



Solicitation Information
9/13/2012

RFP# 7458066

TITLE: 2013 Youth Risk Behavior Survey(s)

Submission Deadline: October 11, 2012 @ 10:00 AM (Eastern Time)

Questions concerning this solicitation must be received by the Division of Purchases at David.Francis@purchasing.ri.gov no later than September 27, 2012 @ 12 Noon (ET). Questions should be submitted in a *Microsoft Word attachment*. Please reference the RFP# on all correspondence. Questions received, if any, will be posted on the Internet as an addendum to this solicitation. It is the responsibility of all interested parties to download this information.

SURETY REQUIRED: No

BOND REQUIRED: No

David J. Francis
Interdepartmental Project Manager

Applicants must register on-line at the State Purchasing Website at www.purchasing.ri.gov

Note to Applicants:

Offers received without the entire completed three-page RIVP Generated Bidder Certification Form attached may result in disqualification.

THIS PAGE IS NOT A BIDDER CERTIFICATION FORM

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

The Rhode Island Department of Administration/Office of Purchases, on behalf of the Rhode Island of Health (HEALTH), is soliciting proposals from qualified firms to assist HEALTH in performing the 2013 Youth Risk Behavior Surveys (YRBS) for high schools and middle schools. The surveys utilize representative samples of Rhode Island students in public high schools (grades 9-12), and public middle schools (grades 6-8). These services are in accordance with the terms of this Request and the State's General Conditions of Purchase, which is available at www.purchasing.ri.gov.

This is a Request for Proposals, not an Invitation for Bid. Responses will be evaluated on the basis of the relative merits of the proposal, in addition to price. There will be no public opening and reading of responses received by the Office of Purchases pursuant to this Request, other than to name those offerors who have submitted proposals.

INSTRUCTIONS AND NOTIFICATIONS TO OFFERORS:

- Potential offerors are advised to review all sections of this Request carefully, and to follow instructions completely, as failure to make a complete submission as described elsewhere herein may result in rejection of the proposal.
- Alternative approaches and/or methodologies to accomplish the desired or intended results of this procurement are solicited. However, proposals which depart from or materially alter the terms, requirements, or scope of work defined by this Request will be rejected as being non-responsive.
- All costs associated with developing or submitting a proposal in response to this Request, or to provide oral or written clarification of its content, shall be borne by the offeror. The State assumes no responsibility for these costs.
- Proposals are considered to be irrevocable for a period of not less than sixty (60) days following the opening date, and may not be withdrawn, except with the express written permission of the State Purchasing Agent.
- All pricing submitted will be considered to be firm and fixed unless otherwise indicated herein.
- Proposals misdirected to other State locations or which are otherwise not present in the Division of Purchases at the time of opening for any cause will be determined to be late and may not be considered. The "Official" time clock is in the reception area of the Division of Purchases.
- In accordance with Title 7, Chapter 1.1 of the General Laws of Rhode Island, no foreign corporation shall have the right to transact business in the state until it shall have procured a Certificate of Authority to do so from the Rhode Island Secretary of State (401-222-3040). *This will be a requirement only of the successful bidder (s).*
- Offerors are advised that all materials submitted to the State of Rhode Island for consideration in response to this Request for Proposals will be considered to be public records, as defined in Title 38 Chapter 2 of the Rhode Island General Laws.
- Submitters should be aware of the State's MBE requirements, which addresses the State's goal of ten per cent (10%) participation by MBE's in all State procurements. For further information, contact the State MBE Administrator at (401) 574-8253 or charles.newton@doa.ri.gov. Visit the website <http://www.mbe.ri.gov>

- Interested parties are instructed to peruse the Division of Purchases web site on a regular basis, as additional information relating to this solicitation may be released in the form of an addendum to this RFP / LOI
- Equal Employment Opportunity (RIGL 28-5.1) § 28-5.1-1 Declaration of policy. – (a) Equal opportunity and affirmative action toward its achievement is the policy of all units of Rhode Island state government, including all public and quasi-public agencies, commissions, boards and authorities, and in the classified, unclassified, and non-classified services of state employment. This policy applies in all areas where the state dollar is spent, in employment, public service, grants and financial assistance, and in state licensing and regulation. For further information, contact the Rhode Island Equal Employment Opportunity Office, at 222-3090 or via email raymond.lambert@hr.ri.gov
- Subcontracts are permitted, provided that their use is clearly indicated in the offeror's proposal, and the subcontractor(s) proposed to be used are identified in the proposal.

