

# Request for Proposals

## EVALUATION STUDY OF OAKLAND UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT'S COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS FOR ALL (MEASURE N) INITIATIVE

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LETTER OF INTEREST DUE:

**TBD**

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### PURPOSE

The Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) is seeking proposals from eligible bidders to conduct an independent evaluation study of the district's College and Career Readiness For All Initiative, funded for ten years (2015-2025) through a local property tax approved by Oakland voters as Measure N. This evaluation will constitute a study to deepen the understanding of the implementation and impact of the College and Career Readiness For All Initiative.

The general purpose of the evaluation is to provide information, findings and analyses, and recommendations for supporting sustained school and student level academic improvement and acceleration through the implementation of linked learning college and career pathways. Findings and recommendations will help to facilitate an ongoing results-based inquiry process for the district, and will be presented to OUSD administrative leadership as well as to the OUSD Board of Education, the Measure N Citizens' Commission, and other stakeholders. The study will also provide a comprehensive structure and protocols for OUSD to conduct longitudinal research on its college and career pathway initiative.

The evaluation study will address the following research areas:

1. School and pathway quality and functioning
2. Student and school-level academic performance
3. Academic rigor
4. Quality of teaching and instruction
5. Quality of school leadership and systems supporting implementation
6. Family and community engagement and satisfaction
7. Aligned district systems that directly support school and pathway quality and functioning, and student and school academic performance

## BACKGROUND

An **Oakland Unified School District Parcel Tax, Measure N** ballot question was on the [November 4, 2014 election ballot](#) for voters in the [Oakland Unified School District in Alameda County, California](#). It was **approved**,

Measure N authorized the district to impose for ten years an annual [parcel tax](#) of \$120 per unit of property. Measure N earmarked the tax revenue for adding school programs designed to prepare students for colleges and real-world jobs and reduce dropout rates. A [two-thirds supermajority vote](#) was required for the approval of Measure N. The measure passed with 76.57% of voters voting yes.

### **The ballot question read:**

To reduce the drop-out rate and provide Oakland high school students with real-world work and learning opportunities; prepare students for admission to the University of California and other four-year colleges; expand mentoring, tutoring, counseling, support services, and transition to job training programs; shall the Oakland Unified School District levy a \$120 parcel tax for ten years, with low income and senior exemptions, no money for Sacramento, and all money benefiting Oakland students?

### **The stated Purpose of The College and Career Readiness for All - Measure N - fund:**

The Oakland College & Career Readiness for All Fund is established to pay for the implementation of a comprehensive approach to high school education in Oakland that integrates challenging academics with career-based learning and real-world work experiences. This comprehensive approach creates small learning communities of career-oriented pathways, and offers intensive, individualized support to create the conditions for all students to graduate high school prepared to succeed in college and career.

### **The Measure N Goals:**

- Decrease the high school drop out rate
- Increase the high school graduation rate
- Increase high school students' readiness to succeed in college and career
- Increase middle school students' successful transition to high school
- Reduce disparities in student achievement and student access to career pathways based on race, ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status, English Learner status, special needs and residency

The full text of Measure N can be found [here](#).

### **Context: OUSD Pathway to Excellence Strategic Plan**

In addition to the Measure N Goals, the OUSD Pathway to Excellence states these goals:

- Provide every student with access to a high-quality school
- Ensure each student is prepared for college, career and community success
- Staff every school with talented individuals committed to working in service of children

- Create a school district that holds itself and its partners accountable for superior outcomes
- Guarantees rigorous instruction in every classroom, every day

The full text of OUSD’s Pathway to Excellence can be found [here](#).

## SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION STUDY

The immediate audience for this evaluation includes: The Measure N Citizens’ Commission; the OUSD Superintendent and administrative leadership team; the Board of Education; OUSD schools, staff, and families; community-based partners; and Oakland residents and taxpayers. The primary purpose of the evaluation is to facilitate an ongoing results-based inquiry process for the Commission and OUSD district leadership to understand how to support and advance the development of linked learning college and career pathways as a strategy for accelerating student achievement throughout the district. The study will also provide a comprehensive structure and protocols for OUSD to conduct longitudinal research on its linked learning college and career pathways initiative.

