REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS
FOR
TEXAS RISING STAR ASSESSOR SERVICES

An Open Procurement Process

Issued September 9, 2014, 1:00 P.M., C.D.T.
Available and delivered to the Board Office
Monday through Friday, 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.

Quotation Proposals for Immediate Consideration: September 30, 2014, 4:00 P.M., C.D.T.

On-line Bidders’ Questions/Answers, RFQ and RFQ Forms at:
http://www.wfsdallas.com/doing-business

Dallas County Local Workforce Development Board, Inc.
dba Workforce Solutions Greater Dallas
www.wfsdallas.com
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Dallas, Texas 75202
214-290-1000
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## ATTACHMENTS

A. Proposal Cover Sheet  
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INTRODUCTION
The workforce development system in Dallas County is governed and managed by the Dallas County Local Workforce Development Board, Inc. d.b.a. Workforce Solutions Greater Dallas, acting on behalf of the county’s citizens and employers. The Dallas County Local Workforce Development Board is a 501(c)(3), a not-for-profit corporation in the State of Texas. It is a volunteer body constituted in accordance with the federal Workforce Investment Act and the Texas Workforce Act (HB 1863 and S 642) and appointed by Chief Elected Officials in the workforce development area. Board Directors represent a partnership of private employers, organized labor, non-profit organizations, and public entities. The Board administers and acts as fiscal agent for programs consolidated at the local level and is responsible and accountable for the management of all workforce development funds made available to the local workforce development area. Grants are received from the Texas Workforce Commission and may include state funds, and federal funds from the U. S. Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Agriculture. Please see the Board’s website for additional information on the workforce programs and locations of the local workforce centers within Dallas County (www.wfsdallas.com).

PURPOSE OF REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)
The purpose of this RFQ is to solicit for qualified professionals to provide assessor services to current Texas Rising Star (TRS) providers and to child care providers who may be seeking TRS certification in Dallas and Tarrant Counties. Workforce Solutions Greater Dallas (WFSDallas) and Workforce Solutions of Tarrant County (WFSTC) are responsible for the development and delivery of child care quality improvement within our respective counties: Dallas and Tarrant.

Workforce Solutions Greater Dallas (WFSDallas) provides subsidized child care services to over 12,000 children per day and has agreements with over 1,000 child care providers (licensed child care centers, registered and licensed home care). Of the 1,000 child care providers, over 120 are Texas Rising Star (TRS) providers.

Workforce Solutions for Tarrant County (WFSTC) provides subsidized child care services to over 5,431 children per day and has agreements with over 625 child care providers (licensed child care centers, registered and licensed home care). Of the 625 child care providers, over 102 are Texas Rising Star (TRS) providers.

The Texas Rising Star program is a Texas Workforce Commission accreditation program that is administered by each Board at the local level. The Texas Rising Star program is a voluntary process where a child care provider can choose to have an outside entity come in and evaluate their program. The evaluation will consist of a standard set of criteria that exceeds the minimum standards required by child care licensing for health and safety, group size, child/staff ratios, caregiver training, and age-appropriate curricula and activities. Child Care providers who choose to become accredited as a Texas Rising Star are evaluated annually to ensure they continue to meet accreditation standards. The Texas Rising Star certification system offers three certification levels in center-based care (2-star, 3-star and 4-star) and two levels in home-based care (provisional or full) to encourage providers to attain progressively higher certification requirements. Each star reflects a higher level of quality that has been achieved by the provider. A Four Star provider has met the highest quality standards for this accreditation. Texas Rising Star certification is available for licensed child care center, licensed child care home, and registered child care home providers who meet the certification criteria.

SERVICES SOLICITED IN THIS RFQ
This Request for Qualifications (RFQ) provides a uniform method for the procurement of these services. It contains the necessary background, requirements, instructions, and information corresponding to this RFQ. Services solicited in this RFQ for Texas Rising Star Assessor Services are to ensure that current TRS providers have met State requirements to remain at the current TRS level or to attain a higher level of TRS certification, and that non TRS providers have met State requirements to attain a TRS status in Dallas and/or Tarrant County areas. The Texas Rising Star Assessor will be responsible for performing effective assessments for the current Texas Rising Star providers and potential providers interested in the Texas Rising Star program. The Assessor will be responsible for coordinating and implementing TRS assessment related activities, including:

- Conducting scheduled and un-announced TRS provider assessments (or re-certifications) within the required timeframe(s);
- Conducting observations in support of completing a TRS provider assessment process provided in WD Letter 08-14 [http://www.twc.state.tx.us/boards/workforce-policy-and-guidance.html#childcare];
- Submitting written detailed reports summarizing findings and justification for assessment scores; and
- Coordinating TRS schedules and maintaining contact with each Board’s contact person regarding workload and required expectations of the Assessor.