SECTION 2 - BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

BACKGROUND:

The Youth Risk Behavior Surveys (YRBS) are administered every other year (in odd years) to randomly selected samples of Rhode Island (RI) public high school and middle school students. The RI Department of Health (HEALTH), Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and the Department of Behavioral Health, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals jointly sponsor the surveys. The surveys constitute a surveillance system that collects information on health-risk behaviors among adolescents. RI has participated in the YRBS since 1995, with technical assistance provided through a Cooperative Agreement with the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). CDC also provides standard protocols and some funding for conducting the YRBS in over 60 participating states, territories, and large municipalities nationwide. Overall, HEALTH has a maximum of \$125,000 to fund the 2013 YRBS. The contracted services will include general administrative support, notification to districts and schools (including all copying and mailing costs), approval and scheduling of districts and schools, generation of classroom samples, solicitation of parental permission, recruitment and training of survey administrators, classroom survey administration, payment of school stipends, and post-survey processing and submission to CDC.

HEALTH conducts the YRBS every odd number year during the spring semester. Students in randomly selected classes self-administer the survey (i.e., read and respond to a questionnaire) during a single class period. Surveying may occur over a period of one or two days for each participating school depending on the number and scheduling of sampled classrooms. The 2013 goal is to obtain 'Weighted Data' from approximately 1,800 completed high school questionnaires, and from approximately 1,800 completed middle school questionnaires (approximately 21 participating high schools and approximately 21 participating middle schools). One classroom survey administrator regulates and facilitates the survey process in each classroom. These survey administrators do not work for the schools or school districts and are largely unknown to the participating students.

The YRBS covers key risk behaviors related to violence, mental health, tobacco use, alcohol and other drug use, sexual activity, injury, weight and physical activity. Prior surveys have been a major source of data for supporting public health programs and health-related legislation in RI and assessing improvement in major health risk areas. Most of the information provided by the YRBS is not available from other sources.

GENERAL PURPOSE:

The intent of this request is to solicit proposals from offerors to contract with the Center for Health Data and Analysis (in HEALTH), for the overall coordination and administration of the 2013 YRBS. HEALTH estimates that survey preparation activities will commence in the fall of 2012. Survey administration in schools should commence by mid-February 2013 and end no later than mid-May 2013, although the shortest possible time period is desired. The contract term extends from the date of issue (approximately November 2012) through August 31, 2013 to accommodate post-survey processing of forms. This contract may be renewed for up to two consecutive survey cycles that will occur biannually as follows:

November 1, 2012 – August 31, 2013 (initial contract period)
November 1, 2014 – August 31, 2015
November 1, 2016 – August 31, 2017

Renewal of the contract is at the sole discretion of HEALTH and is contingent upon the performance of the vendor and the availability of funds.

RESULTS:

The objective of the 2013 YRBS is to obtain ‘Weighted Data’ on the individual health risk behaviors of RI public high school and middle school students. The objective for the vendor is to conduct the survey in such a manner so as to produce ‘Weighted Data,’ including (but not limited to), providing overall coordination through each step of the survey administration process, commencing with the notification to districts and schools about the survey, through the submission of completed survey forms to CDC. Failure to perform to CDC and/or HEALTH’s requirements and standards, or to fulfill the contracted scope of work within the specified timelines, will result in contract modification or termination.

SECTION 3 – SCOPE OF WORK

GENERAL PURPOSE:

The offeror will provide all aspects of survey administration for the 2013 YRBS in conformance with CDC’s specifications as prescribed in the Handbook for Conducting Youth Risk Behavior Surveys and according to HEALTH’s specifications below. Any proposed modification to these specifications is subject to approval by CDC and the Contract Officer for HEALTH (offerors are welcome to propose alternate protocols, consistent with CDC specifications that provide improved reliability and efficiency).

The offeror will implement the following aspects of overall survey coordination: contacting districts and schools to notify them of the survey and to solicit approval, scheduling schools for surveying, developing class lists and generating classroom samples, disseminating permission slips to parents, tracking the inventory of survey materials and other supplies, preparing and bundling classroom survey materials, conducting surveys in classrooms, paying \$500 stipends to participating schools, reviewing survey forms and correcting errors, and submitting completed forms to CDC for final processing.

