

**Center for Safe Schools
Camp Hill, PA
Request for Quote (RFQ) for:
School Climate and Safety Assessments of 30 Identified School Buildings
April 1, 2010 – June 30, 2010**

The Center for Safe Schools (Center) is seeking quotes from qualified organizations or individuals to conduct climate and safety assessments of schools designated by the Department as “Persistently Dangerous Schools”¹ and/or schools with significant school safety issues. Thirty (30) individual school buildings, most of which are located in the southeastern region of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, will be assessed under this project. This project must be concluded by June 30, 2010. The awarding of this work is contingent upon availability of funding from the Pennsylvania Department of Education (Department).

**Scope and Nature of Work:
School Climate and Safety Assessments of 30 Identified School Buildings**

In an effort to improve school safety and climate and reduce the incidence rate of acts of violence being committed in school buildings identified under this project (Identified School Buildings), the Center seeks to identify physical safety and school climate issues/problems and assist districts in developing and implementing action plans to eradicate said problems. School climate and safety assessments are one tool which can be utilized to measure system strengths and deficiencies. The resulting assessment reports will provide specific recommendations to school administration regarding areas that need improvement.

The Center expects that these assessments will provide information to assist the administration of each Identified School Building to improve not only the physical security, but also as an effort to enhance the overall positive school climate and the surrounding school community.

Each Identified School Building Climate and Safety Assessment will require, but not be limited to, the inclusion of the following components:

- Review existing Persistently Dangerous School, Single School Culture plan components and determine fidelity of implementation of these plans;
- Onsite physical facilities and grounds assessment, review of floor plans;
- Review of all existing school safety data and related reports;

¹ The Department’s standards define a persistently dangerous school as any public elementary, secondary, or charter school that meets any of the following criteria in the most recent school year and in one additional year of the two years prior to the most recent school year:

1. For a school whose enrollment is 250 or less, at least 5 dangerous incidents;
2. For a school whose enrollment is 251 to 1000, a number of dangerous incidents that represents at least 2% of the school’s enrollment; or
3. For a school whose enrollment is over 1000, 20 or more dangerous incidents.

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- Review of Student Handbook, including Student Code of Conduct, Faculty Handbook, School Policies;
- Review of All-Hazards Plans;
- Review of all Memorandums of Understanding with local law enforcement and other partner agencies; and
- Review and analysis of attendance and discipline data

Additionally, for each Identified School Building, the successful bidder will be expected to:

- Administer and evaluate student and faculty climate and safety surveys;
- Conduct select interviews/focus groups of students, parents, faculty and administrators;
- Evaluate school staff understanding and implementation of the Standards-Aligned System with a Resiliency/Wellness Approach;
- Evaluate school staff and community understanding and implementation of the proposed School Climate Standards and Student Interpersonal Skills standards;
- Review Chapter 12 Student Services Plan components for appropriate inclusion of school safety and student supports; and
- Ensure the needs of special populations, such as students with disabilities and English Language Learners, are addressed by school safety and school climate efforts.

Required Competencies

The successful bidder will utilize direct and indirect observations of Identified School Buildings and their students, faculty, administration and local partners to evaluate the underlying causes of violence in these designated schools. Skills will include:

- Expertise in conducting interviews, observations and document review to collect data throughout the course of this project;
- Expertise in collecting, organizing and analyzing quantitative data;
- Expertise in conducting on-site climate and safety assessments and/or risk/vulnerability assessments;
- Ability to create well-organized and well-honed analytical reports on qualitative and quantitative data;
- Ability to work with Department and Center management staff;
- Knowledge of school safety and/or emergency management issues and research; and
- Demonstrated project management skills and experience.

