



Request for Proposal

RFP1275 CTE Makerspace Curriculum

I. INTRODUCTION

The Des Moines Independent Community School District (the "District") is currently seeking proposals from qualified firm(s) interested in providing the highest quality middle school career exploration curriculum and related services at the lowest cost to the District. The District intends to select the qualified organization(s) to deliver the services.

I. SCOPE OF SERVICES

A. GENERAL INFORMATION

The District is located in Des Moines, Iowa, the capital city of the state and employs approximately 5,000 teachers and staff.

The District has a large, diverse, and complex school operation. The District expects the selected organization(s) to be knowledgeable and experienced, and able to provide quality services in the relevant areas to the District. While the exact range and extent of services to be provided will be subject to contract negotiation, the District anticipates that the selected firm(s) shall provide access to high-quality applied CTE- and STEM-design curriculum targeted to grades 7-8, and provide related professional development services for educators responsible for the course.

Specific responsibilities of the District's request for proposal may include, but are not limited to, the following:

SCOPE OF WORK:

1. Purpose

As part of the district's Reimagining Education initiative, approved by voters through the 2025 bond referendum, DMPS is developing specialized middle school learning environments designed to provide equitable, hands-on opportunities for students to explore high-demand career pathways before making future academic and career program selections.

The District intends to implement a common curriculum model across all comprehensive middle schools to ensure equitable student experiences while supporting future participation in advanced secondary pathway programs.

DMPS seeks curriculum solutions that provide:

- Experiential, project-based learning
- Alignment to high school and postsecondary career pathways
- Exposure to industry-relevant tools and practices
- Opportunities for collaboration, problem-solving, creativity, and innovation

2. Program Overview

The District is designing middle school CTE programming that engages students in hands-on, project-and-problem based experiences that build foundational technical and employability skills while preparing them for high school CTE and STEM pathways, including advanced programming at Central Campus.

The curriculum must support the following goals:

- Applied Learning
 - Provide students opportunities to:



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- Engage students in authentic design challenges and project-based experiences, not passive career awareness activities, that require students to apply technical skills to solve real-world problems
- Build foundational technical skills (e.g., engineering design process, computational thinking, data/technical literacy) that transfer directly to high school CTE and STEM coursework
- Develop employability skills (collaboration, communication, problem-solving) through structured, hands-on work
- **Career Pathway Alignment**
- Programming should align vertically to pathway opportunities available through:
 - High school CTE and STEM coursework
 - Central Campus programming
 - Emerging district pathway opportunities, including college credit coursework
- Curriculum scope and sequence should map to specific high school pathway entry points, so students and families can see a clear progression from middle school exposure to Central Campus enrollment
- **Equitable Access**
 - Curriculum must be implemented consistently across all comprehensive middle schools, with equivalent equipment, materials, and instructional support at each site
 - Curriculum must be designed and scaffolded to support diverse student populations, including English learners and students receiving special education services, without diluting the hands-on, project-based rigor of the experience

3. Curriculum Requirements

The selected vendors shall provide curriculum and implementation support for the following Grade 7-8 CTE course sequence:

- **Course 1: Computer Programming**
 - Connected Pathway: Computer Science
 - Curriculum should introduce students to:
 - Computational thinking
 - Coding fundamentals
 - Software development concepts
 - App and game design
 - Data structures and problem solving
 - Emerging technologies
- **Course 2: Medical Exploration**
 - Connected Pathway: Health Sciences
 - Curriculum should introduce students to:



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- Health science careers
 - Human body systems
 - Patient care fundamentals
 - Medical technologies
 - Healthcare ethics
 - Clinical simulation experiences
- **Course 3: Design and Modeling**
 - o Connected Pathway: Engineering
 - o Curriculum should introduce students to:
 - Engineering design processes
 - Computer-aided design (CAD)
 - Product development
 - Design thinking
 - Prototyping
 - Problem-solving methodologies
- **Course 4: Automation and Robotics**
 - o Connected Pathway: Engineering and Robotics
 - o Curriculum should introduce students to:
 - Robotics systems
 - Automation principles
 - Mechanical systems
 - Programming and controls
 - Sensors and data collection
 - Engineering challenges
- **Course 5: Business Basics**
 - o Connected Pathway: Business
 - o Curriculum should include foundational learning in:
 - Marketing
 - Finance
 - Entrepreneurship
 - Business management
 - Customer relations
 - Business communication
- **Course 6: Cybersecurity**
 - o Connected Pathway: Networking and Cybersecurity
 - o Curriculum should introduce students to:



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- Network fundamentals
- Digital citizenship
- Online safety
- Cybersecurity concepts
- Ethical computing
- Cyber threat prevention

These six courses reflect the district's initial pathway implementation model and shall be capable of operating within a rotating or semester-based middle school structure.

4. Curriculum Design

Vendor proposals must address the following requirements.

- **Instructional Design**
 - Curriculum shall:
 - Utilize project-and-problem based learning methodologies
 - Include hands-on learning experiences
 - Incorporate collaborative learning opportunities
 - Support inquiry-based instruction
 - Include real-world problem solving
 - Develop employability skills
- **Student Accessibility**
 - Curriculum shall:
 - Support diverse learners
 - Include accommodations and modifications
 - Provide multilingual support where available
 - Align with Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles
- **Course Structure**
 - Vendor shall provide:
 - Complete course scope and sequence
 - Unit plans
 - Daily instructional resources
 - Student materials
 - Assessment tools
 - Rubrics
 - Teacher guides
- **Technology Integration**
 - Vendor shall identify:



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- Required software
 - Required hardware
 - Licensing requirements
 - Compatibility requirements
- Physical Materials
 - Vendor shall identify:
 - Required physical materials beyond the curricular materials required to complete experiential lessons
 - Differentiate between start-up and consumable materials
- Optional enhancement resources
 - The District requires clear differentiation between:
 - Required materials
 - Recommended materials
 - Optional materials

5. Professional Development

The selected vendor shall provide:

- Initial Training
 - Curriculum implementation training
 - Equipment and software training
 - Instructional best practices
- Ongoing Support
 - Technical assistance
 - Curriculum updates
 - Virtual coaching opportunities
- Troubleshooting support
 - Implementation Resources
 - Teacher onboarding materials
 - Pacing guidance
 - Assessment support



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I. PROPOSAL PROCEDURES

A. TIMELINE FOR PROPOSALS

Issue Request for Proposals (RFP)	9/29/2026 3:00PM CST
Clarifications Due	10/15/2026 2:00 PM CST
Proposals Due	10/27/2026 3:00 PM CST

This schedule is subject to change at the sole discretion of the District.

B. PREPARATION OF PROPOSAL

Each proposal shall be prepared simply and economically avoiding the use of elaborate promotional materials beyond those sufficient to provide a complete, accurate, and reliable presentation. Each proposal should be limited to a total of thirty (30) pages, those proposals exceeding this page limit may not be considered. All proposals shall respond clearly to the questions and information requested in the RFP. The proposal should follow the format of the RFP in presentation of the information requested as outlined in section IV. Response Requirements Failure to provide the information as requested may result in disqualification of the proposal.

C. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSAL COPIES

Proposals shall be submitted electronically (in PDF format) via the District's online system at dmschools.ionwave.net.

It is the proposer's responsibility to ensure its proposal is received before the stated deadline. Proposals received after the above date and time will not be considered. No faxed or emailed proposals will be accepted.

D. PROPOSER'S CONDITIONS

Any conditions or expectations on the part of the proposer for performance by the District must be set forth in the proposal.

E. EFFECTIVE PERIOD OF PROPOSALS

All proposals, including any pricing, shall remain valid for ninety (90) days.

F. MODIFICATIONS OF PROPOSALS

Proposals may be modified in the form of a written notice on company letterhead and must be received prior to the time and date set for the solicitation opening or submitted via the District's online system at dmschools.ionwave.net. Each hard copy modification must have the proposer's name, return address, and the applicable proposal number and title clearly marked on the face of the envelope. If more than one modification is submitted, the modification bearing the latest date of receipt will be considered the valid modification. A duly authorized agent of the proposer must sign all requests for modifications.



