

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS:

CONTRACT FOR LOBBYIST SERVICES

ISSUED BY:



MICHIGAN ASSOCIATION OF ADMINISTRATORS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

SEPTEMBER 2015

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR CONTRACT WITH MAASE FOR LEGISLATIVE LOBBYIST SERVICES

PART I - INTRODUCTION/INFORMATION

MAASE is a statewide professional organization of over 640 members affiliated with the National Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE) and the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC). MAASE members are dedicated to the enhancement of the worth, dignity, potential, and uniqueness of each individual in society. Its mission is to provide leadership for the development and implementation of quality programs and services for students with disabilities within the total education community.

Purpose

The Michigan Association of Administrators of Special Education (MAASE) is seeking proposals from qualified organizations/individuals to provide Legislative Lobbyist Services on behalf of the Association.

Information or Clarification:

For information concerning procedures for responding to this RFP, contact Dawn Bentley, MAASE Past President at (517) 540-6804 or dawnbentley@livingstonesa.org.

Proposers please note: No part of the proposal may be submitted via FAX or U.S. Mail. The entire proposal must be submitted in accordance with the instructions contained in this RFP.

Contact Term:

The term of the initial contract will be for the remainder of the 2015-16 school year (through 6/30/2016). MAASE reserves the right to renew the contract for additional one (1) or two (2) year extension terms provided all terms, conditions and specifications remain the same, both parties agree to the extension, and such extension is approved by the MAASE Board of Directors.

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE:

To be eligible to respond to this RFP, the proposer(s) must demonstrate that they, or the Principals assigned to the project, have successfully performed the services in the Scope of Services section of this RFP.

At a minimum, qualification submittals should include:

1. A list of at least three (3) public sector/association clients for whom you have performed these services within the past five (5) years and successes achieved with them. Include client name, contact name, address, email address, and telephone;
2. A history of your organization, including a current organization chart (if applicable), and any other appropriate descriptive information, which will be helpful in our evaluation of your qualifications and experience. Include the number of years you have provided state and/or federal lobbying services, and provide a list of contracts to include a brief scope of services, fees charged and name of membership member who managed the contract; and
3. Identify the principal(s), "team" members and their tentative individual roles in any MAASE contract, including how many years each member has been lobbying at the state and/or federal level around educational issues.
4. Provide a disclosure statement citing any potential or existing conflict of interest(s) with MAASE.

PART II - SCHEDULE

RFP available online at www.maase.org, or by email to Dawn Bentley at dawnbentley@livingstonesa.org.

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| October 7, 2015 | Date proposal is due to MAASE. |
| October 12-14, 2015 | Face-to-face visits with leading proposers. |
| October 19, 2015 | Contract awarded by MAASE by scoring/ranking methodology based upon factors within the RFP, submitted proposal, and face-to-face meeting (if held). |
| November 1, 2015 | Final Execution of Contract by MAASE |

PART III - SCOPE OF SERVICES BACKGROUND:

Since 1991, MAASE has promoted and supported special education leadership in Michigan for the development and implementation of quality programs and services for students with disabilities within the total education community. It is a membership organization of special education administrators in Michigan, and is committed to providing professional learning, networking, technical assistance, political action, educational innovation, and communication and collaboration on behalf of students with individualized education programs (IEPs).

GENERAL INFORMATION/OBJECTIVE:

MAASE seeks to retain the services of a legislative lobbyist for matters in which it may need professional assistance before the Michigan Legislature, State of Michigan administrative agencies, the Michigan Governor and cabinet, the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs, Michigan State Boards and Commissions, et al. Such services shall include, but are not limited to, attending state legislative committee hearings and meetings, rulemaking proceedings and other administrative or legislative agency meetings. The contract services shall include, but not necessarily be limited to: scheduled, extended, or special legislative sessions and meetings; state administrative and agency hearings, meetings, or rule making proceedings; and legal and legislative consulting services, in accordance with the terms, conditions, and specifications contained in this RFP. The successful Contractor shall agree to be available at all times upon reasonable request to meet with the MAASE Board of Directors, the MAASE Legislative Action Committee members, and others as specified in order to perform the responsibilities assigned; and to attend meetings, represent the interests of MAASE, and act as liaison between MAASE and all branches, departments, and agencies of State government, legislative members and membership, at any legislative committee meeting or meetings with the Governor, Cabinet, or Cabinet members, or state agencies on matters under the scope of this RFP.

Although legal opinions are not required as a part of the Contractor responsibilities, MAASE will expect the Contractor to understand the various laws and proposals and the Contractor shall be expected to have the ability to interpret legal implications.

