact: Betsy Brenneman, Preschool Development Grant Coordinator
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The project described is supported by the Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five Initiative (PDG B-5), Grant Number 90TP0012, from the Office of Child Care, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Office of Child Care, the Administration for Children and Families, or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

AASB RFP Summary - PDG Strategic Plan
(must be signed and attached to proposal)

RFP/Solicitation Issue Date: Tuesday, August 13, 2019			
RFP/Solicitation Closing Date: Friday, August 30, 2019		RFP/Solicitation Closing Time: 5:00pm AST	
Issued By: Association of Alaska School Boards (AASB)			
Address: 1111 West 9th St., Juneau, AK 99801			
Telephone Number: 907-463-1660			
Association of Alaska School Boards is a non-profit agency in the state of Alaska founded in 1954 and is exempt from any state or federal tax.			
Responses must be received on or before 5:00pm AST on Friday Aug. 30, 2019 at AASB, 1111 West 9 th St., Juneau, AK 99801			
Hard Copy Responses: please submit one (1) original and three (3) copies in a <u>sealed</u> envelope to Betsy Brenneman, Preschool Development Grant Coordinator, AASB, 1111 West 9 th St., Juneau AK 99801			
Electronic Responses: email submission to bbrenneman@aab.org with a subject line of "PDG Strategic Plan"			
For questions/information, you are invited to attend a pre-proposal webinar on Monday, August 19 at 10:30am Alaska Standard Time . After that, email Betsy Brenneman, Preschool Development Grant Coordinator, bbrenneman@aab.org with "PDG Strategic Plan" in the subject line. Questions/information must be emailed no later than Thursday, August 22, 2019 . All questions received by this date will be answered within three (3) business days and will be posted on the AASB			
AASB reserves the right to waive informalities or irregularities, to reject any or all proposals received, to accept the proposal deemed best for the organization, and/or request new proposals, if necessary.			
Any objection to the above conditions must be clearly indicated in the offers.			
Small or minority-owned businesses are encouraged to respond to this solicitation.			
Acknowledgement: In compliance with this RFP and to all the conditions imposed herein, the undersigned offers and agrees to furnish the services in accordance with the attached signed proposal or as mutually agreed upon by subsequent negotiation.			
VENDOR INFORMATION AND SIGNATURE			
Company Name:			
Address:			
Telephone:			
Email:			
Tax ID:			
Print Name	Title	Authorized Signature	Date

RFP – Strategic Plan for Alaska’s Mixed Delivery System of Early Childhood Care and Education for Ages Prenatal through Eight

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I. Purpose of RFP

The Association of Alaska School Boards (AASB), with funding from the US Department of Health and Human Services and the US Department of Education awarded to the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) is soliciting proposals from highly qualified individuals or organizations to develop a comprehensive statewide strategic plan for the mixed delivery system of early care and learning services for low-income, vulnerable or disadvantaged and rural Alaska children ages prenatal through eight and their families.

A primary purpose of the Preschool Development Grant is to provide funds to develop a plan to support and facilitate collaboration and coordination among existing ECE programs in order to establish and maintain a mixed delivery system that will support all children and their families but particularly those identified as rural, low-income or most vulnerable.

The grant also provides funding for a comprehensive statewide needs assessment, currently underway, which will inform the strategic plan as well as activities aimed at maximizing parent choice and voice, sharing best practices within the ECE system and improving program quality.

This RFP is seeking proposals for what will be the first comprehensive actionable statewide strategic plan for Alaska's entire mixed delivery early childhood care and education system. The primary purpose is to plan for changes to the system that will maximize the availability of high quality ECE options across providers and partners for children and families, particularly those identified as low-income, rural and vulnerable, improve the quality of care, streamline administrative infrastructure, and improve state ECE funding efficiencies. It will be used to support and facilitate collaboration and coordination among existing programs in order to create efficiency, effectiveness and capacity in Alaska's system serving children prenatal through age eight.