REQUIREMENTS:

Contractual and program requirements include:

- 1) A Survey Administration Coordinator with at least a master’s level education in a related field, such as sociology, public or community health, or health promotion and at least 3 years of related work experience. Strong verbal, written, and interpersonal skills are required, and a background in community based surveys and/or administrative experience in education is preferable. The Survey Administration Coordinator will act as the primary contact person with HEALTH’s Contract Officer for the duration of the contract. In addition, the vendor will provide other supervisory or administrative support as required by HEALTH.
- 2) Implementation of a plan for notifying districts and schools about the YRBS and providing them with informational materials (including all printing and mailing functions). Personnel assigned to these tasks must be fluent in English and possess at least a high school diploma and substantial experience as an administrative assistant or high level clerical in a professional capacity.
- 3) Implementation of a plan to solicit district and school approval for surveying from superintendents and principals. Personnel assigned to these tasks should possess at least a bachelor’s degree, good verbal, interpersonal, and persuasive skills, and significant telecommunications experience. Work experience in an educational setting is preferred.
- 4) Implementation of a plan to generate a random sample of classrooms to survey within participating schools. Personnel assigned to these tasks should possess at least a bachelor’s degree and experience with survey and sampling methodology. Work experience specifically related to community surveys, an educational setting, or adolescents is preferred.

- 5) Implementation of a plan to disseminate permission slips to parents of students enrolled in the participating classes.
- 6) Implementation of a plan for recruiting, hiring, training a corps of classroom survey administrators, including mechanisms to replace any administrators that are no longer available. Personnel assigned to these tasks should possess at least a bachelor's degree and strong communication skills as well as experience in human resources and adult training. Classroom survey administrators should have at least a high school diploma and be fluent in English with some background in public speaking. They also need to dress and comport themselves in a professional manner. Work experience in a school setting and/or with adolescents is preferred.
- 7) Implementation of a plan for scheduling and confirming administrators to conduct surveys in classrooms and for transporting administrators to schools, if necessary. Personnel assigned to these tasks should possess at least a bachelor's degree and strong communications skills as well as experience in human resources, scheduling, and transportation.
- 8) Implementation of a plan to provide an appropriately and legally insured, registered, and maintained van or other conveyance and a properly licensed driver for the purpose of transporting administrators to and from participating schools. Alternately, some administrators may need access to their own transportation.
- 9) Implementation of a plan to provide onsite coordinators at each school to distribute materials and to troubleshoot problems. Personnel assigned to these tasks should be fluent in English and possess at least a bachelor's degree and some direct supervisory experience. Work background in an educational setting is preferred.
- 10) Implementation of a plan to pay \$500 incentive stipends to schools for their participation in the YRBS. Personnel assigned to this task should have experience in billing and payables.
- 11) Implementation of a plan to examine and correct each completed survey form, if necessary.
- 12) Implementation of a plan to bundle the completed survey forms and related documentation according to CDC specifications and to mail these materials via a traceable carrier to the CDC contractor.
- 13) Implementation of a survey calendar and a tracking system to monitor the following activities for each school: obtaining approval and scheduling the survey, sending introductory packets, class list forms and instructions to school (original copies of each, including YRBS support letters to be provided by the Contract Officer), developing and confirming a list of eligible classes, generating the classroom sample, notifying school of sample, bundling and delivering parental permission slips, scheduling and confirming classroom survey administrators, bundling classroom survey materials, completing the survey, sending the \$500 stipend, and reviewing, correcting, and bundling completed survey forms. This tracking system will be the responsibility of the Survey Administration Coordinator.
- 14) Implementation of a plan for other general administrative support functions, including maintaining an inventory of supplies and preparing information packets, permission slips, and classroom survey materials (including sharpening pencils) for timely and efficient distribution.
- 15) As requested, the vendor will also provide statistics related to the number of participating districts, schools, classrooms, and students as well as school participation, student participation, and overall participation rates (consistent with CDC definitions and methodologies).
- 16) The work outlined here and described in greater detail under TASKS will be performed on the vendor's premises, except for onsite survey administration and coordination. The vendor will provide all necessary professional and support personnel, materials, equipment, utilities, and office space to meet the requirements of this contract. The Survey Administration Coordinator and other necessary staff will meet with the Contract Officer, as required (at HEALTH in Providence, RI), but not to exceed an average of one visit per month.
- 17) A monthly invoice that itemizes the following expenses: a) personnel costs by person (by hour, hours worked, and total); b) travel expenses; c) compensation costs for classroom administrators; d) (\$500) stipend payments to schools; e) subcontractor costs; and h) other itemized expenses (e.g., telephone, postage, photocopy, printing, translation, supplies, etc.).