The Contractor is also expected to monitor proposals and activities in meetings regarding state educational policies, administrative and agency hearings, inclusive of related Boards and Commissions, as well as in rules packages in the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs. This would include a review of the agendas and the provision of notification to MAASE as pertinent issues arise. The Contractor would also be expected to report the outcome of such meetings. Contractor should be prepared to lobby committee members prior to and at these meetings, to accomplish MAASE's desired positions. The contractor would be expected to attend the following MAASE meetings: Legislative Action, Finance & Legislation, and General Membership. There are no pre-set number of meetings of governmental agencies that the Contractor may be expected to attend or with which to interact. This will be mutually determined between MAASE and the Contractor following award, and/or as determined to be needed during the contract term.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES REQUIRED:

1. Review, analyze and report on a continuing basis all existing and proposed State policies, programs, and
2. Identify those legislative issues that may affect MAASE, and regularly inform MAASE as to these matters. Provide legislative expertise and consulting services.

3. Review the legislative policy statements adopted by other local government lobbying groups and education-related organizations and associations for the purpose of identifying issues that may either positively or negatively affect students with IEPs. Assist MAASE Board of Directors in the coordination and development of MAASE's legislative platform and priorities.
4. Monitor state legislative committee hearing and meetings prior to and during the regular and special legislative session(s) at which specific issues within MAASE's adopted legislative platform and priorities are considered, as well as other that may arise that affect MAASE.
5. Develop and evaluate strategy for the support, opposition, or amendment of pending legislation.
6. Testify and lobby before the Legislature, State Board of Education, Governor, and Cabinet as necessary on behalf of MAASE, during the annual legislative session, extended, or special session(s) and at legislative committee meetings.
7. Appear and testify before state agency hearings, inclusive of relevant Boards and Commissions, rule making proceedings and other administrative agency or legislative meetings, as required, to promote, oppose, and seek passage of legislation affecting MAASE or its citizens, and specific legislation contained in the MAASE's legislative program.
8. Upon request, coordinate appointments/meetings between MAASE Board of Directors or other MAASE committees, and appropriate state officials and legislators.
9. A written summary report shall be submitted at the end of each week detailing legislative action taken during the week, status of legislative issues, and anticipated action during the upcoming week. A written report that summarizes the status of MAASE's legislative priorities shall be provided within one (1) week of the closing of the session and a more detailed final written report on specific legislation affecting MAASE shall be provided within a reasonable time period, not to exceed thirty (30) days from the close of session.
10. Periodic written reports (at least monthly) shall be provided during those months that the legislature is not in session, on issues of interest or concern to MAASE. Such information may include, but not necessarily be limited to, action taken at interim committee meetings, rule making hearings, and advance notice of legislation being proposed.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CONTRACTOR:

1. The Contractor shall perform the scope of services, as contained in the RFP specifications. This list of services shall not be deemed to be all-inclusive, and may be changed from time to time as authorized by MAASE Board of Directors.
2. All correspondence shall be directed through the MAASE President, or designee.
3. Contractor shall provide MAASE with a current written listing of all its clients. This list must be kept current at all times. The Contractor shall notify MAASE of any new client(s) within ten (10) days of such commitments(s). The written notice may be in the form of an email to the MAASE President, or designee.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF MAASE:

1. MAASE shall designate MAASE President as the "lead" member to coordinate with the Contractor; however, the MAASE President may designate other individuals.
2. MAASE shall have appropriate members available as may be required to discuss issues with the Contractor, particularly during the legislative session.
3. MAASE shall use its best efforts to cooperate with the Contractor in providing the information and documentation necessary in the performance of the Legislative consulting services under this contract.

FEE COMPENSATION/EXPENSES:

The proposed fee(s) shall detail all costs: i.e. travel, and related incidental out-of-pocket expenses, if applicable. Contractor shall not be reimbursed or otherwise paid for internal word processing, data processing or other services (i.e. local telephone services, copies, mail or postage services) that would reasonably be deemed the Contractor's overhead expense.

Hourly fees for proposed “team” members, expense reimbursement, and related additional costs should be included for information purposes only, and may be used to form a basis for any subsequent negotiations for additional services, outside the base services contained in the RFP, if applicable.

Cost Proposal: Proposer shall define the billing method, not to exceed one detailed invoice/per month.

1. Flat retainer fee, plus or including expenses, and a MAXIMUM ANNUAL FEE NOT TO EXCEED, inclusive of travel and expenses, for all services as outlined in the RFP,
2. Variable fee based on a per “team member” rate, plus travel and all additional charges, or
3. Firm, fixed annual fee (preferred) that would encompass retainer and any expenses for the initial contract term.

NOTE: MAASE prefers Proposer(s) to offer their fee to MAASE as a **firm, fixed annual fee schedule**, which includes all expenses including travel for the services outlined in RFP.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST:

In the event the Contractor becomes aware of any conflicts or potential conflicts between the interest of MAASE and the interests of clients of the Contractor, the Contractor shall immediately notify MAASE President, or designee, in writing, of such conflict. Written notice may be in the form of an email notification. In the event MAASE becomes aware of any conflicts or potential conflicts between the interest of MAASE and the interests of clients of the Contractor, MAASE President, or designee, shall promptly notify the Contractor of such conflict. MAASE and the Contractor shall attempt to resolve any such conflict in a manner mutually acceptable to MAASE and the Contractor. If the conflict cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of MAASE, MAASE reserves the right to procure these items/services from other vendors with an appropriate reduction to the Contractor’s fee(s).

