



LEARNING COMMUNITY

OF DOUGLAS AND SARPY COUNTIES

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"Bringing together the strengths within our communities, we will create a collaborative environment that promotes the development of educational *opportunity*, resource *equity* and academic *excellence* that maximizes the potential of every child."

INVITATION LETTER

The Learning Community Coordinating Council of Douglas and Sarpy Counties invites proposals for the management of an Elementary Learning Center (Center) to be located in south Omaha. Proposals must be received electronically by 4:00 pm November 17, 2011. Proposals should be sent to Renee Franklin at rfranklin@learningcommunityds.org.

The Learning Community's mission is to bring together the strengths within our community to create a collaborative environment that promotes academic excellence, the development of educational opportunity and resource equity that maximizes the potential of every child.

Subcouncil 5 of the Learning Community Coordinating Council is considering establishment of an Elementary Learning Center in South Omaha. The mission of the Elementary Learning Centers is to serve as visionary resource centers for enhancing the academic success of elementary students, particularly those students who face challenges in the educational environment due to factors such as poverty, limited English skills, and mobility. The Center will provide resources to parents so they can be in the best possible position to support the growth and development of their elementary school children.

The Center will serve parents through two main venues:

- Personal parent advocates will help individuals navigate the public school system, community resources and adult educational programs
- An instructional team will develop personalized educational programs for cohort groups of parents to include such services as adult literacy, English as a Second Language classes, pre-GED classes and parenting strategies. Specific details about the Center's program design can be found in the attachment.

The Center will be held in property either owned or leased by the Learning Community and operated by a lead organization selected through this RFP process.

A voluntary meeting will be held at 10:00AM on October 31 to answer any questions regarding the proposals. This is the only time questions will be answered regarding the proposal so participants are strongly encouraged to attend or send a representative.

The Learning Community will be in contact with final applicants by November 25, 2011 to ask any additional questions or begin to negotiate final terms. It is anticipated a contract could be awarded as early as mid December 2012.

Sincerely,

Renee Franklin
Executive Director, Elementary Learning Centers

SOUTH OMAHA PARENT CENTER RFP GUIDELINES

MISSION

The Learning Community's mission is to bring together the strengths within our community to create a collaborative environment that promotes academic excellence, the development of educational opportunity and resource equity that maximizes the potential of every child.

ELIGIBILITY

Public and private nonprofit organizations who serve students and/or parents are eligible to respond with proposals. Interested applicants must demonstrate fiscal management of projects of similar scope as the proposal and with project budgets ranging into several hundred thousand dollars. Applicants must have a solid reputation working with parents in South Omaha, demonstrated experience aligning programming with community need and proven capacity to implement and excel at new initiatives.

FUNDING

The funding request must not exceed \$325,000 for the period of January 1, 2012-August 31, 2012.

APPLICATION GUIDELINES & DEADLINES

Proposals must be no longer than 5 pages (exclusive of attachments) and must be received electronically by 4:00 pm November 17, 2011. Proposals should be sent to Renee Franklin, Executive Director of Elementary Learning Centers, at rfranklin@learningcommunityds.org.

QUESTIONS

A voluntary meeting will be held at UNO's Alumni Center at 10:00AM on October 31 for those interested in submitting proposals to answer any questions. Questions may be submitted by October 26th to rfranklin@learningcommunityds.org if desired. The meeting will be the only time questions will be answered regarding the proposal so participants are strongly encouraged to attend or send a representative.

TIMELINE

The Learning Community will be in contact with final applicants by November 25, 2011 to ask any additional questions or to begin to negotiate final terms. It is anticipated a contract could be awarded as soon as mid December 2012. Program implementation will be expected no later than February 1, 2012. The performance period will run through August 31, 2012 with an option to renew for 12 months.

PROGRAM DESIGN

A detailed copy of the Learning Community's Program Design is attached. The programs will be held in property either owned or leased by the Learning Community and operated by a lead organization selected through this RFP process.