Respondents must meet the following qualifications presented for Texas Rising Star (TRS) Assessor:

**Minimum Education**
- Bachelor’s degree from an accredited four-year college or university in early childhood education, child development, special education, child psychology, educational psychology, elementary education, or family consumer science;
- Bachelor’s degree from an accredited four-year college or university with at least 18 credit hours in early childhood education, child development, special education, child psychology, educational psychology, elementary education, or family consumer science with at least 12 credit hours in child development; or
- Associate’s degree in early childhood education, child development, special education, child psychology, educational psychology, elementary education, or family consumer science with two years of experience as a director in an early childhood program, with preference given for required experience with a provider that is accredited or TRS certified.

**Minimum Work Experience**
- One year of full-time early childhood classroom experience in a child care, Early Head Start, Head Start, or prekindergarten through third grade school program

**Demonstrated Knowledge**
- Best practices in early childhood education
- Understanding of early childhood evaluations, observations, and assessments for both teachers and children
- ITERS, ECERS-R, FCERS, TBRS, CLASS, or other assessment tools

**Other Preferred Knowledge**
- Understanding of TRS Certification Guidelines and the minimum standards of Texas child care licensing
- Bilingual (English and Spanish speaker)
- Ability to relate to individuals from culturally diverse backgrounds
- Microsoft Word and Excel, Internet, and comfortable using e-mail and entering data on a PC tablet
- Detail oriented with strong oral and written communication skills
- Basic administrative skills, including recordkeeping and use of a computer for data management and professional communication

**Required Continuing Education and Professional Development**
Participation in required annual professional development and continuing education consistent with child care licensing minimum-training requirements for a center director must be provided on an annual basis.

For Texas Department of Family and Protective Services Child Care Licensing regulations on required center director professional development and continuing education requirements, see Section 746.1311 at [http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/documents/Child_Care/Child_Care_Standards_and_Regulations/746_Centers.pdf](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/documents/Child_Care/Child_Care_Standards_and_Regulations/746_Centers.pdf).

The purpose of the **Texas Rising Star Program** is to offer quality care that exceeds the State's Minimum Licensing Standards for health and safety, group size, child/staff ratios, caregiver training, and age-appropriate curricula and activities.

**Objectives for Texas Rising Star Certification** are:
- To improve the quality of child care offered by providing high quality child care options;
- To ensure that children are offered care that promotes their social, emotional, physical and intellectual development; and
To promote early physical, emotional, social and intellectual development of children who are the state’s future workforce.

Eligible Providers
A. Any child care provider that has a current agreement with a Board child care contractor to serve subsidized children and that meets either of the following criteria may apply for Texas Rising Star (TRS) Provider certification:
   - Has the appropriate permanent license or registration from, and is in good standing with, the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (TDFPS); or
   - Is regulated by the military, or
   - Is alternatively accredited by an organization approved by TDFPS as stipulated in Chapter 42, Subchapter E, of the Human Resource Code.

Any provider that is on Adverse Action, Corrective Action or Monitoring Plan 1 status with DFPS due to non-compliance with the Child Care Licensing Minimum Standards is not eligible to apply for TRS Provider certification.

B. Child care providers who are regulated by the military or who have attained one of the following national accreditations may be certified as a TRS Provider without going through the TRS Provider assessment process and are initially enrolled as a Four-Star or fully certified provider:
   - National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
   - National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA)
   - National Accreditation Commission for Early Child Care and Education Program (NAC)
   - Association of Christian School International (ACSI)
   - National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC)
   - National AfterSchool Association (NAA)

The complete Texas Rising Star Provider Certification Guidelines are available at: http://www.twc.state.tx.us/svcs/childcare/provcert.html

ADMINISTRATION OF THIS REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)

The RFQ is issued at 1:00 p.m., Tuesday, September 9, 2014 and available at the WFSDallas offices at One Main Place, 1201 Main Street, Suite 2700, Dallas, Texas 75202 during the normal business hours (Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. through 5:00 p.m.) and to download from the WFSDallas website: http://www.wfsdallas.com/doing-business. If you are unable to download the RFQ, please contact: procurement@wfsdallas.com or (214) 290-1000.

The package contains all the necessary information and forms to respond to this RFQ. A response to this RFQ should include one (1) complete original proposal for services with signatures and five (5) exact copies. This RFQ will be an open procurement process and proposals will be considered on a monthly basis until closed for services. For immediate consideration, any respondent must submit a proposal for services to the Board by 4:00 p.m. C.D.T. on Tuesday, September 30, 2014. WFSDallas is not responsible for any errors or omission or otherwise on the part of the U.S. Postal Service or other carrier regarding proof of mailing. After the initial deadline, we will continue accepting proposals for services. A proposal for services must be submitted by 5:00 p.m. on the first Wednesday of the following months (beginning November 2014) to be considered at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting.