- 18) Bi-weekly progress reports containing the following: a) number of classroom survey administrators hired and trained; b) number and name of districts pending approval, granting approval, or refusing to participate; c) number and names of schools sent information packets; d) number and names of schools pending approval, granting approval (not yet scheduled), or refusing to participate; e) number and name of schools which have been scheduled (not yet surveyed) and which have completed the survey. The bi-weekly reports are the primary responsibility of the Survey Administration Coordinator.
- 19) Standards must be adhered to for administering the YRBS as described in detail in the CDC 'Handbook for Conducting Youth Risk Behavior Surveys' and in the following description under TASKS.
- 20) All rights to data, work products, and materials generated in the conduct of this contract revert to HEALTH upon payment. The vendor has no rights to the use or distribution of any materials developed or used under this contract.
- 21) The offeror will maintain all survey forms and materials in a secure manner that will assure the confidentiality of school districts and schools as well as the confidentiality and anonymity of students. Such efforts will be pursuant to (1) RI law and regulation, (2) any other applicable statutes, (3) any conditions imposed during review by HEALTH's Institutional Review Board, and (4) any applicable CDC specifications. All personnel providing YRBS related services, including classroom survey administrators, must sign a confidentiality form (original provided by the Contract Officer). The offeror will agree to notify immediately, in writing, HEALTH's Contract Officer in the event there is reason to suspect a breach of either confidentiality or anonymity pursuant to the above. The offeror further agrees not to re-contact any students, administrators, teachers, or staff of participating districts and schools other than for activities performed within the terms of the contract or as otherwise authorized in writing by the Contract Officer.

TASKS and CONTRACTOR RESPONSIBILITIES:

A. District and School Notification, Clearance, and Scheduling.

The vendor will coordinate all aspects of notifying districts and schools regarding the YRBS and soliciting their approval to conduct the survey. In addition, the vendor shall schedule the survey in each school on a date (or dates) that is mutually agreed upon. Specific responsibilities include:

- Early in the survey cycle, the vendor will mail packets containing information on the YRBS and survey methods to approximately 18 district superintendents who have authority over public high schools and middle schools in the sample. CDC will generate the school sample in the early fall using a list of eligible schools, which the RI Department of Elementary and Secondary Education will compile. The Contract Officer will determine the content of the information packets and provide original copies of the materials to the vendor.
- The vendor will develop contact and tracking forms for districts and schools in the YRBS sample using information provided by the Contract officer. The vendor will make follow-up phone calls to superintendents to solicit their approval for conducting the YRBS in the district. These calls will occur between 2 and 7 days subsequent to mailing the district packets. Other means of communications, such as email and fax, may also be employed.
- Once a superintendent grants approval, the vendor will mail an information packet to the principal of each school in the YRBS sample in that district. There will usually be only one or two schools in the sample from each district with the exception of the larger communities, such as Providence.
- The vendor will make follow-up phone calls to the principals between 2 and 7 days after mailing their information packet. The purpose of the call is to solicit school approval for conducting the survey, answer questions and provide further information regarding the YRBS, and schedule a survey date or dates. Other means of communications may also be employed.
- The vendor will inform the Contract Officer upon encountering significant resistance from superintendents or principals to conducting the YRBS. The same procedure applies to administrators who are difficult to contact after a few attempts. The Contract Officer will either direct the vendor to make additional attempts or contact the party(ies) by other means. The Contract Officer has final authority to determine that no further attempts will be made to obtain clearance.

- Field administration (i.e., surveying at schools) should commence early in CY 2013, and continue until completed, but no later than mid-May 2013. The goal is to obtain clearance from all districts and from at least 21 schools in the high school sample and 21 schools in the middle school sample. The vendor should schedule schools for surveying at least 2 weeks after obtaining approval from the principal to allow time for classroom sampling and dissemination of permission slips. No school should be scheduled during the window period for state assessment testing (usually 3 weeks during March and April).
- The vendor will perform other related services, as HEALTH and the Contract Officer require.