SOUTH OMAHA PARENT CENTER PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

Capacity (2.5 pages maximum)

Provide relevant background on your organization with details on capacity and qualifications that include:

- Experience with education enterprises including both elementary education and adult/parent education;
- Evidence of successful service relationships with community members, particularly from those diverse racial, ethnic, and language backgrounds;
- Evidence of successful partner relationships with community organizations in the provision of services to community members, particularly those from diverse racial, ethnic, and language backgrounds;
- Evidence of successful experience in human resources management including recruitment, selection, training and supervision;
- Evidence of developing high quality communication materials including brochures, websites and press releases.
- Evidence of successful fiscal management of projects of similar scope as the proposal and project budgets ranging into several hundred thousand dollars;
- Evidence of successful experience managing to results and working with developmental evaluation approaches;

Operational Plan (2.5 pages maximum)

Provide an operational plan for the implementation and management of the Design Proposal to include:

- Processes to develop job description, recruitment, selection and necessary training and support for a program director, noting the participation of the Executive Director of Elementary Learning Centers in this process;
- Staffing plan for the remainder of staff needed to implement the Design proposal and processes to develop job description, recruitment, selection (including background checks) and necessary training and support for any staff assigned to this project;
- Plans to partner with community organizations as listed in the Design Proposal and others not listed;
- Detailed timeline for program implementation no later than February 1, 2012 initially in temporary facilities as identified by the Learning Community;

Attachments

Provide a one page budget and budget justification not to exceed \$325,000 for the term of the initial agreement to support the operational plan including:

- Staffing costs delineated by position*
(Suggested salary minimums should include \$55,000 for Program Director and \$40,000 for Navigators).
- Payroll taxes & benefits
- Training Costs
- Equipment Costs

- Indirect or support costs not to exceed 15%
- Contingency

Letters of Support (up to 5)

Provide evidence of insurance or insurability for:

Commercial General Liability Insurance providing coverage to organization and naming Learning Community as Additional Insured on a primary and non-contributory basis, including completed operations, with limits of not less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence, \$2,000,000 general aggregate, \$2,000,000 product and completed operations aggregate, and \$1,000,000 personal and advertising injury. Organization shall waive its rights of recovery against Learning Community and will obtain such waiver of subrogation from its insurer. Such waiver of subrogation shall be endorsed to the policy in favor of Learning Community;

Sexual Abuse & Molestation coverage with a limit of not less than \$500,000 per occurrence and \$1,000,000 in the annual aggregate;

Professional Liability Insurance with a limit of not less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence;

Automobile Liability Insurance with a combined single limit of not less than \$1,000,000 per accident, which coverage shall apply to all owned, hired, and non-owned automobiles used by the organization, its employees, agents or representatives in conducting the Program;

Workers' Compensation Insurance covering the organization and its employees for all costs, statutory benefits and liabilities under the Nebraska Workers' Compensation Act and similar laws for employees of the organization and Employer's Liability Insurance with limits of not less than \$100,000 per accident, \$100,000 per person per disease, and \$500,000 per disease. Organization agrees to waive its rights of recovery against Learning Community and such waiver of subrogation shall be added to the policy; and

Umbrella / Excess Insurance with limits of not less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence which shall provide liability coverage in excess of the specified Workers' Compensation/Employers Liability, Commercial General Liability and Auto Liability insurance policies.

SOUTH OMAHA CENTER PROGRAM DESIGN



**LEARNING
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EVERY CHILD • EVERY OPPORTUNITY • EVERY COMMUNITY

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BACKGROUND

Subcouncil 5 of the Learning Community has long been committed to establishing a Center to meet the critical needs of children and families in the South Omaha area. While the Center will be funded through the elementary levy, it has been clear from the outset that the Center would serve families so that parents and families could be in the best possible position to support the growth and development of their elementary children. Thus, the Center would complement the strong academic focus of the investment of nearly \$1 million by Subcouncil 5 and the Learning Community in Extended Learning Programs offered for fiscal year 2011-12 with the Omaha Public Schools and Bellevue Public Schools.

