

Request for Information
RFI
Charleston Promise Neighborhoods
Expanded Learning Project

Date: 6/26/2014
RFI number: SY 2014-15

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CPN Organization Background:

Charleston Promise Neighborhood (CPN), a 501c3 non-profit organization incorporated in May 2010, builds on the key success factors of the highly successful Harlem Children's Zone (HCZ) project and is designed to ensure that every child and family in "the CPN Neighborhood" has the supports they need to thrive.

The CPN Neighborhood, home to just over 17,000 residents--4,300 of whom are children under the age of 18--is a 5.6 square mile area of Charleston County, South Carolina that straddles portions of the cities of Charleston and North Charleston. The CPN Neighborhood coincides with the attendance zones of four Charleston County School District (CCSD) elementary schools with high concentrations of children living in poverty: James Simons Elementary School, Sanders-Clyde Elementary/Middle School, Mary Ford Elementary School, and Chicora Elementary School. Unfortunately, the progress of this area has lagged behind the rest of Charleston County in most economic, educational, and social indicators for at least the last 25 years.

CPN's purpose is to support the disproportionate numbers of young people in Charleston County growing up in environments marked by poor education, extreme poverty, and high crime. Despite Charleston's reputation as a center of beauty, history, culture, and wealth, a darker reality stunts the graduation rates and futures of thousands of children in this community. Determined to end these inequities, the cities of Charleston and North Charleston, the County of Charleston, and CCSD banded together and partnered with local organizations and residents to create The CPN. CPN's founders include the Charleston County School District, the cities of Charleston and North Charleston, Charleston County, business partners, private philanthropists, and key community-based organizations, which have united with one goal: Provide every child in the Neighborhood with a clear path to college. In addition to our governmental partners, we also have partnerships with the College of Charleston, Medical University of South Carolina, The Citadel, Trident United Way, the Coastal Community Foundation, Reading Partners, the LCFB, Communities In Schools, Teach For America, Blackbaud, Inc., and many other nonprofit organizations and corporations.

Our strategy is deliberate, as we acknowledge that we have an audacious goal, and that transformation will not happen overnight, and it will not happen in one large-scale implementation effort. Rather, it will be the product of a thorough, disciplined, rigorous process that will: (a) identify needs across the lifecycle from prenatal through graduation, and across CPN's Six Strands of Focus (Education, Parenting, Community Engagement, Healthcare, Employment, Housing), which were identified by residents of the Neighborhood; (b) select proven solutions to create a continuum to fill existing gaps and compensate for weaknesses identified in every Strand of Focus, at every stage of the lifecycle; and (c) roll out the solutions in a phased process to ensure early successes and community ownership.

CPN's Mission and Vision:

CPN aims to ensure "The Neighborhood will be socially and economically indistinguishable from the rest of Charleston County within a generation". The CPN Neighborhood called "The Neck"--home to just over 17,000 residents--is a 5.6 square mile area of Charleston County, South Carolina that straddles portions of the cities of Charleston and North Charleston.

As a community, our schools are focused on all students achieving at high levels and supporting students' social emotional needs. We will have a laser- focus on ensuring 1) that by third grade, achieve the Vision 2016 goals, 2) that all school partners and programs are aligned to support students' academic and/or social emotional success; and 3) teachers have access to a state of

the art longitudinal database of student performance data to provide individualized student support.

Achieving Vision 2016 goals is a recognizably bold task! Currently, CPN schools have a 38% gap towards the 98% English Language Arts (ELA) goal and a 43% gap towards the 93% Math goal. The corresponding gaps for all CCSD elementary schools (excluding the CPN schools) are 19% and 24%, respectively, validating CPN's bold mission.

