



Thomas M. Menino
Mayor of Boston



United Way of Massachusetts Bay
and Merrimack Valley

Community School Readiness Wiring (CSRW) Bidder's Conference Questions and Answers - Supplement

1. What is the RFP decision making process? Is it written down? Will it be a public process?

Answer: There is a written decision making process for the Community School Readiness Wiring hub agency selection process. Please contact Katie Madrigal, Thrive in 5 Ready Families Manager (katie.madrigal@thrivein5boston.org or 617-624-8196), to receive a copy of the selection process document.

The hub agency selection process will be an open process. Any not-for-profit organization is encouraged to apply. Initial scoring of the proposals will be done by an independent group of community readers. In addition, applicants may request 1.) feedback about their proposals, 2.) guidelines given to proposal readers, 3.) numerical scores of all proposals, 4.) consensus ranking by proposal readers, 5.) consensus ranking by Thrive in 5 team, and 6.) Thrive in 5 Leadership Council feedback (if any). We will make a list of proposals submitted available, and proposals will be available upon request with the permission of the proposer.

2. How will the data collection system be jointly developed by the hub agency and Thrive in 5?

Answer: Hub agencies will work with an external evaluator hired by Thrive in 5 to determine how to effectively build on the hub agency's current data collection system in order to meet Thrive in 5's expectations. Hub agencies will need to a.) identify a staff member to be the primary contact for the external evaluator, b.) complete an assessment of the organization's current data collection system, c.) attend individual meetings with the evaluator as needed, and d.) perform the data collection identified by the evaluator as necessary to meet Thrive in 5's expectations. Thrive in 5's evaluator will work with the agency to develop forms or mechanisms to capture any necessary data not currently captured.

3. The budget grid is not clear to me. How can I create a budget before completing the CSRW Project Plan?

Answer: The beginning of the Community School Readiness Wiring process is to gain community buy-in, gather information, recruit School Readiness Roundtable participants and create an implementation plan that addresses each CSRW component. We expect hub agencies to use a portion of the funding during this

phase, according to the budget items listed in the rows of the budget grid: salaries/wages/total benefits, parent participation, materials/supplies, printing costs, refreshments, indirect costs, other. Please use the budget narrative to identify and describe aspects of your proposed budget that you feel might change when the CSRW Project Plan is completed.

While we recognize that some aspects of the budget might change when the CSRW Project Plan is finalized, given the broad budget categories of the budget grid, a good draft of a budget can be prepared up front. Thrive in 5 will work with you to make any adjustments to your budget that might be necessary; however, we would expect that the broad outlines and categories of your budget would not change dramatically.

4. Is there any drawback to a proposal that focuses specifically on families of children with special needs?

Answer: Thrive in 5's goal is to prevent the achievement gap among Boston's next generation of children, therefore we focus on supporting the families of children at the greatest risk of entering kindergarten without the foundation they need to be successful. In Boston and around the country, data show that the achievement gap disproportionately affects children of color, low income children, children with disabilities and children whose first language is not English. While CSRW is an inclusive, neighborhood-wide strategy, it has a particular focus on including and supporting these children and families.

We strongly encourage organizations to demonstrate, through their proposals, the ability and to engage families of children with special needs and the commitment to include strategies that will support families of children with special needs in their CSRW Project Plan. We do not, however, encourage organizations to focus exclusively on families of children with special needs, because Community School Readiness Wiring is a universal, neighborhood-wide strategy.