Proposals must be typed, 12 font, and submitted on materials in accordance with instructions in this RFQ. The information requested may be mailed or hand delivered. No fax or emailed proposal will be accepted. Responses must be addressed/externally labeled as follows:

Texas Rising Star Assessor Services
Attn: Procurement
Dallas County Local Workforce Development Board, Inc.
1201 Main Street, Suite 2700
Dallas, Texas 75202
Also, potential respondents are hereby informed that the WFSDallas may at any time provide a notice closing this RFQ in order to facilitate new procurement to solicit for services.

### BIDDERS’ CONFERENCE

There will be no Bidders’ Conference to respond to questions about the RFQ; however, respondents may e-mail any questions to procurement@wfsdallas.com. Responses will be posted at the website, [http://www.wfsdallas.com/doing-business](http://www.wfsdallas.com/doing-business), every Wednesday by 5:00 p.m. C.D.T. with final responses, clarifications or amendments posted on October 1, 2014. This is the only opportunity for potential respondents to ask questions.

### SELECTION AWARDS

Selected Texas Rising Star Assessors will be placed on a vendors’ list for availability of assessor services. Vendors will remain on the list until removed for lack of availability of funding and satisfactory performance in accordance with Texas Workforce Commission and Board’s requirements. Vendors will be assigned on an as need basis to provide assessor services for child care providers in Dallas and/or Tarrant counties between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Dates, times and locations will be provided to selected respondents as assessment is determined for the participating providers.

Individuals selected as an Assessor will be required to undergo a background check prior to conducting any work in a child care facility (center or home) on behalf of WFSDallas and/or WFSTC. Proof of a background check that has been completed no more than the prior six (6) months of an award will be accepted. Any associated expense related to the required background check will be the responsibility of the contracted Assessor.

### SERVICES PERIOD

The anticipated service period for availability on a vendor’s list is November 1, 2014 through October 31, 2015. Assessor Services may be extended for up to two (2) additional years through October 2017 depending upon performance and availability of resources.

### GOVERNING PROVISIONS AND LIMITATIONS

A. The main purpose of this RFQ is to ensure uniform information in the solicitation of proposals and procurement of the Texas Rising Star Assessor Services. A response to this RFQ is not to be construed as a purchase agreement or contract, or as a commitment of any kind; nor does it commit the WFSDallas and WFSTC to pay for costs incurred in the preparation of a response, or any other costs incurred prior to the execution of a formal contract, unless such costs are specifically authorized in writing by the WFSDallas and WFSTC.

B. WFSDallas and WFSTC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received, to cancel and/or reissue this RFQ in part or its entirety.

C. WFSDallas and WFSTC reserve the right to correct any error(s) and/or make changes to this solicitation as it deems necessary.

D. WFSDallas and WFSTC reserves the right to negotiate the final terms of any and all contracts or agreements for placement on the vendors’ list with respondents selected and any such terms negotiated as a result of this RFQ may be renegotiated and/or amended in order to successfully meet the needs of the Board's local plan and impose additional requirements and refinements in the terms and conditions, proposal for assessor services, performance measures, and funding amounts during the course of any agreement.

E. All Board Directors, officers, and staff, or any agents of the Board are precluded from entertaining questions concerning the proposal or this procurement process outside the confines of the formal Questions and Answers process. Potential respondents, respondents and contractors are asked to respect these conditions by not making personal requests for assistance. No employee, member of a Board of Directors or other governing body, or representative of a respondent who submits a proposal under this RFQ may have any contact outside of the formal review process with any employee of WFSDallas and WFSTC, or any member of the Board of
Directors for purposes of discussing or lobbying on behalf of respondent's proposal. This contact includes written correspondence, telephone calls, personal meetings, e-mail messages, or other kinds of personal contact. WFSDallas and WFSTC will reject proposals of those respondents who violate this condition.

F. WFSDallas and WFSTC reserves the right to contact any individual, agency employer, or grantees listed in a proposal, to contact others who may have experience and/or knowledge of the respondent's relevant performance and/or qualifications; and to request additional information from any and all respondents.

G. WFSDallas and WFSTC or its designee will conduct a review of records, systems, procedures, etc. of any entity selected for funding. This may occur prior to, or subsequent to, the award of a contract or agreement. Misrepresentation of the respondent's ability to perform as stated in the proposal(s) may result in cancellation of any contract or agreement for services on the vendors' list that is awarded.

H. WFSDallas and WFSTC reserves the right to withdraw or reduce the amount of an award or to cancel any contract or agreement resulting from this procurement if adequate funding is not received from the Texas Workforce Commission or other specific funding source.