Charleston Promise Neighborhood Strategy:

The Charleston Promise Neighborhood Learning Committee (CPNLC) is a new strategy launched in partnership with CPN and the Charleston County School District (CCSD), to ensure children in CPN schools exceed the Vision 2016 Goals, as determined by the CCSD Board of Directors. The CPNLC is new, different, and vital. This strategy provides a single focus on dynamic resource allocations, focused leadership, and joint programming in four high-poverty elementary schools (Mary Ford, Sanders-Clyde, Chicora and James Simons) which are at significant risk of continued under-performance. CCSD recognizes the needs of high-poverty, high-potential schools and is partnering with CPN to implement aggressive programming and strategies to turn these schools around and to ensure these schools have all the resources and supports needed to exceed the Vision 2016 Goals. While this work is immediate, CPN's work is generational; our early work in elementary schools will provide a model for expansion into the middle and high schools in our area, and indeed a model for the District.

CPN's SY2013-14 CPNLC unique strategies include but are not limited to:

- Focusing on the individual student in terms of current academic performance and the gap between that performance and the 2016 performance goals for that child. This entails not only tracking performance by each student, but also analyzing performance gaps for each student and teacher performance for student cohorts, i.e. is an individual child having difficulty in a subject (student issue) or are many students having difficulty (potentially a teacher problem in addition to students).
- Allocating scarce resources, i.e. extra teachers, master teachers, external observers, in real time as opposed to annually. That is, if goals are not being met in one school with the initially planned level of support, needed resources will be added quickly. What type of resources to add will be based on input from principals, external observers, and standardized test results.
- Developing an expanded learning model to support closing the achievement gap using innovative school-community partnerships to address student needs.

Purpose of the CPN RFI:

While we acknowledge the strengths and opportunities of our school partners, we also understand that in order for the four CPN schools to be successful in preparing students for long-term success, CPN must provide additional resources, to infuse creativity, innovation, and ultimately results. CPN's investments complement CCSD's allocated resources, to ensure that each school has the necessary tools and program supports to be their most effective.

As such, CPN is interested in accomplishing the aforementioned goals by infusing the Community Schools model to include the Expanded Learning program into the CPN targeted schools. Community schools make schools the center of the community, with a focus on giving all students the supports, opportunities, and resources they need to succeed. By collaborating with community-based organizations, effectively coordinating resources, expanding access to high-quality instruction, and engaging families in meaningful ways, community schools help resolve

issues that distract students in the classroom, creating a safe and supportive school environment. As a result, we will better prepare students for academic instruction, and we will graduate more students who are college and career-ready. Research increasingly demonstrates that community schools have positive impacts on attendance, student behavior and safety, parent involvement, stay-in-school rates, and academic performance and graduation rates. We create successful students and vibrant, healthy, and connected schools.

Community schools use innovative collaborations between schools, teachers, families, community-based organizations, health and human services providers, and arts and culture organizations, among others, to extend the school day and offer individualized interventions that directly address the unique challenges faced by some of our students. The purpose of the CPN Expanded Learning Time competitive grant process is to provide funding to community based organizations (CBOs) who are interested in or are currently operating in collaboration with CPN schools for the purpose of increasing school-wide achievement with high-quality expanded school day and/or expanded school year programs. During the SY 2014-15, CPN would like to identify community based organizations to support the Expanded Day models at James Simons and Sanders Clyde.

With this RFI we request information regarding your CBO. This same information will be gathered from other service providers and used to evaluate which organizations will be considered eligible to submit a response to CPN's RFP solicitation. If your organization successfully satisfies the requirements, you will be forwarded the link to the RFP for the CPN Expanded Learning program.

Scope

Specific information is requested according to the attached RFI application.

RFI Application Definitions:

CPN- Charleston Promise Neighborhood

CBO- Community Based Organization

Expanded Learning Time (ELT) - ELT programs engage students in their own education by providing hands-on, experiential learning opportunities through community partnerships that build on—but do not replicate—the lecture instructional style learning that happens during the school day. By adding time to the school day, CBOs in partnership with schools can provide focused, alternative learning opportunities that support achievement, so that all students experience educational success.