### Evaluation Design Focus

- 1) Two (overlapping) phases of evaluation design:
  - a) Design & Implementation evaluation
  - b) Outcomes evaluation
- 2) A partnership between the external evaluator & OUSD office of Research, Assessment & Data (RAD), with relevant involvement of the Office of Post-Secondary Readiness (OPSR) for implementation evaluation co-analysis
  - a) Phase I:
    - i) External Evaluation focus on mixed method study of implementation, co-analysis in partnership with OPSR;
    - ii) Phase I intensive in first three years, tapering off in years four-ten;
  - b) Phase II:
    - i) External Evaluation focus on Outcomes and Impacts, per Measure N, with quantitative data input from RAD;
    - ii) Phase II monitors quantitative outcomes data in first three years, more intensive analysis in final years.
- 3) A Logic Model - main focus of evaluation and the logic/ theory of action of the initiative
  - a) Design Evaluation
    - i) Initiative Inputs (e.g., Linked Learning Pathway Design Criteria, Measure N Purpose and Goals, resources, other Community Partners’ contributions)
  - b) Implementation Evaluation
    - i) Initiative Activities, including OPSR’s and other OUSD offices’ involvement in supporting design and implementation
    - ii) Initiative Outputs
      - (1) Structural changes in pathways and school sites
      - (2) Changes in the experience of major stakeholders
        - (a) students
        - (b) teachers
        - (c) district personnel

- (d) industry & community partners
- c) Outcomes & Impacts, per Measure N Purpose and Goals

### **General Approach**

OUSD expects the contractor, in undertaking this study, to collect and analyze both quantitative and qualitative data (i.e., indicators and measures of student, teacher, school, and district processes, practices, and outcomes). The proposal must include a detailed study design that provides a description of the overall evaluation plan. The study design must include:

- overall evaluation questions aligned to focus and purpose
- purpose
- key audiences for the evaluation
- a conceptual framework for the evaluation, including a brief literature review of relevant existing studies of similar initiatives, as well as a logic model for the design, implementation, and outcomes of Measure N
- reference to baseline data and analyses from the SRI cluster evaluation of the James Irvine Foundation funded Linked Learning District Initiative longitudinal evaluation of nine districts
- key variables and indicator definitions,
- specific methods – including sample and instrumentation – proposed for use, and their relationship to the evaluation phases, questions, and time-lines
- plans for the study utilization by key stakeholders
- the plans for the comprehensive structure and protocols for OUSD to conduct longitudinal research beyond the scope of this study.

The proposal must clearly delineate the overall methodology for the study, including data collection strategies that will be used for obtaining the necessary data (qualitative data collection may include strategies such as case studies, document analysis, interviews, focus groups, site observations), and a description of the analytical procedures that will be used to answer the chosen evaluation questions. Methods may include such analytical procedures as content analyses, case studies, narrative descriptions, longitudinal analyses of academic growth patterns, cohort matched data analyses, statistical procedures. The Proposal must address justification for appropriate choices of quantitative and qualitative methods and analyses of data collected for this study, explaining how the methodology will obtain the information needed to address the evaluation purpose and answer the evaluation questions, including addressing threats to validity in the stated methods, and provisions for exploring alternate explanations as appropriate.

In addition, the bidder must explicitly state:

- the degree to which the evaluation questions can or cannot be answered with the available data
- other proposed data sources
- any anticipated problems and their proposed solutions in conducting the study

The bidder must identify and address any confounding variables that may affect this study. These may include, but are not limited to, school district variation in program data collection, reporting techniques and practices, and the intervening impact of other key state, district, or

union initiatives and requirements (e.g., changes in the state testing program, limited autonomy in selecting teachers, district-wide use of a particular adopted curriculum, etc.)