I. Respondents shall not under penalty of law, offer or provide any gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value to any officer, member, employee, or agent of the Board, for the purpose of having an influencing effect toward their own proposal or any other proposal submitted hereunder.

J. WFSDallas and WFSTC reserve the right to deem a proposal non-responsive or disqualify any proposal that, in its sole determination, does not comply with or conform to the terms, conditions, and/or requirements of this RFQ.

K. Selected vendor must comply with Texas Government Code §2264 and WD Letter 07-08 and applicable changes in reference to public subsidies provided to employers.

**SELECTION PROCESS**

Selection of vendor(s) shall be in accordance with the principles stated in the Board's plan and State plans, as well as other applicable laws, regulations and policy issuances from Federal, State, and Local entities.

A. A consideration in selecting vendors or organizations to deliver services shall be the demonstrated performance of the vendor or organization in delivering comparable or related services. Performance in this or similar activities shall be considered when awarding points for past performance. Other performance with this Board will be considered in evaluation for proposals received in response to this RFQ.

B. Funds provided under this RFQ shall not be used to duplicate facilities or services available in the area (with or without reimbursement) from the Federal, State or local sources, unless it is demonstrated that alternative services or facilities would be more effective or more likely to achieve the local workforce development area's performance goals.

C. The proposal review process will include: evaluation, rating, and ranking of proposals by qualified staff using the general criteria specified in “EVALUATION CRITERIA/POINT VALUE” below. The proposal review process will also include review, approval to negotiate and selection for award of vendor services by the Board of Directors.

**EVALUATION PROCESS**

Responsive proposals submitted by the deadline are evaluated using the objective criteria below. WFSDallas assigns professional staff or qualified outside evaluators to read and evaluate each proposal. Parts of the scoring are scored independently by each reader; the final scores for those parts will be the average of the independent scores of all readers. All references are validated and scores included in the evaluation process. In selecting proposals for award of contract or agreement for vendor services, WFSDallas reserves the right to depart from the
strict ranking by evaluation scores, whenever it deems such departure will better serve the best interests of WFSDallas, WFSTC and its constituents.

**EVALUATION CRITERIA/POINT VALUE**

Responsive proposals submitted by the deadline will be evaluated using the following criteria:

**Responsiveness to RFQ**
The extent to which the requirements of the RFQ have been complied with, including certifications, good business ethics, and commitment to non-discrimination.  

**Qualifications**
The respondent must meet the qualifications specified in the “Services Solicited” section of this RFQ. Provide a resume, transcripts, and copies of certifications.

**Demonstrated Experience/References**
Include specific experience demonstrating technical competence in providing evaluations/assessments of child care providers within the last 2 years. Relevant experience must include the dates of services, description and the organizations for which the services were provided, contact names and phone numbers, and contract amount. Also, provide three references including contact name, phone number and email address.

**Cost**
Cost reasonable, necessary, allocable, and allowable. Hourly rate should be inclusive of necessary expenses including mileage. An estimated number of hours per evaluation/assessment should be identified by facility type. All proposed costs are significant competitive variables in this procurement.

**TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS**

**PROPOSER INQUIRY AND APPEAL PROCESS**
The Dallas County Local Workforce Development Board, Inc. dba Workforce Solutions Greater Dallas is the responsible authority for handling complaints or protests regarding the procurement and proposal selection process. “The Commission shall accept no protest or dispute appeal until all administrative remedies at the contractor level have been exhausted.” These issues include, but not limited to, protests, disputes, and claims.” Matters concerning violation of law shall be referred to such authority as may have proper jurisdiction. (TWC Financial Manual for Grants and Contracts, Chapter 14, Procurement, July 1, 2005)

Respondents not selected by this process may appeal the decision by submitting, within 10 days of the Board notification of the procurement decision, a written request for debriefing. A copy of the complete appeal process will be provided upon request. The Request for Debriefing should be sent registered mail or hand delivered (a receipt will be issued), clearly identified externally as “Dated Material” and addressed to: Laurie Bouillion Larrea, President, Workforce Solutions Greater Dallas, 1201 Main Street, Suite 2700, Dallas, TX 75202.

**RESPONSE CHECKLIST AND ORDER OF SUBMISSION**
The proposal must be submitted in order as Attachments:

A. Proposal Cover Sheet
B. Proposal for TRS Assessor Services
C. Certification of Bidder
D. Certificate Regarding Debarment
E. Certificate Regarding Drug-Free Workplace
F. Certificate Regarding Lobbying
G. Certificate Regarding Conflict of Interest
H. Texas Corporate Franchise Tax Certification

Submit the following items as Additional Attachments in the bidder’s response.

I. Non-Discrimination Statement/Policy (Please attach this information as Attachment I)