II. Timeline and Contract Period

All responses to this request for proposal should be received no later than **Friday, Aug. 30, 2019 at 5pm Alaska time.**

Anticipated Timeline for RFP Award

Event	Time	Date
Issue RFP		Tues. Aug. 13, 2019
Pre-proposal Zoom webinar meeting	10:30amAST	Mon. Aug. 19, 2019
Deadline to submit additional RFP questions and clarifications		Thurs. Aug. 22, 2019
Anticipated date of response to additional vendor questions via AASB website.		Mon. Aug. 26, 2019
Proposal deadline	5:00pm AST	Fri. Aug. 30, 2019
Review of proposals		Sept. 3-5, 2019
RFP award announcement		Wed. Sept. 11, 2019

The term of any contract resulting from this RFP shall start on or about Sept. 11, 2019 (or from the date the contract is executed) and shall expire on or about December 30, 2019 unless terminated earlier or extended beyond that date consistent with the terms of the contract.

AASB reserves the right to alter or update this schedule but will make every effort to adhere to it.

III. Background and Context of PDG Strategic Plan

A. Introduction

In December of 2018, Alaska was awarded a Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5) from the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), which is jointly administered by the US Department of Health and Human Services (HSS) and US Department of Education (ED). The governor designated the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) as the lead agency in partnership with Alaska Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) for this cross-sector initiative.

In January 2019 DEED signed an agreement with the Association of Alaska School Boards (AASB) to coordinate activities described in the grant, primarily completion of a statewide needs assessment and strategic plan. AASB is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization founded in 1954 representing 51 school districts and more than 330 individual board members. AASB advocates for children and youth by assisting school boards in providing quality public education focused on student achievement through effective local governance and engagement. Its services include strategic planning, board training and development, community engagement and support, youth advocacy and leadership training, school improvement workshops, digital learning services and legislative advocacy.

Also in January 2019, the Early Childhood Joint Task Force (JTF) was formed to guide and align work on the PDG needs assessment and strategic plan with two other projects: the Impact Project (AK Dept. of Health and Social Services Child Care Program Office) to align ECE systems with programs and services and provide support and recommendations to the Alaska Early Childhood Coordinating Council (AECCC) with technical assistance from the State Capacity Building Center, and Indigenous Project LAUNCH (Southcentral Foundation) to prepare Alaska Native children 0-8 with skills to succeed in school through a grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

An 8-member JTF leadership team of representatives of AASB, DEED, DHSS and Southcentral Foundation meets weekly and guides the 40+ member task force of EC stakeholders advising all three projects. To support the mission and align with the purpose of the AECCC and to meet the requirements of the three projects, the leadership team agreed the PDG B-5 needs assessment and strategic plan should focus, as much as possible, on children ages prenatal through 8.

AASB has contracted with the McDowell Group of Juneau and Anchorage, Alaska to conduct the statewide PDG needs assessment which is underway and will provide baseline information and analysis of Alaska's early care and learning landscape to inform the strategic planning process. It has also contracted with the All Alaska Pediatric Partnership (A2P2) to share data being

compiled for its “Early Childhood System Scan and Baseline Report on the Condition of Young Children in Alaska” (EC Report).

There are many engaged and passionate early childhood partners ready to mobilize and collaborate to improve outcomes for Alaska’s children and families. However, there continue to be challenges to adopting a shared, comprehensive strategic plan in which everyone can clearly identify their most appropriate roles and responsibilities. In order to develop and achieve consensus on such a plan, key stakeholders, including AECCC members, need to undergo an honest self-assessment process in which existing gaps as well as redundancies in the system are identified. The PDG needs assessment and the process leading to creation of an actionable statewide strategic plan is expected to accomplish this and to invite all key stakeholders in to operate together under a clear and shared vision and with a powerful unified voice.

B. Overview of Alaska’s Early Childhood Mixed Delivery System

Alaska has a loosely coordinated mixed delivery system of early care and learning programs across education, health, behavioral health, human services, tribal and private agencies. It includes providers from the public, private, tribal and faith-based sectors including various types of licensed child care centers, home-based providers, school-age programs, Head Start and Early Head Start, homeschools, state pre-kindergarten, early intervention and preventative home visiting services, library story times, the Imagination Library, Sunday Schools and stand-alone special education programs.

In 2006 Alaska’s first Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Plan (ECCS) was developed by public and private partners across the state. In 2007 the Interdepartmental Early Childhood Coordinating Council (IECCC) was formed to oversee and coordinate the state’s early learning activities. In 2010, IECCC was designated as the state’s advisory council on early children education and care and is now called the Alaska Early Childhood Coordinating Council (AECCC).