Key Deliverables

- 1) Assessment of the state of security and safety, (with a specific focus on climate) of the physical plants of the selected schools and their immediate surrounding areas. This assessment will include but not be limited to:

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- a. In depth review of safety/security/crisis plans. The consultant will review and analyze the existing safety/security/crisis plan and other documents or resources related to safety currently in use at the selected schools. An attempt will be made to understand trends and correlates of negative behaviors or incidences that have occurred in or around the school facilities.
 - b. Review existing Single School Culture Plans and assess the application, knowledge and understanding of the components of these plans by the leadership of each Identified School Building. An attempt will be made to understand the relationship between the Identified School Building leadership's understanding of the model and plans and the efficacy of and fidelity to the Single School Culture model.
 - c. Key Informant Interviews. In an effort to gather information about current safety concerns, interviews will be conducted with selected stakeholders of the selected schools as well as with other key staff from the Department and the Center.
 - d. Security Technology and Personnel Assessment. An overall evaluation of the current security policies in use at each Identified School Building and related systems will be conducted. A part of this process will include a walkthrough of each Identified School Building and their immediate surrounding properties, with particular attention paid to assessing the current use of technology (cameras; identification systems) and staffing assignments and scheduling.
- 2) Summary Briefing for the Department, Center and Identified School Building Administration. The consultant will meet with above-referenced individuals to review the scope of work, answer questions and to provide a full list of recommended actions and improvements for each Identified School Building. This list will include recommendations for immediate actions and additional recommendations that can be implemented when deliberating future expenditures. During the implementation phase, the consultant will be available on a limited basis by email and phone to provide clarification on findings or recommendations. Short-term and long-term recommendations for each Identified School Building may include, but are not limited to:
- a. Additional data collection;
 - b. Additional trainings and/or drills in conjunction with the Department and Center;
 - c. Changes to physical space;
 - d. Development of other resources; and
 - e. Procurement of materials and/or equipment.

It is anticipated that the scope of this work will require the successful bidder to spend a minimum of one week per Identified School Building. Each site will require at least a one-day physical safety assessment, a minimum one-day climate assessment and one-half to one full day interviewing selected individuals/focus groups referenced above. Bidders should also account for appropriate time to complete analysis and compilation of comprehensive reports for each Identified School Building.

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Bidders may submit an application encompassing all deliverables described in this RFQ, or may submit proposals which address select deliverables. For example, a bidder may submit a proposal to conduct only the physical safety assessments and associated deliverables, or may select to address only school climate assessments and associated deliverables. However, priority will be given to proposals that are comprehensive and cost effective. All proposals must clearly indicate the scope of work proposed therein.

Additionally, the successful bidder may include trainings for school staff and administrators as part of the remediation plan developed for each Identified School Building. These trainings would target needs identified by the school safety and climate review and will focus on various school safety and youth violence prevention topics. Any trainings offered must be conducted in conjunction with Department and Center staff.

Quote Format

Applicants shall submit a quote by 11:59 p.m., **March 31, 2010** to describe or include:

1. An overview of the approach of the evaluation, including an approximate schedule of key tasks and description of project methods;
2. A description of key staff and their experience in school safety assessment/evaluation efforts (including staff CVs);
3. Examples of completed school climate and safety assessment reports (redacted to protect the confidentiality of the school/schools) or a detailed outline of the proposed format and components of a comprehensive school climate and safety assessment report that will be provided;
4. A summary budget and budget justification for the project, identifying the total cost of the project, which is based on an identifiable per building assessment cost (travel costs may be listed separately, and, if listed separately, must be itemized);
5. Quotes that utilize subcontractors must include subcontractors' letters of intent and qualifications;
6. Professional references for similar work; and
7. Agreement to protect the confidentiality of information that will be provided to them in the course of this project.

Please address any questions concerning this RFQ to Vicki Murray, Fiscal, Grants and Operations Manager, Center for Safe Schools, vmurray@csc.csiu.org

Applications may be submitted via U.S. mail or other surface mail delivery method, or via electronic transmission (email).

Please submit complete RFQ applications to:

Lynn M. Cromley, Director,
Center for Safe Schools
275 Grandview Avenue, Suite 200
Camp Hill, PA, 17011
safeschools@csc.csiu.org

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RFQ applications must be received at the Center office by 11:59 p.m., **March 31, 2010**. The Center reserves the right to disqualify any RFQ application that is incomplete or does not adhere to the specifications contained in this document.

Since 1988, the Center has been committed to improving outcomes for children and families through training, technical assistance, program evaluation, research and resource development. The Center supports Education, Community & Family, and Violence Prevention initiatives funded primarily by the Pennsylvania Departments of Education, Health and Public Welfare, and focuses on prevention and intervention initiatives operated by schools, organizations and agencies serving children, youth and families. Additional information about the Center is available at: <http://www.center-school.org/about.php>