



REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)

LEGAL SERVICES

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: Thursday, October 24, 2019 2:00pm EST

SUBMISSION CONTACT AND ADDRESS:

Cherie Trahan
Director of Finance
Mansfield Public School District
4 South Eagleville Road
Mansfield, Connecticut 06268-2599
(860) 429-3344
TrahanCA@mansfieldct.org

Proposals will be accepted in electronic or print format.

Purpose

Mansfield Public School District (the "District") is soliciting proposals from qualified licensed full service law firms to represent the district in basic legal matters and litigation, excluding litigation handled by attorneys selected by school district insurance carriers.

Project Description

Legal Counsel will serve in an advisory capacity to the Superintendent of Schools on all legal matters affecting the District. Sample work conducted by legal counsel will include: preparing proposals for negotiations with labor unions; updating all policies related to school operations including personnel policies; advising staff on complex matters such as student discipline, special education and general school law; and representing the District in any and all legal proceedings.

Qualification Requirements

Respondents to this RFQ must meet the following minimum requirements:

1. Member in good standing of the Bar Association of the State of Connecticut.
2. Member in good standing of the Bar of the United States District Court of Connecticut.
3. Must have experience with Federal and State Education laws and have a minimum of five (5) years working with or for Connecticut school district in all areas of service required herein.
4. Ability to provide same day response.
5. Assignment of a lead attorney with appropriate experience.
6. A minimum of three attorneys with experience in education law.

Background

The Town of Mansfield, Connecticut has a population of approximately 26,600 (roughly 14,000 year-round) and is located in the northeastern corner of the state, approximately 25 miles east of Hartford.

Mansfield Public Schools is a school district with 2019-2020 enrollments of approximately 1,150 students and an operating budget of \$23,637,850, The District maintains four schools (3 elementary and 1 middle school).

The District is in ERG (Education Reference Group) C. The District employs approximately 235 full and part time employees.

Three labor unions represent the following employees: teachers (appx. 115 employees), paraprofessional staff (appx. 66 employees), and custodians and cafeteria workers (appx. 24 employees). The remaining employees 30 +/- employees are unaffiliated (non-union).

Scope of Services

The District invites submittals from appropriately qualified firms to provide legal counsel to the Mansfield Public School District including but not limited to the following legal services:

1. Represent and advise the District and individual staff on detailed requirements of educational law.
2. Consultation on personnel, labor relations, special education, student discipline and general school law both on the telephone and in person.
3. Contract analysis and interpretation.
4. Representation during collective bargaining negotiations both at the table and on a consulting basis, including mediation and arbitration.
5. Representation at meetings and before the Board of Education on school law matters, including student discipline hearing, employee discipline, non-renewals, reductions-in-force, dismissal, and expulsion hearings.
6. When appropriate, review of student records, proposed and existing IEP's and case files, including an initial assessment of all potential appeals. Additionally, representation at due process hearings for special education.
7. In-service meetings with district's administrators and/or staff.
8. Periodic advisory communications on school law matters.
9. Review and drafting of correspondence and policies on school matters.
10. Advise on legal Special Education issues.

Summary

The firm should submit by email or hard copy: a letter of interest containing general information on the firm; the firm's brochure; resumes for key personnel and information regarding the consultant's experience conducting similar business; references; and rates for work performed. Submissions should be directed to: Cherie Trahan, Director of Finance, not later than **Thursday, October 24, 2019 at 2:00 pm EST**. (Please submit two copies if utilizing traditional mail.)

The District intends to "short-list" firms responding to this RFQ and to interview one or more firms to accurately assess their qualifications. The District will negotiate a scope of services and a fee proposal with the selected firm. District administration will evaluate and select the firm based on qualifications, experience and performance with similar projects, references, ability to provide timely services, awareness of project issues, opportunities and constraints, and estimated fees and expenses. The selected firm must be able to meet all municipal, state and federal affirmative action and equal employment opportunity practices and guidelines.

The District does not expressly state or imply any obligation to reimburse responding firms for any expenses incurred in preparing submissions in response to this request. The District reserves the right to reject any or all submissions, to select a firm in a manner that is advantageous to the district and to waive all formalities in the bidding.

The Mansfield Public School District is proud to be an equal employment opportunity employer.

Please address any questions related to this RFQ to Cherie Trahan, Director of Finance, at (860) 429-3344 or via email at TrahanCA@mansfieldct.org.