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G. WITHDRAWALS OF PROPOSALS

Proposals may be withdrawn prior to the time and date set for the solicitation opening. Such requests for withdrawals must be made in writing on company letterhead and signed by a duly authorized agent of the proposer. Proposals may also be removed from consideration on the District's online system at dmschools.ionwave.net.

H. CONTACT OF DISTRICT OFFICIALS

Questions regarding this RFP should be directed to the Procurement department via the District's procurement portal at dmschools.ionwave.net. Contact with any other District officials or personnel besides the Procurement department about this RFP, at any time, may be grounds for immediate disqualification from participation in this RFP.

I. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The District reserves the right to request additional information, if necessary, or conduct any investigation that it deems appropriate for the evaluation of the proposals.

J. DISPOSITION OF PROPOSALS

All proposals shall become the property of the District and shall not be returned to the proposer. Except as may be otherwise provided by law, all proposals become public record as soon as received by the District.

K. BACKGROUND CHECKS

By submitting a proposal, the proposer agrees that it has or will conduct thorough and satisfactory background checks, at its own expense, on all of its employees who may be assigned to work on the District's property. Additionally, the proposer is required to ensure that all subcontractors, consultants, or any other individuals engaged by the proposer in connection with the contract are also subject to background checks at its own expense. If the proposer is selected as the successful proposer, it will be required to provide copies of these background check results to the District prior to the execution of the contract.

The District reserves the right, but is not obligated, to conduct its own background checks on the proposer's employees at the District's sole discretion. Furthermore, the District reserves the right, but is not obligated, to audit the proposer's background screening program at any time, whether such audit is announced or unannounced. The proposer agrees to cooperate fully with such audits and to permit an authorized District representative, upon request, to review all relevant background screening records, including those pertaining to individual employees. This review may be conducted to ensure compliance with the District's requirements, as well as for any necessary audits or investigations, to the fullest extent permitted by law.

In the event that the District determines that an employee, subcontractor, or consultant does not meet the required standards based on the background check results, the proposer will be expected to take appropriate corrective action, including removing the individual from any work involving access to District property. The proposer acknowledges that the District's decision regarding the suitability of personnel and access to District premises is final and at the sole discretion of the District.



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L. NONCOLLUSION; NO CONFLICT OF INTEREST; NO DEBARMENT; NO SEX OFFENSE CONVICTION

By submitting a proposal, the proposer certifies that: (i) the costs included in its proposal have been arrived at independently and without consultation with any competitor or representative of the District and are in all respects free from collusion or fraud; (ii) no improper, unethical, or illegal relationships or conflicts of interest exist or have the potential to exist between the proposer and the District, or any employee, officer, or director of either party, except as otherwise expressly identified by the proposer in its proposal; (iii) the proposer and its employees, officers, and directors have not been debarred, suspended, or otherwise excluded from or ineligible to participate in any procurement or non-procurement programs or other assistance programs or activities with the state or federal government; and (iv) the proposer is not owned, operated, or managed by a registered sex offender who has been convicted of a sex offense against a minor in accordance with Iowa Code 692A.113. In addition, the proposer shall not permit any employee, subcontractors, consultants, or other engaged by the proposer who has been convicted of a sex offense against a minor to be present on District property.

M. PROPOSAL PREPARATION COSTS

The District is not responsible for any costs incurred in the preparation of the proposals. All costs directly or indirectly related to preparation of a response to this RFP or any presentation required to supplement and/or clarify a response, which may be required by the District, shall be the sole responsibility of and shall be borne by the proposer.

N. SIGNATURES

The proposal and any clarifications to it shall be signed by an officer of the proposing organization empowered to bind the firm in a contract.

O. APPROVAL OF ACCOUNT TEAM MEMBERS

The District reserves the right to require the successful organization(s) to replace any assigned member to the District's account if, in the opinion of the District, an employee is not rendering, or is incapable of rendering, the quality of service and cooperation required.