RFI vs. RFP – Request for Information (RFI) are an informal means of gathering general information similar to an informational interview. Request for Proposal (RFP) is a solicitation made, often through a bidding process, by an organization interested in procurement of a service to potential agencies to submit proposals for funding consideration.

Administrative Expenses - Grant funds that are spent on executive/management staff salaries; administrative support staff; salary and fringe benefits for staff that are not directly supporting children and youth attending CPN schools. **(Note: No more than 8% of the requested award amount is applied towards administrative costs of the program.)**

CPN Schools- Mary Ford (MF), Sanders Clyde (SC), Chicora (C) and James Simons (JS)

RFI Procedure:

To answer this RFI please fill in the attached form. Contact person listed below is available for assistance in case that is needed. The answers to this RFI will be evaluated by CPN staff and CPN organizational partners.

How to deliver the answer:

Send the attached form (format unchanged) by email to:

April Green

Administrative Assistant

Charleston Promise Neighborhood Learning Community

4720 Jenkins Avenue

North Charleston, SC 29405

Telephone: (843) 745-7150

Fax: (843) 566-7799

Email: april_green@charleston.k12.sc.us

Contact:

For questions regarding this RFI, you are welcome to contact:

April Green

Administrative Assistant

Charleston Promise Neighborhood Learning Community

4720 Jenkins Avenue

North Charleston, SC 29405

Telephone: (843) 745-7150

Fax: (843) 566-7799

Email: april_green@charleston.k12.sc.us .

Timeframe:

The timeframe for the CPN SY 2014-15 Grant Cycle is as follows:

06/26/2014 – RFI sent out

07/01/2014 – RFI Informational Webinar. **(To participate in the Webinar please email your name, name of your organization, an email address and phone number to email April Green at april_green@charleston.k12.sc.us)**

07/07/2014 – Last date for questions

07/11/2014 – Last date for submission of CPN's RFI **(Note: all applications are due by 5:00pm)**

07/18/2014 – Agencies approved from the RFI notified

07/18/2014 – RFP sent to agencies that have met the expectations of the RFI

07/28/2014 – RFP Due **(Note: all applications are due by 5:00pm)**

08/01/2014 – Grant recommendations announced

08/15/2014 – Finalize all negotiated scopes of work, budgets and conclude the contract development and signature process

Operational Specifications:

- All programs must be accessible to all CPN students regardless of ability to pay.
- CPN funds must be used to support programming in the CPN schools only. For SY 2014-15, the CPN funding allocation can be used to offset expenses related to approved activities that support students attending James Simons, Sanders Clyde and potentially Mary Ford.
- All contracts will operate between August 18, 2014 – June 4, 2015.

Characteristics of Programs to be Funded:

- Results-Driven: program focuses on improving the conditions of well-being for children and youth with a tracking system in place to measure the program's impact on participants
- Evidence-based Practice: program has a significant level of quantitative and qualitative data showing positive outcomes
- Innovative: program addresses gaps in current systems, tests new approaches to closing the academic gaps or uses creative strategies to address unmet needs
- Collaborative: the agency's contracted services will be implemented as part of the Expanded Day models at each of the targeted schools. Agency partners with one or more organizations to achieve a collective impact.
- Highly skilled and well trained staff: program offers ongoing professional development to staff members and is willing to participate in CPN and/or school based training opportunities.

Ineligible Applications:

Application will be DEEMED INELEGIBLE for the following reasons:

- More than 8% of the requested award amount is applied towards administrative costs of the program.
- Construction projects, renovations, repairs modeling of existing buildings, land acquisitions or multiple year requests will not be funded.
- Agencies that serve as a funding sources to 501(c)3 organization
- Deficit reduction
- Capital expenditures (resources not completely consumed during the contract year i.e. computers, construction, vehicles, cell phones etc.)
- Current Links to Success funded projects