Over the past couple of years, Subcouncil 5 has held numerous, and highly attended, community forums to better determine specific community priorities. In June of 2011, the Learning Community Coordinating Council, following the recommendation of Subcouncil 5, commissioned a needs assessment to be conducted by OneWorld Community Health Centers, Inc. that would recommend the key focal areas for critical needs that might be best met through such a center. The assessment was completed in mid-August and reviewed by the Subcouncil on August 23. The members of Subcouncil 5 asked Renee Franklin, Director of Elementary Learning Centers, and Ted Stilwill, CEO, to draft an operational plan for a Center for further review and reaction by the Subcouncil. At the same time, the Subcouncil decided to advance on conversations with the City of Omaha and potential use of the vacant “old” South Omaha Library as a potential location for the Center. This short paper is a response the Subcouncil 5’s request for that operational plan.

THE NEED

The Needs Assessment and Asset Map prepared by OneWorld Community Health Centers, Inc. indicated that the proposed center should focus on “a range of services, including parenting education and resources, parent support services, GED classes, connection to legal assistance, assistance in navigating both the educational system in Omaha, as well as available service in the community. These findings are consistent with the needs identified in the numerous community forums. Most importantly, however, is that the Elementary Learning Center should focus on being as inviting as possible for parents, with a comfortable environment and approachable staff.” We would suggest that these needs can be met through two functions that we will further describe below. The first function would be *Navigation Services*, and the second would be *Parent Education Services*. The delivery services would be uniquely personalized to small groups of parents whose children might attend the same school and, to the extent practical, have children similar in age and grade level.

APPROACH AND TARGET AUDIENCE

The Center would be designed primarily to serve parents of elementary-aged school children. Rather than simply open a center with available services, we will begin by working directly with our Family Support Liaisons in Bancroft, Castelar, and Gomez schools to identify and “recruit” parents who might benefit from the combination of navigation services and educational support. Rather than asking these parents to simply come to the Center to attend classes, or

visit with navigation specialists, we would try to offer personalized support to small groups of parents, as well as provide them individual support. The first wave of parents will naturally be those who are more comfortable in school, but they will help us reach other families once they see success. If we establish the program in the first few months with these schools, it can expand to other schools. Successive phases can be best determined after some experience with the initial groups. There might be six sets of cohorts from the three schools, with 6 to 8 parents in each cohort in the first phase.

PROGRAMMING DESIGN

Navigation Services

The Navigators would serve as personal parent advocates and help parents in three key areas:

- **Navigation of the public school system.** Services would include translating documents, helping parents understand how to access their child's grades online, who to contact at the school for specialized needs, etc.
- **Navigation of community resources.** The navigators would work with key partner agencies to provide legal services, medical services, and job counseling. The Learning Community would work with key partners to ensure on-site, quality, and affordable services. In addition to these key partners, the navigators would have relationships with secondary partners to whom they can connect parents for additional resources.
- **Navigation of adult educational programs.** If parents need educational services (i.e., ESL classes, parenting strategies, and workforce training), the navigators will work closely with an instructional team to personalize a program for them (see below).

Parent Education Services

The educational needs of parents would be personalized and tailored to cohort groups of six to eight. An Instructional Team would be comprised of individuals and/or organizations with knowledge in adult literacy, ESL classes, GED classes, and parenting strategies. These individuals would work on a contract basis and not only design a personalized education package for parents, but also deliver the program to each cohort of parents.

For either the Navigation or Parent Education services, a weekly schedule of two to three times at the Center would be determined, with the possibility of individual visits, as needed.

MANAGEMENT AND STAFFING

We would contract with a lead organization to operate the Center. The lead organization will have a solid reputation working with parents in South Omaha, demonstrated experience aligning programming with community need, and proven capacity to implement and excel at new initiatives. We would work closely with the lead agency to hire a full-time Program Director who would be responsible for outlining the specifics of the program, managing the staff, and overseeing all of the programming. The lead agency would also be expected to work with leadership in the Learning Community to develop a small advisory board to guide the delivery of services.

