



Montezuma-Cortez RE-1 School District

Request for Qualifications for Communications Services

Date Issued: September 30, 2018

I. Introduction

Background

Montezuma-Cortez RE-1 serves the town of Cortez, the Ute Mountain Ute tribe, and a large portion of unincorporated Montezuma County up to the NM, AZ and Utah borders. In 2016-17 the district served 2,822 students, educating and engaging a very diverse group of students. Approximately 61% of our students qualified for Free and Reduced lunch, with percentages rising to 80-87% in the three large elementary schools. The demographics of the students also reflect the unique diversity of the community with 27% of students identifying as American Indian, 20% Hispanic, 4% multi-racial, 49% Caucasian, and less than 1% identifying as Black or Asian American. The district operates a high school, a middle school, five elementary schools and a preschool. In addition, the district authorizes three charter schools including an alternative high school and two elementary schools.

The district recently improved accreditation status with the state and is demonstrating positive momentum in improving student growth and achievement across schools. The district is engaged in a multi-year school improvement effort that has shown some results including improvements at Kemper, Manaugh Elementary, Cortez Middle School, and improvements at the high school in improving graduation rates by over 20% in the past five years. The district is interested in strategies for deeper engagement of parents and broader community members to better understand the district's progress and academic priorities and to better support our local schools. The district is also interested in better engaging potential candidates and improving overall recruitment and retention of teachers and other staff. Finally, the district is interested in leadership in implementing a district-wide communications plan.

Request for Qualifications

The Request for Qualifications (RFQ) is soliciting bids from all interested parties for a 12-month contract. The district is requesting proposals from interested parties to provide communications services that will:

- Promote the visibility within the region and community of Montezuma Cortez RE-1's academic priorities, goals, and progress including promotion of our 3-year strategic plan;
- Inspire broader public awareness of and community support for the Montezuma-Cortez RE-1 district through targeted messaging, media strategies, and social media; and
- Position Montezuma-Cortez RE-1 as a highly desirable rural education employment option for teachers and other education leaders coming from within and outside the region.

Anticipated Term of Contract

Montezuma-Cortez RE-1 intends to enter into a contract with a proposer for an initial contract period beginning November 1, 2018-October 31, 2019. The amount of an approved contract shall not exceed \$45,000.

II. Scope of Services

The following provides a general overview of the specific work that Montezuma-Cortez RE-1 will expect the selected firm to complete. These should not be considered an exhaustive listing of tactics to be employed to meet the goals stated above. The district welcomes proposer's recommendations to add strategies and tactics to this list and/or revise this list as part of the creation of a communication plan that can further enhance district efforts as outlined in the above goals within the constraints of available resources.

The selected firm will need to work with the district board and leadership to determine how the district can best further the goals outlined above given the resources available.

The Scope of Services has three major components: supporting effective district media relations; developing and coordinating a district social media plan; and coordinating execution of the district communication plan.

Media relations

- Draft and disseminate press releases for the district
- Support drafting and dissemination of monthly superintendent's column in local media through collaboration with the Superintendent
- Serve as district media contact for incoming media inquiries and work with Superintendent's cabinet to ensure that responses are aligned with district messages
- Coordinate development and execution of internal protocol for review and approval of content prior to release

Social media

- Develop and coordinate district social media plan that ties district social media to school-based social media to align district messaging across all platforms

- Work with designated social media content contacts to ensure generation of content that is timely and aligned to district plan and messaging

Community engagement and district communication plan

- Implement district communication plan priorities and project manage multiple priorities to completion
- Convene district communications committee to advise on implementation of district communication plan
- Ensure alignment of district communication plan with other district outreach and communications priorities (e.g. district strategic plan, parent engagement, tribal engagement, staff recruiting, website revisions)
 - Creating common messaging for district to be disseminated across a variety of channels in alignment with the district communications plan
 - Support the development and launch of updated district and school websites

III. Issuing Information

This RFQ is issued on behalf of the Montezuma-Cortez RE-1 School District. Interested individuals or firms should respond with a proposal, not to exceed 10 pages, that succinctly addresses the following:

- Agency or individual's qualifications, experience, and relevant prior projects;
- Agency or individual's proposed approach to partnering with the district to address the goals specified in this RFQ;
- A minimum of two professional references from current/former clients; and
- Proposed budget.

Proposals should be submitted via email to the issuing officer and must be received by 5:00pm on October 15,2018. Please contact the district for more information on this RFQ. The following individual will serve as the Issuing Officer from the date of release of this RFQ until a contract is awarded:

- Carol Mehesy – Cmehesy@cortez.k12.co.us or 970-565-7282 x1127