P. NON-DISCRIMINATION

The successful organization(s) shall not discriminate or permit discrimination in its operations or employment practices against any person or group in violation of applicable federal, state, or local laws and regulations and shall furnish evidence of compliance with this provision when so requested by the District.

Q. TAX-EXEMPT ENTITY

The District is a tax-exempt entity, and therefore, taxes are not to be included in a proposer's pricing calculations.

II. RESPONSE REQUIREMENTS



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Your response must include the following information to demonstrate the capacity of your organization to perform the required services. If it does not, it will be rejected as non-compliant / non-responsive. You are encouraged to provide any other information that will be beneficial to the District when reviewing your performance abilities.

To facilitate the evaluation of the proposal, Proposer is to number all pages of its proposal and provide designated tabs as indicated below. The proposal shall be limited to thirty (30) pages excluding the Proposal Response Cover Page.

- a) Tab # 1 SCOPE OF WORK: Address all areas detailed in the Scope of Work, include all deliverables
- b) Tab # 2 GENERAL INFORMATION
- c) Tab # 3 EXPERIENCE AND FINANCIALS
- d) Tab # 4 TERMINATION AND LITIGATION
- e) Tab # 5 REFERENCES
- f) TAB# 6 COMPENSATION AND PRICING
- g) Tab # 7 PROPOSAL RESPONSE COVER PAGE

A. SCOPE OF WORK (Tab # 1))

- (1) Address all deliverables

B. GENERAL INFORMATION (Tab # 2)

- (1) Provide your organization's name, address, website, social media sites, telephone number, and fax number. Include the name, title, email, and phone number of the individual who will serve as the organization's primary contact during the review process. If service will be provided from multiple locations, please list all other locations.
- (2) Describe your organization's ownership and legal structure, including any corporate affiliations and how long your organization has been in business in its current form. Please also provide all former names of your organization.
 - a. If your organization is a corporation or LLC, provide the date of incorporation, state of incorporation, and the names of the President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer.
 - b. If your organization is a sole proprietorship or partnership, provide the date of organization, state in which the partnership was formed or incorporated, whether your organization is qualified to do business in Iowa, your Iowa Registration number, and the names of all individuals or partners.
- (3) Provide the total number of employees in your organization.
- (4) Provide your Federal Tax Identification Number.

C. EXPERIENCE AND FINANCIALS (Tab # 3)

- (1) If applicable, describe the area(s) that your organization specializes in.
- (2) Describe whether your organization uses contractors or if services are provided in-house.
- (3) Describe the manner in which you communicate with your clients.
- (4) Provide the number of staff you plan to allocate to this project.
- (5) Provide the proposed assigned personnel's title, educational background, and number of years performing the work required by this RFP. (For example: Tech Architect, MBA, 12 years).
- (6) Provide the number of public entities of equivalent size to the District that you have implemented the requested service for in the past three (3) years. Please include details.



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- (7) Provide the number of public entity customers that you currently have that are of equivalent size to the District. Please include details.
- (8) Describe your organization's expectations of its clients and of the District if selected.
- (9) Provide your Dun & Bradstreet number.
- (10) Provide the name, address, city/state, and phone number of your banking service provider, including contact name and email.

D. TERMINATION AND LITIGATION (Tab # 4)

- (1) Provide information regarding whether your organization has had a contract for services terminated for any reason in the past three (3) years. Please include details.
- (2) Describe any damages or penalties of anything of value traded or given up by your organization under any of its existing or past contracts in the past three (3) years as it relates to services performed that are similar to the services outlined in this RFP and the resulting contract.
- (3) Describe any order, judgment, or decree of any federal, state, city, or local public authority barring, suspending, or otherwise limiting the right of your organization to engage in any business, practice, or activity in the past three (3) years.
- (4) Provide information regarding whether your organization has within the last three (3) years been subject to any litigation, administrative or regulatory proceeding, or investigation that could affect the ability of your organization or its employees, officers, and directors to perform the required services under any resulting contract with the District.

E. REFERENCES (Tab # 5)

- (1) Provide at least three (3) references for which the organization has provided similar products and services to within the last five (5) years, and whose complexities are similar to those presented in this RFP on a local or regional level. Please include the entity name and address, as well as the name, title, email address, and phone number of the contact person.