### **Ownership of Materials of the Evaluation and Dissemination of Findings**

All data collected, the data collection instruments developed, and the reports prepared for and submitted to OUSD under the terms of this agreement are the sole property of OUSD. OUSD reserves the exclusive right to copyright such materials and to publish, disseminate, and otherwise use materials developed under the terms of this contract. Any use of these materials by the contractor for reasons separate from completion of the contract requirements, during or subsequent to the contract period, may be done only with written permission of OUSD. It is incumbent upon the contractor to secure such permission.

### **Roles & Responsibilities of OUSD Project Monitor**

As the contracting organization, OUSD expects the contractor to work closely with pertinent departments and personnel within the district and the Measure N Commission. The purpose of this ongoing working relationship is for the contractor to provide written and verbal briefings about the progress of the evaluation to ensure that timelines are being met, to cooperatively resolve issues as they arise, and to share information pertinent to the evaluation, including relevant early and periodic formative findings that may help the District and the Commission make mid-course corrections in the effort. OUSD staff on this project, primarily through the RAD division, and the OPSR, will:

Work with the contractor on an ongoing basis to keep them informed of developments in the Measure N processes:

- Assist in developing of all data-collection instruments;
- Review and approve all data-collection instruments;
- Coordinate access to relevant OUSD databases and data sources;
- Assist in selecting schools / pathways for any intensive study;
- Assist and/or participate as an observer in data-collection activities, including field work such as school visits or focus groups;
- Review statistical methods;
- Review qualitative and quantitative data analyses;
- Co-analyze quantitative and qualitative data, as appropriate;
- Monitor the ongoing work of the contractor to ensure compliance with contract terms;
- Review and approve contract changes, if necessary;
- Meet and confer with the contractor about study implementation as needed;
- Review and approve the contractor's draft and final versions of required reports.

OUSD staff will monitor this contract through the following mechanisms:

- Contractor invoices (frequency to be determined);
- Contractor written or oral (in person or by phone) bi-monthly progress reports;
- In-person and/or phone conference meetings to present and discuss interim and formative findings as needed;
- Phone and email communications as needed;
- Contractor draft and final evaluation reports.

OUSD reserves the right to attend and to participate in the contractor's staff, planning, and deliberative meetings about the study, as appropriate or as needed.

### **Required Products and Reports, Timeline**

The contractor must provide OUSD with the following products and reports:

- 1) An electronic copy of a revised evaluation study design.
- 2) Electronic copy of any materials intended for use by principals, teachers, students, or parents in OUSD schools.
- 3) Electronic copies of monthly and annual progress reports, including discussion of issues and concerns, and summary of data and/or findings from work completed to date.
- 4) An electronic copy of a draft evaluation reports.
- 5) Annual formative reports addressing all evaluation factors, with recommendations.
- 6) An electronic copy of a final evaluation report, with data collection instruments developed for this study and all supporting data files.
- 7) A summary report in presentation form.
- 8) Presentation of findings and summary report to appropriate leadership bodies and/or the public.

<b>EVALUATION TIMELINE</b>	
	Initial RFP/RFLOI release date.
	<b>Letters of Interest due</b> to OUSD. Electronic submission to: preston.thomas@ousd.org
	OUSD conducts bidders' conference (call) to address questions
	OUSD invites selected bidders to submit full proposal
	Full proposals due from invited bidders. Submit to: preston.thomas@ousd.org
	Notification of the successful bidder
	Revisions of design conference
	Proposed contract start date
	Revised Evaluation Study Design
	Formative feedback sessions
	Annual Draft Reports due
	Final Report due

## LETTER OF INTEREST

Bidders are required to submit a Letter of Interest. The Letter of Interest may be emailed and must be received by Oakland Unified School District by **4:00 p.m.** on **XXX**. The Letter of Interest does not require an organization to submit a proposal; however, a bidder will not be invited to submit a proposal unless a Letter of Interest is submitted on time.

The Letter of Interest should indicate the bidder's interest, expertise, and general capacity to conduct a multi-year study as outlined in the RFP. Questions regarding this RFP may be included with bidder's Letter of Interest.