B. Classroom Sampling and Dissemination of Parental Permission Slips

The vendor will coordinate all aspects of generating a classroom sample and providing a sufficient number of parental permission slips with adequate lead-time for each school participating in the YRBS. Specific responsibilities include:

- Upon scheduling a school for the YRBS, the vendor will work with the school contact person designated by the principal to develop a list of eligible classes that account for all students in the school in only one class according to CDC protocols. Only self-contained special education and English as a second language classes are excluded. The Contract Officer will supply original copies of related material to the vendor who will copy and forward these materials to each school contact person to assist them in developing the class list.
- After confirming that the class list from each school is comprehensive (i.e., includes all eligible students), the vendor will generate a random sample classrooms from the list using materials and random numbers generated by CDC. The class sampling will follow CDC protocols. For both surveys (high school and middle school), the goal is to obtain approximately 86 completed questionnaires per school (or, approximately 1,800 completed high school questionnaires statewide, and approximately 1,800 completed middle school questionnaires statewide).
- The vendor will notify the school contact person immediately as to which classrooms are in the sample. Past practice has schools responsible for notifying the affected teachers. The vendor will then coordinate with the school contact person to provide teachers with enough parental permission slips for the number of enrolled students in each class. Historically, these have been passive permission slips that are only completed and returned to the teachers if the parent(s) do not want their child to participate in the survey. The Contract Officer will provide an original copy of the permission slip in English to the vendor.
- The vendor will perform other related services, as HEALTH and the Contract Officer deem necessary.

C. Recruiting and Training Classroom Survey Administrators and Conducting the YRBS in Schools

The contractor will coordinate all aspects of administering the YRBS surveys to students in public high school and middle school classrooms between January/February and May 2013. Specific responsibilities include, but are not limited to the following:

- The vendor will recruit a corps of classroom survey administrators or surveyors. During the course of field administration, the vendor will promptly replace any administrators who are no longer available for survey work.
- The vendor will conduct a survey administration training for surveyors. The vendor is responsible for assuring that all classroom administrators attend this training. There may be supplemental trainings later in the survey process for new administrators, if necessary.
- The vendor will schedule survey administrators several days in advance of each survey date. Whenever feasible, administrators must be unknown to the participating students in each school. Most of the time, schools will conduct the surveys on a given day during one period (usually the second class of the day). However, scheduling at certain schools will require that classroom administrators be available for several class periods over one or two days.
- The vendor will confirm the date, time, and other critical information with classroom administrators 1 to 2 days prior to surveying any given school and provide replacements for anyone that is no longer available.

- The vendor will provide appropriate transportation for classroom administrators to and from schools (approximately one half hour prior to the designated period). However, the vendor may adopt alternate transportation mechanisms that achieve this goal.
- The vendor will develop and implement a sign-in or other system to track and record the number of hours worked by surveyors broken down by classroom administration and travel time, if necessary. A classroom survey administrator will typically spend a total of 2-3 hours traveling to and from a school and conducting the survey.
- The vendor will confirm the logistics of survey administration with the school contact person 1 to 2 days prior to the survey date. On the day of the survey, there must be an onsite coordinator at each school in addition to a survey administrator for each classroom. The coordinator will distribute survey materials to the surveyors, troubleshoot any problems that may arise, and obtain a signed invoice from a school official to facilitate the processing of the \$500 school stipend. There should be a sufficient supply of extra survey materials available, and both the coordinator and survey administrators should arrive at the school at least 30 minutes prior to the start of the survey and check in with the school contact person. The coordinator may serve as a backup classroom administrator if necessary. The Contract Officer will provide original copies of classroom survey materials to the vendor.
- The classroom survey administrators will arrive at each class approximately 5 minutes prior to the start of the survey period. Via prior arrangements with the vendor, schools will usually provide maps or escorts to assist surveyors in finding their rooms. After introducing themselves to the teacher, the administrators will obtain any returned permission slips as well as current enrollment information. Teachers are required to remain in the classroom to assist with any problems that may arise.
- The classroom administrators will distribute the survey materials to the class, read a standardized script of instructions, and proctor the class as the students complete the survey. In particular, the administrator will maintain procedures to assure the confidentiality and anonymity of the students' responses. At the end of the survey, the administrator will collect the questionnaires and/or answer sheets, exit the room, and record the number of completed surveys on CDC class forms (the Contract Officer will supply original copies to the vendor). Students are allowed one class period (approximately 40 to 60 minutes) to complete the YRBS.
- The vendor will develop and implement a calendar and tracking system to monitor the completion of key survey activities related to each school. These activities commence with soliciting approval and scheduling the YRBS and end with reviewing and bundling completed survey forms.
- The vendor will perform other related services, as HEALTH and the Contract Officer require.