F. COMPENSATION AND PRICING (Tab #6)

- (1) Describe your organization's policy with respect to pricing and method of compensation.
- (2) Provide a comprehensive billing rate for your organization and propose a method of payment.
- (3) Indicate if there is different pricing available for different service plans.
- (4) State whether any other fees or costs not included in the above may be charged.
- (5) Provide all the costs associated with the service requested. No additional cost will be accepted post award.

G. PROPOSAL RESPONSE COVER PAGE (Tab # 7)

- (1) Proposers shall complete and sign the Proposal Response Cover Page (attached to this RFP) and submit it with their proposal.
- (2) Any misstatement or omission by a proposer in the Proposal Response Cover Page will be grounds for disqualification and/or immediate termination of any resulting contract at the sole discretion of the District.

H. INSURANCE



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The selected proposer shall maintain sufficient liability insurance to cover any negligent acts or omissions and/or other liabilities that may arise out of performing a contract resulting from this RFP. Provide the District with copies of certificates of insurance verifying that your organization has liability insurance in the types and amounts acceptable to the District's insurance advisor, as well as workers' compensation insurance in the amounts required by law. The successful organization(s) shall submit to the District certificates of insurance, prior to the beginning service and no later than ten (10) days after award of the contract. Please review dmschools.ionwave.net for an example certificate of insurance requirement.

All policies shall be written by insurance companies licensed to conduct business in the state of Iowa, with an A.M. Best rating of A- or better. The Contractor agrees to notify the district immediately if insurance coverage is cancelled or materially modified, or if limits become impaired by other claims.

The selected proposer must provide a statement saying that such coverage shall be written exclusively to cover the Des Moines Public Schools contract or as an alternative guarantee that the aggregate has not already been impaired by other claims if this policy covers other activities or services for other clients. Other forms of insurance, which must be maintained during the entire term of the contract. The establishment of minimum limits of insurance by the Des Moines Public Schools does not reduce or limit the liability or responsibilities of the successful Proposer.

<u>Coverage</u>	<u>Minimum Limits</u>
Workers' Compensation	Statutory Limits (including a waiver of subrogation)
Auto Liability	\$1,000,000 Combined Single Limit
General Liability	\$1,000,000 Per Occurrence / \$2,000,000 Aggregate Limit
Professional Liability	\$1,000,000
Umbrella/ Excess Liability	\$2,000,000

- The Workers' Compensation policy must be endorsed to include a Waiver of Subrogation in favor of the district.
- If Contractor will have direct student contact, the General Liability policy must include coverage for Sexual Abuse and Molestation with a minimum limit of \$1,000,000.
- If Contractor accesses or interfaces with district IT systems or software, Contractor must carry Cyber Liability coverage with a minimum limit of \$1,000,000.
- The establishment of minimum limits by the District does not reduce or limit the liability or responsibilities of the Contractor.

V. AWARD OF CONTRACT

A. COMMITTEE EVALUATION

An evaluation committee comprised of representatives of the District will assess all proposals. Each proposal will be reviewed with regard to compliance with the requirements of the RFP. The District retains the sole right to develop and utilize an evaluation methodology and scoring system to grade the proposals. The committee will rank the proposals in the order that it determines, in its sole discretion, will best meet the needs of the District. The committee may select the top



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proposers and conduct personal interviews or request a formal presentation be conducted before the evaluation committee. At the conclusion of the interviewing process, the committee will make their determination of the successful proposer, and if necessary, make a recommendation to the Board of Directors for the District at the earliest regularly scheduled meeting.

B. TIME AND LOCATION OF PROPOSER INTERVIEWS OR PRESENTATIONS

The District may interview up to 100% of the proposers. Those proposers will be notified to arrange specific times. The interviews or formal presentations will be conducted virtually.

C. RIGHT OF REJECTION BY DES MOINES PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Notwithstanding any other provisions of this RFP, the District reserves the right to award this contract to the organization(s) that best meet(s) the requirements of the RFP, and not necessarily to the lowest proposer(s). Further, the District reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, or any part thereof, and to waive informalities, and to enter into such contract or contracts as shall be deemed in the best interests of the District.