AECCC is co-chaired by the Commissioners of the Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) and the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) and is designed to facilitate the alignment of services for young children prenatal through age eight and their families, planning efforts, resources, data, policy development, and funding as well as establish connections between health, mental health, education and family support systems and public and private partners. Progress has been made in achieving these goals, but there is still much to do.

IV. Scope of Work

A. Overview

AASB is seeking a vendor with project management expertise in strategic plan development, stakeholder engagement, communication and dissemination to facilitate the design of a strategic planning process and to write a comprehensive, actionable plan to improve Alaska’s mixed delivery system of early childhood care and education (ECE) for children ages prenatal through eight and their families.

The strategic plan will be based on PDG needs assessment data and findings and stakeholder input and will be developed in collaboration with the EC Joint Task Force leadership team which will serve as the planning committee, offer guidance and make decisions throughout the process.

The plan will lay out a thoughtful, ambitious, but achievable, path to implementation of a multi-year effort to establish and/or improve a comprehensive mixed delivery system for all children, especially the most vulnerable. The plan will detail goals, action plans, roles and performance indicators for improving the state’s ECE system; demonstrate input and ongoing involvement of stakeholders directly impacted by the ECE system; and analyze gaps and weaknesses noted in the PDG needs assessment with recommendations for improvement with goals and action steps.

Vendors should be aware that a very short timeline exists to complete this work and should be attentive to ensure adequate capacity to meet the needs of the PDG timeline. Vendors are encouraged to seek collaborative relationships with other entities to ensure adequate expertise and capacity to meet the requirements of this RFP. If a collaboration, one entity must serve as the lead and fiduciary for the agreement and may subcontract with others.

Anticipated Timeline for Scope of Work

RFP awarded	Sept. 11, 2019
Status report	Oct. 9, 2019
First draft ready for review	Oct. 24, 2019
Final draft, executive summary ready for review	Nov. 29, 2019
Final draft, executive summary completed	Dec. 16, 2019
Drafts of presentation materials, graphics, etc. ready for review	Dec. 20, 2019
Final strategic plan and all deliverables completed.	Dec. 30, 2019

These dates may be adjusted with pre-approval from AASB and in the case of an extension granted by DEED and federal funders.

The awarded vendor should be prepared to begin the strategic planning process immediately upon award and work toward meeting each of these deadlines to ensure timely execution.

Funding available for the scope of work described herein is \$180,000 - 230,000, all inclusive.

B. Tasks

1. Obtain consistent and continuing input from the PDG Coordinator and JTF leadership team to design and implement a “plan for the plan” that includes scope, vision, framework, structure, goals, strategies and a timeline for achieving a comprehensive, statewide, actionable plan by Dec. 30, 2019.

2. Complete a review and cross-walk of existing strategic plans, recommendations from the PDG needs assessment and other resources to develop priorities for the strategic planning process in collaboration with JTF leadership.

3. Design a series of facilitated processes to engage key partners and stakeholders in building a mission and vision for the state ECE system and prioritizing findings of the needs assessment to arrive at data-driven goals and strategies for a shared actionable agenda in the strategic plan.
4. Collaborate with AASB and JTF leadership to facilitate stakeholder engagement.
5. Work with the PDG Coordinator and the JTF leadership team to develop the final draft of the strategic plan.
6. Post the final draft of the plan for public comments and revise as necessary based on input.
7. Report progress made toward milestones and deliverables to a variety of audiences.
8. AASB reserves the right to identify additional key areas or components of strategic plan tasks and anticipates clarifying final components in the process of developing a vendor contract.

C. Deliverables

1. A fully completed, comprehensive, statewide strategic plan in narrative and table form that must:
 - Identify the full range of stakeholders meaningfully impacted by the work and how these stakeholders were engaged in the strategic plan development and updates.
 - Clearly identify goals, milestones and action steps that establish a comprehensive ECE system and address the gaps and strengths identified in the needs assessment.
 - Identify the partnerships, collaborations, coordination, and quality improvement activities that will be used to leverage policy alignments and program quality and service delivery across ECE settings in the prenatal through eight system.
 - Identify activities that address improving transitions of children from ECE programs into elementary schools.
 - Delineate how key actions in the plan will build on and support improved coordination and collaboration among ECE programs.
 - Provide a strong framework for how the state will increase the overall participation of children in high-quality ECE programs, services, and settings within and across a mixed delivery system.
 - Assess current federal, state, and local statutory requirements and identify any potential barriers or roadblocks that these requirements put on future coordination.
 - Identify how the state will track and use indicator data to assess progress, assess key desired outcomes, inform cost and resource efficiency, and support continuous quality improvement on an on-going basis.
 - Describe how the state will maximize the role and responsibilities of the AECCC and its members in the implementation of the strategic plan.
2. A strategic plan that recommends goals and action steps to directly address specific areas for improvement within the domains of the PDG needs assessment as identified by the

needs assessment. The domains can be accessed on the AASB website on the PDG Resources page <https://aasb.org/wp-content/uploads/PDG-Needs-Assess-Domains-Key-Questions.pdf>

