

BETHLEHEM CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Student Travel Services

November 27, 2018

**DUE: Friday, December 14, 2018
2:00 p.m.**

**JUDITH E. KEHOE
CHIEF BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL OFFICER
700 DELAWARE AVENUE
DELMAR, NEW YORK 12054
Phone - (518) 439-7481
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The Bethlehem Central School District is issuing a Request for Proposal (RFP) for student travel services. You are invited to submit a proposal in accordance with the terms outlined in this RFP.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DISTRICT AND OVERVIEW OF TRAVEL PROGRAMS

The district is a large, suburban district, located just outside of the New York State capitol of Albany. Current K-12 enrollment is approximately 4,500 students. Travel has been a longstanding and important component of enriching the academic experience for our students. Trips may include domestic or international travel.

The District will select a single company to coordinate and supervise both domestic and international trips, for students in grades 6-12.

The chosen travel company will work closely with the designated district representatives. The Superintendent is responsible for overseeing all areas associated with curriculum content and for recommending potential trips for approval to the Board of Education. The Chief Business Official is responsible for oversight on all fiscal and general contractual matters, including controls surrounding student accounts and any trip incentive benefits. District faculty will participate as chaperones.

The District prefers to identify scheduled international trips at least three years in advance of the trips. We believe this gives families ample time to plan and to fund the travel. The upcoming trips that are planned are as follows:

Annual trips to Boston for 7th graders
Annual trips to Washington DC for 8th graders
HS to Williamsburg, Virginia and Baltimore, MD, spring 2019
MS French students to Montreal, spring 2019
HS to Peru, spring 2020
HS to Italy, spring 2020
HS to Japan, spring 2021
HS to Spain, spring 2022

YOUR PROPOSAL SHOULD ADDRESS EACH OF THE FOLLOWING REQUIREMENTS:

Trip Development and Pricing

The District seeks information on how your company develops travel itineraries, steps taken to make sure that travel budgets are prepared and honored, and how pricing information is conveyed to parents and students. Please describe any guarantees that are made, and the timing of when prices are finalized, relative to the trip. Your proposal should provide samples of the materials provided to families. Describe how you maintain a cost-sensitivity for the families while building a travel itinerary.

Describe the procedures used by the company if any modifications are made to the established itinerary during the trip, including how such changes are communicated to District staff, and to families.

Once a price is agreed upon for a particular trip, it is understood that the company will assume the risk of future price changes, such that we do not need to bill additional costs to families who have committed

to a trip at a specific price point. Please provide your company's policy as to how far in advance of a trip you lock in on the price of an international trip.

Please describe how you coordinate trip requests between various departments and programs, to avoid duplications, and how you make recommendations to generate maximum levels of interest from students.

Your response should include three trip proposals for the District to consider, including both a detailed itinerary and the cost of the trip:

1. Domestic trip, to Washington, DC, for a two night, three-day tour.
2. International trip, to Italy, for a trip over April break.
3. Immersion trip, to Spain, for a trip over April break.

Tools for District Staff and Families to Manage Trips

The chosen company will be expected to provide an on-line portal for trip management. The program manager for the District will have administrative access, and families will be able to establish an account to fund the cost of the trips. The system must track periodic payments by families, enabling them to save over a longer period of time.

Although each Group Leader will be given access to an on-line, secure account to manage their specific trip, the District requires full access to all trip accounts. Ideally, our preference would be access to a single site, from which we can view the activity for all trips.

The District desires to have the company maintain all student accounts, whether payments are personally funded, or from fund-raising proceeds. The student account records should present a detailed transaction log for all payments received and disbursed, including date, amount, purpose of transaction, and a running balance.

Parents should have the ability to make payments in a variety of ways, such as on-line, by phone, via debit/credit cards, ACH transfers, or by check. Additionally, recurring monthly payments to fund future trips is also a desired feature.

Any incentive bonuses that are earned must be restricted for District-directed use only. Such use will typically be to offset future travel costs for the district. The District will not allow any individual teacher or Group Leader to redeem any incentives for personal use, including seating upgrades or hotel upgrades. The District will either direct the "unused rewards" be closed out to another travel sub-account, or to be refunded to the District. Please provide information on what you typically recommend districts use the incentives for (Scholarships? Additional chaperones? Optional excursion?).

Safety of Travelers

Please provide information on how you address the safety of students when travelling abroad, including the following:

- Assessing whether it is safe to leave for a planned trip, if there is a heightened safety risk due to recent events at the chosen destination. What alternatives are there if a trip is cancelled.
- Describe what steps you take to maximize safety while travelling with students, from hotel to touring to attendance at venues and events.

- Describe what steps occur when there is a crisis in the midst of a trip, either with the health of a traveler, or with an unexpected event.

Describe the professional development provided to staff who are interested in becoming a Group Leader, and who have been approved by the Superintendent to serve in this capacity. The District limits travel to designated training locations within the United States, unless the company has obtained written authorization from the Superintendent to permit training abroad.