D. WRITTEN CONTRACT

A proposer to whom a contract is awarded shall be required to enter into a written contract with the District in a form approved by legal counsel for the District. This RFP, the proposal, the District's General Terms and Conditions, and the District's Procurement Policy Manual, or any part thereof, may be incorporated into and made a part of the final contract. The District reserves the right to negotiate the terms and conditions of the contract with the selected proposer(s). If necessary, the contract will be approved by the Board of Directors of the District. Any contractual changes shall be made in writing and shall be mutually agreed upon by both the District and the proposer, and subject to Board approval.

A contract shall not exist between the District and any selected proposer until the written contract has been duly authorized and executed by the District's Chief Financial Officer. In the event the contract is \$100,000 or greater, the Board of Directors of the District must approve the award. In the instance that a recommendation to award a contract to a proposer is rejected by the Board of Directors of the District, the District will not be obligated to the proposer in any manner.

The successful proposer will provide the requested services to the District in accordance with this RFP, the District's Procurement Policy Manual, and the written contract.

E. CONTRACT TERM

The contract period shall be for one (1) year and may be renewable for four additional one-year periods at the end of each fiscal year at the discretion of the District. The renewal's pricing structure will be negotiated prior to the termination of the previous contract period.

F. TERMINATION OF CONTRACT

A resulting contract may be terminated by the District at any time and for any reason without penalty upon a thirty (30) day written notice.



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Compliance with Applicable Laws. This RFP and any resulting contract will be governed under the laws of the State of Iowa. The selected proposer shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations, as well as relevant District policies and procedures. The selected proposer shall ensure that all services are provided as described in its proposal and are rendered in a competent and professional manner by qualified personnel using practices that are standard in the industry or better.

Addenda. The District may modify this RFP at any time by issuing written addenda in the same manner as this original RFP was issued.

Disclaimers. The District is not committed to any course of action as a result of its issuance of this RFP and/or its receipt of a response from your organization or other organizations in response to it.



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PROPOSAL RESPONSE COVER PAGE (Tab # 8)

I, the undersigned, state that I am authorized by the below-named organization to submit the attached proposal in response to the Request for Proposals (RFP) issued by the Des Moines Independent Community School District (the "District").

On behalf of this organization, I hereby certify that the following statements are true and correct: (i) the costs included in this proposal have been arrived at independently and without consultation with any competitor or representative of the District and are in all respects free from collusion or fraud; (ii) no improper, unethical, or illegal relationships or conflicts of interest exist or have the potential to exist between the organization and the District, or any employee, officer, or director of either party, except as otherwise expressly identified by the organization in the proposal; (iii) the organization and its employees, officers, and directors have not been debarred, suspended, or otherwise excluded from or ineligible to participate in any procurement or non-procurement programs or other assistance programs or activities with the state or federal government; and (iv) the organization is not owned, operated, or managed by a registered sex offender who has been convicted of a sex offense against a minor in accordance with Iowa Code 692A.113. In addition, the organization shall not permit any employee who has been convicted of a sex offense against a minor to be present on District property.

This organization has examined the RFP, including the specifications for the services to be provided, and is familiar with the local conditions surrounding the District. The organization hereby proposes to provide the requested services to the District in accordance with the RFP, the District's Procurement Policy Manual, and any contract documents, within the time frame described therein and in this proposal, and at the prices stated in this proposal. The organization agrees to comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations, as well as relevant District policies and procedures. The organization further agrees to ensure that all services are provided as described in its proposal and are rendered in a competent and professional manner by qualified personnel using practices that are standard in the industry or better.

This organization agrees to the terms and conditions set forth in the RFP. The organization further agrees that any contractual conflict between the RFP and the proposal documents submitted by the proposer will be resolved in favor of the RFP, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the District.

Signature of Authorized Contracting Agent: _____

Name (Typed): _____

Title: _____

Organization: _____

Street Address: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Date: _____