3. A strategic plan that reflects a broad focus across multiple entities and services that support young children and their families including healthcare, behavioral healthcare, support for children with disabilities, economic assistance, employment support and child protection to ensure connection and integration with the ECE system for a comprehensive systems-level approach.
4. A design for securing approval of the final strategic plan
5. An easy-to-read executive summary written for public review.
6. A one to two-page summary with infographics and narrative.
7. Materials for stakeholder and community engagement sessions.
8. Materials for 3-5 public presentations explaining the strategic planning process, vision, goals, action steps and timeline, roles and responsibilities, indicators for measurable objectives, strategies to achieve the objectives and resources needed.
9. Graphics illustrating the structure for the planning process showing the lines of connection between key organizations and individuals including roles, lines of communication, responsibilities and funding to support the effort and illustrating the process of the strategic planning effort for stakeholders and the general public.
10. Additional communication deliverables may be identified during the strategic planning process in consultation with the vendor, the JTF and other stakeholders.

V. Proposal Requirements and Terms

A. General requirements

1. Vendors must submit a complete proposal in response to this RFP. In the case of hard copies, one (1) original and five (5) copies of the proposal must be submitted to AASB in a sealed envelope or package. The envelope must be clearly labeled with vendor's name and "PDG Strategic Plan RFP" on the outside.

2. Proposals must include a signed copy of page 2 "AASB RFP Summary - PDG Strategic Plan" and a signed copy of "Vendor Identification Form" on page 14.

3. Email submission of electronic copies of the proposal sent to bbrenneman@aasb.org is acceptable and is the preferred method of submission.

4. Vendors may submit no more than one (1) proposal in response to this RFP and it must be signed by an authorized representative of the vendor.

5. Proposals should be prepared simply, thoroughly and concisely. Emphasis should be placed on completeness and clarity of content.

6. All responses are to be submitted on standard 8.5" x 11" paper size in 12-point font minimum type. In the case of a hard copy, each copy of the proposal should be bound or contained in a single volume where practical. All pages of the proposal should be numbered.

The core proposal should not exceed 20 pages of key content including budget. The appendices should be reserved for including items listed in #8 below.

B. Content requirements

The core proposal must include:

1. Introduction of vendor summarizing the company's background, resources and relevant experiences in strategic planning and early childhood system work.

2. Examples of past strategic planning projects, preferably of a similar size and scope including links to strategic plans, facilitation tools and summary materials developed.

3. References from at least three (3) past projects, preferably matching those projects used as examples in 2. above.

4. Detailed work plan outlining key required components of the strategic plan including a proposed schedule with project stages, milestones and payments and strategy for facilitating group or individual stakeholder conversations.

5. Design and layout description including proposed visual content (charts, graphs, graphics, etc.) and tools and technology planned to be used to produce the visual representations.

6. Proposed budget for the project. Budget should include the proposed work plan with a breakdown of fees for professional services, hours and administrative services and proposed travel expenses.

7. A list of personnel on the project team and any possible sub-contractors and consultants. Please include biographical information and their roles. Identify the project leader as the main point of contact and provide name, title, phone and email address.

8. Items to include in an appendix: additional writing samples, examples of any completed strategic plans or similar projects; letters of support; Vendor Identification Form on page 14.

C. Terms

1. Ownership of all data, materials, and documentation originated and prepared for this RFP shall belong exclusively to AASB and designated partners.
2. Any amendment will require signatures by authorized representatives of AASB.
3. No other distribution of the proposals may be made by the vendor without permission.
4. The term “vendor” in this document refers to a respondent to this RFP.

VI. Evaluation Criteria and Terms

A. Criteria

All proposals will be reviewed for compliance by a multi-disciplinary team to determine if they adhere to the format and instructions of the RFP, meet the criteria indicated below, and conform to the objectives and requirements of the RFP.