The Letter of Interest must be submitted by the bidder or bidder's representative and include the title of the person signing the Letter of Interest and show the date of submission.

All Letters of Interest received by the deadline will be reviewed.

A bidders' conference (call) will be held before the final proposal submission date.

Bidders will be notified by **XXXX**, 2016, whether they will be invited to submit full proposals by the **XXXX**, 2016, due date.

## GENERAL PROPOSAL GUIDELINES & INFORMATION

The proposal must be presented in a narrative form, demonstrating the ability to meet all qualifications, requirements, and standards specified in this RFP. The proposal must contain the following sections: Cover Letter, Table of Contents, General Approach, Work Plan, Detailed Evaluation Study Design, including sample instrumentation (in an Appendix),

Management and Staffing, Budget, Related Experience, and Examples of Previous Work (minimum of two examples), References.

Proposals are limited to 20 double-spaced pages (not counting resumes), typed in no smaller than 12-point font. The 20-page limit applies to the General Approach, Work Plan, Detailed Evaluation Study Design, Management and Staffing, and Related Experience sections. Do not attach pamphlets, letters of support (except from any proposed subcontractors) or other items not specifically requested in this section.

The **Cover Letter** must be signed by an individual qualified to make the offer to perform the work described in the RFP. The **Table of Contents** must identify major points of discussion by page. The **General Approach** must provide an overview of the approach to be taken in addressing the evaluation questions and issues described in the Scope of the Evaluation Study (Section III of this RFP). The **Work Plan** must describe in detail the tasks and activities to be undertaken to accomplish the scope and purpose of the project and produce the required products. Any anticipated theoretical or practical problems associated with completion of each task must be discussed, and solutions, alternatives, or contingency plans related to these problems must be proposed as appropriate. The work plan must include proposed task initiation and completion dates and proposed staffing.

The **Detailed Evaluation Study Design** must include a conceptual framework for the evaluation, including key variables and indicator definitions. It must provide a description of the study methodology, including activities of the evaluation study based on information from this RFP, and must include activities related to answering the evaluation questions. The study design must include specific methods, including samples and instrumentation, and their relationship to evaluation questions, tasks and timelines. Appropriate justifications must be provided for each method selected.

The **Management and Staffing** section must present a plan for the internal management of contract work that will ensure the accomplishment of the tasks, including personnel, roles, and lines of responsibility.

The **Budget** section must include staffing and rates, operating expenses (including travel, computer software, subcontracted services, etc.) for the full evaluation project.

The **Related Experience** section must describe the experience of the bidder in providing services required, including a discussion of previous related work, as well as evidence of: experience with quantitative research, including surveys, sampling methodology, statistical analyses, qualitative research including interviews, focus groups, case studies, and content analysis; current research and literature about small school reform and statewide, comprehensive, high-stakes school accountability systems.

The **Examples of Previous Work** section must include at least two samples of an evaluation study design and their accompanying final evaluation reports developed and prepared by the bidder.



The **References** section must include three client references relevant to the scope and complexity of the services required by this RFP, including a description of services performed, dates of services, and name, address, and telephone numbers of the client references.

Each invited bidder must electronically submit proposal by **XXXX**

## **CONTRACT TERMS & REQUIREMENTS**

### **Contract Funding and Time Period**

The study will begin approximately in **XXXX** and end in **XXXX**. The actual starting date is contingent upon approval of the contract by OUSD. Should the funding amount change for any reason, OUSD agrees to negotiate with the contractor a revised scope of work and accompanying budget.

OUSD reserves the right to cancel the contract at any time before the end of the contract period if it believes the contractor has not performed, or is unable to perform, in accordance with the contract. The contract scope will be amended if actual funding levels are less than anticipated.

### **Compensation**

For services satisfactorily rendered, and upon receipt and approval of the invoices, OUSD agrees to compensate the contractor for actual expenditures incurred in accordance with the rates specified herein. Payments will be made in arrears on a monthly basis upon receipt of an itemized invoice and a progress report of activities.

All travel costs shall be reimbursed at rates not to exceed those established for OUSD staff.