D. Administrative Support Functions

The contractor will coordinate all aspects of administrative support and clerical services that are necessary to conduct the YRBS in public high schools and middle schools. Specific responsibilities include, but are not limited to the following:

- The vendor will organize, store, and maintain an inventory of all survey related materials, including but not limited to YRBS questionnaires, answer sheets (if required), classroom header sheets, permission slips, information packet materials for superintendents and principals, classroom survey administration materials, and other office supplies (e.g., envelopes, document clamps, etc.). The administrative support staff (i.e., administrative assistant[s]) will also be responsible for all photocopying and faxing and/or mailing materials and documents as warranted. In addition, the administrative assistant(s) must maintain an adequate supply of sharpened number 2 pencils ready for use with surveys.
- The vendor will maintain a computer database with the names and addresses of participating schools, districts, principals, and superintendents. The administrative assistant(s) will produce all mailing labels and compile and send mailings of informational materials as needed as well as fax class list forms and instructions to the school contact persons.
- The vendor will compile parental permission slips for each participating classroom and deliver them to the contact person at each of the participating schools no later than 7 days prior to the survey date. The vendor

will provide written language translation services for parental permission slips and other survey materials, if required. The vendor could use a subcontractor for this purpose. Ideally, the permission slips should be transported to each school in person to assure timely receipt. Hand delivery also offers an opportunity to check and finalize driving directions to the school.

- The vendor will bundle survey materials in envelopes for each of the participating classrooms statewide. These materials will include questionnaires, answer sheets (if required), pencils, classroom forms, and instructions and scripts for classroom survey administrators. The administrative assistant(s) will label each envelope with descriptive information and identification codes for the classroom and deliver all envelopes to the vendor's onsite coordinator for each school at least one day in advance of surveying.
- The vendor will examine completed questionnaires and/or answer sheets and correct any errors related to the use of pen or light pencil, stray marks, ruffled or folded forms, improperly photocopied forms, partially filled answer bubbles, and multiple responses for a question. The administrative assistant(s) will bundle completed surveys and answer sheets with school and classroom level forms according to CDC specifications and send these materials via a traceable carrier to the CDC YRBS contractor (i.e., Westat Corporation in Maryland).
- As soon as the vendor obtains the completed and signed invoice for the incentive stipend from each school, the administrative support staff shall process the invoice and mail a \$500 check directly to the school. Usually, the onsite coordinator will obtain the invoice on the day of the survey.
- The vendor will perform other related services, as HEALTH and the Contract Officer require.

CLAS LANGUAGE

Cultural Competence

Cultural competence is the integration and transformation of knowledge about individuals and groups of people into specific standards, policies, practices and attitudes used in appropriate cultural settings to increase the quality of services, thereby producing better outcomes. Competence in cross-cultural functioning means learning new patterns of behavior and effectively applying them in appropriate settings.

Limited English Proficiency

Under the authority of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Presidential Executive Order No. 13166 requires that recipients of federal financial assistance ensure meaningful access by persons with limited English proficiency (LEP) to their programs and activities. A 2002 report from the U.S. Department of Justice, *Prohibition Against National Origin Discrimination Affecting Limited English Proficient Persons*, provides guidance on uniform policies for all federal agencies to implement Executive Order No. 13166. Further, the National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services in Health Care (CLAS Standards) issued by the Federal Office of Minority Health in 2004 outline mandates, guidelines, and a recommendation for the provision of language access services, culturally competent care, and organizational supports for cultural competence in health care settings. CLAS Standards 4-7 (see below) are mandates and address language access services that should be provided by every organization that receives federal funding, whether directly or indirectly.

Effective immediately, all vendors who contract with HEALTH must perform the following tasks and provide documentation of such tasks upon request of a HEALTH employee:

1. The supports and services provided by vendor shall demonstrate a commitment to linguistic and cultural competence that ensures access and meaningful participation for all people in the service area or target population. Such commitment includes acceptance and respect for cultural values, beliefs and practices of the community, as well as the ability to apply an understanding of the relationships of language and culture to the delivery of supports and services. Vendor shall have an education, training and staff development plan for assuring culturally and linguistically appropriate service delivery.
2. Vendor shall have a comprehensive cultural competency plan that addresses the following: 1) the identification and assessment of the cultural needs of potential and active clients served, 2) sufficient policies and procedures to reflect the agency's value and practice expectations, 3) a method of service assessment and monitoring, and 4) ongoing training to assure that staff are aware of and able to effectively implement policies.