PART VI - REQUIREMENTS OF THE PROPOSAL

All proposals must be submitted as specified on the proposal pages that follow. Any attachments must be clearly identified. To be considered, the proposal must respond to all parts of the RFP. Any other information thought to be relevant, but not applicable to the enumerated categories, should be provided as an appendix to the proposal. If a proposer to respond to a requirement supplies publications, the response should include reference to the document number and page number. This will provide a quick reference for the evaluators. Proposals not providing this reference will be considered to have no reference material included in the additional documents.

1. All proposals must be submitted electronically via email with the RFP title clearly marked in the subject line. If more than one email is submitted they should be marked 1 of 2, etc.
2. All proposals must be received by the Michigan Association of Administrators of Special Education prior to 5:00 pm on the date specified in the RFP SCHEDULE Section of this RFP.
3. A representative who is authorized to contractually bind the Contractor shall sign the proposal.

PROPOSAL PAGES ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1. Signature Page
2. Financial
3. Technical: includes narrative outlining understanding and approach, special considerations and possible difficulties.
 - a. Client References and Successes
 - b. Current Client List
 - c. Existing relationships with State of Louisiana Local Legislative Delegation, Congressional Delegation, Cabinet officials, Agency heads, and with other key legislators and support membership.
4. Any Attachments to Proposal

PROPOSAL SUMMARY - SIGNATURE PAGES**TO:** Michigan Association of Administrators of Special Education (MAASE)

The below signed hereby agrees to furnish the following article(s) or services at the price(s) and terms stated subject to all instructions, conditions, specifications addenda, legal advertisement, and conditions contained in the RFP. I have read all attachments including the specifications and fully understand what is required. By submitting this signed proposal I will accept a contract if approved by MAASE and such acceptance covers all terms, conditions, and specifications of this proposal. I certify that I have not divulged to, discussed with, or compared this proposal with any other proposer(s), and have not colluded with any proposer(s) or parties to this proposal. I certify that I am authorized to contractually bind the proposing firm.

Proposal
Submitted

By:

*Name**Title*

Company

Name:

(Legal, Registered Name)

Address:

*State**Zip**Phone*

Email:

Signature:

Date

VARIANCES: State any variations to specifications, terms and conditions in the space provided below, attachment or reference in the space provided below all variances contained on other pages of RFP, attachments or proposal pages. No variations or exceptions by the Proposer will be deemed to be part of the proposal submitted unless such variation or exception is listed and contained within the proposal documents and referenced in the space provided below. If no statement is contained in the below space, it is hereby implied that your proposal complies with the full scope of this RFP.

Variances? **If YES, please include** a copy with your response. Included? ☐ YES ☐ NO

PROPOSAL SUMMARY PAGES - FINANCIAL**I. *FLAT RETAINER FEE PLUS EXPENSES***

Estimated Total Annual Cost to MAASE: \$_____

Describe and Detail all costs included. Please include as an attachment to your RFP response. Detail any exclusion from above Total Cost, if applicable, and the basis for which additional costs shall be charged, if applicable.

OR

II. *VARIABLE FEE SCHEDULE OF CHARGES*

Estimated Total Annual Cost to MAASE: \$_____

Include all hourly rates/per team member, travel expenses, and all related out-of pocket expenses, if applicable. If additional space is needed, please include as an attachment to your RFP response. Detail all fees.

OR

III. *FIRM, FIXED ANNUAL FEE*

Total Annual Cost to MAASE: \$_____

An annual fee that would account for any type of retainer fee and all applicable expenses. If additional space is needed, please include as an attachment to your RFP response. Detail fees and calculation as appropriate.

PROPOSAL SUMMARY PAGES - TECHNICAL

The following issues should be fully responded to in your proposal in concise narrative form. Additional sheets should be used and attached to your RFP response. Please reference each issue and present in the same order.

1. Understanding of MAASE's needs and your overall approach to those needs.
2. Timeline schedule to meet with MAASE and assist in development of MAASE's Legislative program and finalize annual priorities and issues.
3. Outline of special considerations/needs of MAASE, or any potential problems.
4. Experience of Proposer and team: Detail all members; provide resumes, education, special training, and prior experience in accordance with the RFP requirements.
5. Any additional information pertinent to your capability and resources to perform the RFP services.
6. Lawsuits (any) pending or completed involving the corporation, partnership or individuals:
 - a. List all pending lawsuits, which are concerned directly with the membership or part of your organization proposed for the contract.
 - b. List all judgments from lawsuits in the last 5 years, which are concerned directly with the membership or part of your organization proposed for the contract.
7. Client References
8. Current Client List
9. Summary of existing relationships with legislators, cabinet officials, agency heads, and support membership.
10. Have you included the required Original and Two (2) copies of the RFP Proposal and all attachments?