The Navigation portion of the programming would be provided to parents by 2 full time Navigators who would report to the Program Director. After approximately four months, another full time Navigator will be hired. The Navigators would work closely with parents to help them navigate the school system, community resources, and educational programs. Examples of some key partners who could provide high priority services would be Justice for our Neighbors (who is willing to seek private funding to provide free legal consultation services) and OneWorld (who is willing to provide some on site medical services) as well as Metropolitan Community College, Literacy Center and Heartland Workforce Center (all to provide various levels and access to adult education and job counseling). Navigators would also connect families with community organizations for secondary services, such as emergency assistance, housing, etc.

The personalized Parent Educational Services (ESL, Literacy, pre-GED, parenting strategies) would be overseen by an Instructional Team who would also report to the Program Director. These individuals would work on a part-time contract basis and would increase as the number of cohorts increase. The educational services would address the need for basic level services and would strategically align with more advanced educational services offered by Metro Community College and others. We would form partnerships with key players who would each provide expertise in a certain area to help tailor an “educational package” for each cohort.

We would form a close partnership with Metropolitan Community College (MCC) to help train the Instructional Team. As a partner, Metropolitan Community College would be willing to provide: (1) technical assistance to help the Program Director and Instructional Team members learn how to use several basic literacy tutorial programs, (2) initial staff training for the Instructional Team (3) staff development opportunities, (4) technical assistance for staff in how to recruit and train volunteers, (5) basic literacy printed materials and training, (6) a designated Metropolitan Community College representative to talk with parents about work readiness opportunities, and (7) a representative from Metropolitan Community College to serve on an advisory team.

The Omaha Public Library (OPL) would also be a close partner in providing on-site Parent Educational Services including ESL, literacy, computer classes, and connecting services to their location up the street. The Literacy Center would also be a key partner, and is willing to provide on-site literacy programs for adults, including adult basic education, pre-GED classes, and one-on-one tutoring. Some of the individuals who provide these direct services would also be good candidates for the instructional team itself. Both the Omaha Public Library and the Literacy Center already have a close partnership with each other, and both organizations would be willing to provide a representative to serve on an advisory team.

The Latino Center of the Midlands would be a close educational partner with expertise in adult education, community affairs and parental engagement. Collaborative opportunities would include on-site classes (GED, pre-GED, literacy, computers, English), candidates for the instructional team and training. Additionally, the Latino Center of the Midlands is located just 2 blocks from the old South Omaha Library and has plenty of classroom and office space that can be utilized during the renovation of the old library.

The Omaha Public Schools would enlist the support of their ESL Director to ensure the strategic alignment of ELL classes with neighborhood schools as well as serve on an advisory team. The bilingual liaisons in the Omaha Public Schools would also work with the Family Support Liaisons to identify cohorts of families.

For the parenting strategies component, Boys Town is willing to provide the Common Sense parenting model and we envision a partnership whereby we can personalize a parenting component through an organization such as Boys Town.

It is envisioned the maintenance of the Center would be taken care of with funding separate from the management contract. However, we would envision a receptionist like position to be part of the program, perhaps with multiple responsibilities.

We would ramp up the staffing in phases to accommodate the program start up.

PHYSICAL SPACE

Consistent with the needs assessment and other input, the space at the Center needs to be warm and welcoming. There needs to be a comfortable welcoming or reception space, some private spaces for individual navigation service conversations, small group instruction areas with access to a set of computers, when needed, for the instruction, but also accessible to casual, unscheduled users who are following up on navigation conversations, individual educational programs, or other needs. Ideally, small group space could be flexibly designed to accommodate large groups, as needed. Of course, spaces for management and operational needs should also be considered.

Depending on the timeline for acquisition and renovation of the space required, there may be an advantage to thinking about temporary space for the initial program. This might be space in the initial target schools, or space that could be rented on a short-term basis for very low investment such as the Latino Center of the Midlands, One World or other establishments.