Provide a sample of the expectations given to student travelers, as a condition for their participation on the trip. Be prepared to discuss how the company has responded to instances of student misconduct.

Please address how accommodations are provided for students with special needs, such as physical, emotional or other concerns.

Provide a sample of the expectations given to District chaperones, as a condition for their participation on the trip. Be prepared to discuss how the company has responded to instances of chaperones who may have deviated from professional supervision standards. Your response should also include information on the training given to chaperones, and detail the level of authority given to chaperones and to tour guides, relative to possible changes in the planned itinerary.

Travel Insurance and Booking Conditions

The District prefers that supplemental travel insurance be made available for all international trips, and that all participating families purchase this coverage. However, to enable some discretion, the District will determine on a case-by-case basis whether it wishes to make this insurance mandatory or optional for any given trip.

The chosen company will provide a sample booking conditions/travel contract to BCSD for each trip. Although this document is designed to be the contract as it relates to terms and conditions for a specific trip between the company and the parents, the District wishes to have a sample on file for review/approval prior to release to any parent groups.

The District will require official Board approval of all international and out-of-state trips. The company is not authorized to commence trip planning without the express, written authorization from the Superintendent. Future trip planning may also include establishing future trips over the course of three or four years.

FIRM QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

- ▶ The RFP should state the size of the firm, the number of years the firm has engaged in student travel services, the staff resources and roles that it utilizes to achieve the highest quality of services, and the location of offices, both domestically and abroad, where services are housed.
- ▶ The RFP should identify the staff to be assigned to the District. The staff may be changed if those personnel leave the firm, are promoted, or are assigned to another office. These personnel may be changed for other reasons with the express prior written permission of the District. However, in either case, the District retains the right to approve or reject replacements.
- ▶ You must include a list of School District references, including name, title and phone number of the person who had regular contact with your travel liaisons. The references should be those with whom you have worked for within the past three years.

PROPOSAL DUE DATE AND SELECTION OF A COMPANY

Proposals are due on or before Friday, December 14, 2018 by 2:00pm. Nine (9) copies of the proposal are requested. Proposals should be submitted to:

Bethlehem Central High School
Business Office
Judith E. Kehoe, Chief Business and Financial Officer
700 Delaware Avenue
Delmar, NY 12054

The envelope shall be labeled **RFP – Student Travel Services**

During the evaluation process, the District reserves the right, where it may serve the District's best interest, to request additional information or clarification from a proposer, or to allow corrections of non-material errors or omissions or waive non-material requirements.

The most important selection criterion will be demonstrated experience with School-based travel services. Cost will be a consideration, but secondary to the requisites of expertise in designing instructionally focused itineraries and efficiently organized itineraries. The District reserves the right to reject any or all proposals submitted.

After the Selection Committee (the "Committee") has had an opportunity to review the submitted proposals, finalists will be requested to meet with the Committee on Thursday, January 10, 2019. Interviews will begin at 2:30 p.m. (a snow date of January 24, 2019 has also been reserved). The Committee expects to request the Board of Education to appoint the Travel company at their February 27, 2019 meeting.

The chosen firm will be appointed for a three-year term, with the option to extend the services annually for an additional two years, upon mutual agreement. In the event either party wishes to discontinue the services within this period, written notice must be provided, and the impacts that may affect any trips that are in the planning phases must be addressed to the District's satisfaction.

NON-COLLUSIVE BIDDING CERTIFICATION

By submission of this bid or proposal, the bidder certifies that:

- a) This bid or proposal had been independently arrived at without collusion with any other bidder or with any competitor or potential competitor;
- b) This bid or proposal has not been knowingly disclosed and will not be knowingly disclosed, prior to the opening of bids or proposals for this project, to any other bidder, competitor or potential competitor;
- c) No attempt has been or will be made to induce any other person, partnership or corporation to submit or not to submit a bid or proposal;
- d) The person signing this bid or proposal certifies that he has fully informed himself regarding the accuracy of the statements contained in this certification, and under the penalties of perjury, affirms the truth thereof, such penalties being applicable to the bidder as well as to the person signing in its behalf.
- e) That attached hereto (if a corporate bidder) is a certified copy of resolution authorizing the execution of this certificate by the signatory of this bid or proposal on behalf of the corporate bidder.

Signed _____

Title _____

RESOLUTION – For Corporate Bidders Only

RESOLVED that _____ be authorized to sign and submit the bid or proposal of this corporation for the following project _____ and to include in such bid or proposal the certificate as to non-collusion required by Section One Hundred Three-D of the General Municipal Law as the act and deed of such corporation, and for any inaccuracies or misstatements in such certificate this corporate bidder shall be liable under the penalties of perjury.

The foregoing is a true and correct copy of the resolution adopted by _____ corporation at a meeting of its Board of Directors held on the _____ day of _____, 20____ and is still in full force and effect on this _____ day of _____, 20____

(Seal of Corporation)