APPLICATION TO PROVIDE ADJUSTMENT TO BLINDNESS AND RELATED REHABILITATION SERVICES
Addendum #1 – add Transition Program
Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development
State Services for the Blind

Project Overview for Transition Program

In response to recent changes in federal law, under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the Department of Employment and Economic Development, State Services for the Blind (SSB) division, is seeking proposals for the development and implementation of transition programs. The proposed program(s) should be designed to function during the school year, with an option for a summer component. The program(s) must be designed for students aged 14-21 and include an educational component for parents of these students in a group setting. These programs will not replace currently offered summer programming. The ideal program(s) will offer a track for students aged 14-15 and another for students 16+. SSB is seeking multiple program proposals in order to serve students from the following geographic districts. There are potentially forty additional students that may need services throughout the state.

Metro Area - Hennepin-20, Ramsey-12, Dakota-8, Scott-3
Southeast - Wabasha-1, Olmsted-1, Winona-2, Houston-1, Mower-1, Dodge-2
South Central - Nicollet-2, Blue Earth-2, Faribault-1, Le Sueur-1, Rice-1
Southwest - Murray-1, Cottonwood-1
Central - Kandiyohi-2, Stearns-4, Meeker-1, Wright-1, Sherburne-1, Benton-1
East Central - Isanti-1, Chisago-1, Anoka-7, Washington-7
West Central - Otter Tail-2, Douglas-3
North Central - Cass-1, Crow Wing-1
North-Beltrami - Itasca-1, St. Louis-2

The program(s) must be designed to augment work done by school districts and must offer activities for students in the evening and/or on weekends. Program outcomes should include development of student skills in orientation and mobility, technology, braille, independent living, self-advocacy, and career exploration and readiness. In addition, SSB is seeking proposals that can effectively serve students where geographical location is a significant impediment.

Goal

The goal of this project is to provide more opportunities for Minnesota students who are blind, visually impaired or DeafBlind to enhance their skills and readiness for post-secondary work and training. This goal is to be achieved through programs held outside traditional school hours. Furthermore, parents of these students will also have opportunities to increase their knowledge and awareness of options for their children.

Program offerings should include:

- Exposure to various occupations and career pathways (ex. conducting informational interviews, learning how to look up labor market information, attending presentations in which speakers talk about their work etc.).
• Exposure to various post-secondary training options (ex. certification programs, technical schools, colleges, other).
• Exposure to a variety of businesses including tours of companies.
• Exposure to varied work experiences including job shadowing, internships, short-term employment, etc.
• Resume development and mock interviewing.
• Training in adjustment to blindness skills and alternative techniques including orientation and mobility, braille, technology, and independent living. Teachers must be certified by SSB.
• Training in self-advocacy.
• Opportunities to improve soft skills needed to succeed at work and in life.
• Training for parents/guardians (ex. information about governmental & independent programs that are available to students, funding and scholarship options etc.).

Proposals will incorporate the guidelines listed in the Transition Timeline developed by SSB. Additionally, proposals will draw from the results of the SSB Comprehensive Functional Assessment for Transition Planning-Preparing for Life, Training and Work After High School in creating plans for working with individual students. Here is a link to the Transition Timelines http://mn.gov/deed/job-seekers/blind-visual-impaired/teens-student-services/ and the Transition Functional Assessment is attached.

Overview of requirements for Approved Proposals:
The contractor will work closely with the SSB Transition Coordinator throughout the implementation of this contract. SSB Counseling staff will refer students to the contractor for inclusion in the program through the typical referral process with a copy of the Comprehensive Functional Assessment attached for guidance.

1. The contract will begin on the date stated in the contract or upon full execution of the contract, whichever is later. Initial responses due August 1, 2015

2. Responders are encouraged to propose additional innovative tasks or activities if they will substantially improve the results of the project. These items should be separated from the required items on the cost proposal.

3. This request for proposal does not obligate the state to award a contract or complete the project, and the state reserves the right to cancel the solicitation if it is considered to be in its best interest.

4. All questions regarding this project should be submitted in writing and will be responded to in writing. Questions should be submitted by June 15th to ensure enough time for response prior to the solicitation deadline. Answers will be provided to all entities requesting proposals.

Prospective responders who have any questions regarding this request for proposal may contact:

Jennifer Beilke
2200 University Avenue, Suite 240
St. Paul, MN 55114
651-539-2273
Jennifer.beilke@state.mn.us
Other personnel are **NOT** authorized to discuss this request for proposal with responders, before the proposal submission deadline. Contact regarding this RFP with any personnel not listed above could result in disqualification.

**Proposal Content**

**Responders must submit the following information:**

1. A statement that identifies the geographic area of the state the responder is proposing to serve and the estimated number of students to be served.

2. A tentative schedule of program offerings for the school year and summer if that option is chosen that makes available at least four hours of programming per week after traditional school hours and/or weekends and a detailed description about each program offering and the way in which it will be delivered. The schedule may follow the school calendar with time off during designated holidays. An additional two hours per month must be offered for parents/guardians of students. All program offerings are in a group setting.

3. A statement that the responder understands the program must be all inclusive of the following items: transportation to and from the program or provision of transportation options at no cost to the student, activity fees, and supply costs. Responder will provide interpreters if needed. The student and parent/guardian will not be charged to participate in any activities/programs.

4. An outline of the responder's background and experience with examples of similar work done by the responder and a list of personnel who will conduct the project, detailing their training, and work experience. Resumes or other information about project personnel should not, if possible, contain personal telephone numbers, home addresses or home email addresses. If it is necessary to include personal contact information, please clearly indicate in the proposal that personal contact information is being provided.

5. Cost detail. A detailed budget that includes: Salary/benefits for staff implementing the program, transportation costs, activity fees, supplies, overhead, other. Project a monthly cost per student/family which will be the basis for payment.

6. Customer Satisfaction- A description of how the responder will assess customer satisfaction with the program offerings and report to SSB at least twice during the contract year.

7. Partnership. A statement about partnerships that will be used throughout the duration of this contract including partner names and what the partnership entails.

Background checks are required for all individuals working with the program. The successful responder is required to submit Criminal Background Checks. To ensure the health and safety of SSB consumers, criminal background checks are required. Contractors with employees shall conduct criminal background checks at their own expense on employees authorized to provide direct services to SSB consumers and submit those background checks to SSB. Contractors with no employees shall submit to a criminal background check conducted and paid for by SSB. Contractors shall immediately notify SSB of any change in criminal background check status.
Proposal Instructions

All proposals must be sent to:

State Services for the Blind
ATTN: Jennifer Beilke
2200 University Avenue, Suite 240
St. Paul, MN 55114

All proposals must be received not later than 3:30 p.m., Central Time, July 1, 2015, as indicated by a notation made by the Receptionist at SSB or SSB Mailroom personnel.