	Anticipated Evaluation Criteria	Points
1	Background and experience with strategic planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrated experience developing strategic plans for large systems with many stakeholders; • references from previous clients showing similar work has been completed successfully • experience using an organized approach to guiding strategic planning processes • demonstrated experience working on document production within collaborative structures • adequate resources to complete scope of work 	15

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • experience and abilities of project staff 	
2	<p>Project plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • descriptive, detailed logical work plan • demonstrated ability to complete an effective work plan including reasonable timelines, key milestones and key contract responsibilities • stakeholder management plan with logical and clear processes for input • sequenced processes and feedback loops for a collaborative approach to strategic planning • contingency or risk management plan • communication plan • plan for reporting progress and updates 	25
3	<p>Implementation and methodology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • thorough, targeted approach inclusive of stakeholders and families • ability to collaborate and facilitate stakeholder engagement with guiding organizations • ability to analyze, compile and present stakeholder input gained • ability to synthesize, analyze and present a large quantity of data and information from different sources • approach that incorporates all PDG requirements, needs assessment findings and deliverables • familiarity with Alaska early childhood systems and data • staff experience with data analysis, facilitation and stakeholder engagement and developing strategies, goals, and action steps. 	20
4	<p>High quality document development and publishing experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • examples of written documents/print presentations • examples of layouts; design elements; visuals used • description of resources, tools and technology • examples of communication plans and dissemination strategies • experience developing easily navigable web-based reports 	15
5	<p>Writing and project samples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • quality of writing • organization and presentation of samples 	10
6	<p>Financial outline and budget</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • development of a cost-effective budget • understandable budget categories • description of payment schedule • ability to complete projects on budget • budget alignment with activities and staff resources in project plan 	20
7	Extra points	15

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • experience working in Alaska • knowledge of Alaska’s early childhood system and stakeholders • experience working in the early childhood field in Alaska • experience working with rural Alaska Native communities • experience working with low-income urban and rural populations in Alaska. • simple, thorough and concise proposal • quality of references and similar information 	
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B. Terms

1. Incompleteness, significant inconsistencies or inaccuracies found within a response may result in a reduction of the evaluation rating. Any deviation from the requirements can result in a reduction in points or a disqualification for review.

2. AASB reserves the right to reject any or all proposals; request clarifications from any or all vendors; and accept any portion of a proposal or all items proposed if deemed to be in the best interest of AASB. It also reserves the right to interview any potential vendor prior to making an award.

3. The review team may use other sources of information to perform the evaluation.

VII. Award of Contract

The award for this contract will be made to the highest-ranked vendor considered responsive and responsible and the most advantageous to AASB with respect to the technical and pricing factors combined together. In the event a contract cannot be negotiated with the highest-ranked vendor, AASB may enter into negotiations with the second highest-ranked vendor and/or may decide to call for new proposals.

VIII. General Requirements and Terms

A. Eligibility

Eligible applicants include public or private organizations with documented and demonstrated ability to provide services as described in section IV. Preference will be given to Alaska-based and minority-owned vendors and/or vendors with experience working in Alaska.

B. Point of contact.

The sole point of contact for AASB concerning this RFP is:

Betsy Brenneman, Preschool Development Grant Coordinator
 Association of Alaska School Boards
 1111 West 9th St., Juneau, AK 99801
 907-463-1660 (main) 907-463-1676 (direct)
bbrenneman@asb.org

C. Modifications

This RFP is subject to change and AASB may modify this RFP at any time. Modifications will be posted on the AASB website PDG Resources page at <https://asb.org/preschool-development-grant-resources/>. This is the only method by which the RFP will be modified.

D. Contract compliance.

The EC Joint Task Force leadership team and DEED in partnership with DHSS will coordinate with AASB to monitor progress on specific activities required by the grant including the strategic plan. Should contract non-compliance be determined, the contract may be terminated or amended.

VENDOR IDENTIFICATION FORM
(must be completed and returned with proposal)

Company/individual's Name:	
Doing business as (DBA):	
Company tax ID# or Social Security #:	
Address:	
Remit to address:	
Telephone(s):	
Email:	
Fax:	
Web address:	
Main contact person:	
Person responsible for response (if different):	

Print name _____

Title _____

Authorized signature _____ Date _____