3. Vendor shall have a plan to recruit, retain and promote a diverse staff and leadership team, including Board members, representative of the demographic characteristics of the populations served.
4. Vendor shall assure equal access for people with diverse cultural backgrounds and/or limited English proficiency, as outlined by the Department of Justice, *Prohibition Against National Origin Discrimination Affecting Limited English Proficient Persons*. Vendor shall provide language assistance services (i.e. interpretation and translation) and interpreters for the deaf and hard of hearing at no cost to the client.

National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services in Health Care

Culturally Competent Care (Standards 1-3)

Standard 1

Health care organizations should ensure that patients/consumers receive from all staff member's effective, understandable, and respectful care that is provided in a manner compatible with their cultural health beliefs and practices and preferred language.

Standard 2

Health care organizations should implement strategies to recruit, retain, and promote at all levels of the organization a diverse staff and leadership that are representative of the demographic characteristics of the service area.

Standard 3

Health care organizations should ensure that staff at all levels and across all disciplines receive ongoing education and training in culturally and linguistically appropriate service delivery.

Language Access Services (Standards 4-7)

Standard 4*

Health care organizations must offer and provide language assistance services, including bilingual staff and interpreter services, at no cost to each patient/consumer with limited English proficiency at all points of contact, in a timely manner during all hours of operation.

Standard 5*

Health care organizations must provide to patients/consumers in their preferred language both verbal offers and written notices informing them of their right to receive language assistance services.

Standard 6*

Health care organizations must assure the competence of language assistance provided to limited English proficient patients/consumers by interpreters and bilingual staff. Family and friends should not be used to provide interpretation services (except on request by the patient/consumer).

Standard 7*

Health care organizations must make available easily understood patient-related materials and post signage in the languages of the commonly encountered groups and/or groups represented in the service area.

Organizational Supports for Cultural Competence (Standards 8-14)

Standard 8

Health care organizations should develop, implement, and promote a written strategic plan that outlines clear goals, policies, operational plans, and management accountability/oversight mechanisms to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate services.

Standard 9

Health care organizations should conduct initial and ongoing organizational self-assessments of CLAS-related activities and are encouraged to integrate cultural and linguistic competence-related measures into their internal audits, performance improvement programs, patient satisfaction assessments, and outcomes-based evaluations.

Standard 10

Health care organizations should ensure that data on the individual patient's/consumer's race, ethnicity, and spoken and written language are collected in health records, integrated into the organization's management information systems, and periodically updated.

Standard 11

Health care organizations should maintain a current demographic, cultural, and epidemiological profile of the community as well as a needs assessment to accurately plan for and implement services that respond to the cultural and linguistic characteristics of the service area.

Standard 12

Health care organizations should develop participatory, collaborative partnerships with communities and utilize a variety of formal and informal mechanisms to facilitate community and patient/consumer involvement in designing and implementing CLAS-related activities.

Standard 13

Health care organizations should ensure that conflict and grievance resolution processes are culturally and linguistically sensitive and capable of identifying, preventing, and resolving cross-cultural conflicts or complaints by patients/consumers.

Standard 14

Health care organizations are encouraged to regularly make available to the public information about their progress and successful innovations in implementing the CLAS standards and to provide public notice in their communities about the availability of this information. * Mandates

SECTION 4 – PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Questions concerning this solicitation may be e-mailed to the Division of Purchases at David.Francis@purchasing.ri.gov no later than the date and time indicated on page one of this solicitation. Please reference RFP # 7458066 on all correspondence should be submitted in a Microsoft Word attachment. Answers to questions received, if any, will be posted on the Internet as an addendum to this solicitation. It is the responsibility of all interested parties to download this information. If technical assistance is required to download, call the Help Desk at (401) 574-9709.

Offerors are encouraged to submit written questions to the Division of Purchases. No other contact with State parties will be permitted. Interested offerors may submit proposals to provide the services covered by this Request on or before the date and time listed on the cover page of this solicitation. Responses received after this date and time, as registered by the official time clock in the reception area of the Division of Purchases will not be considered.

Responses (an original plus four (4) copies) should be mailed or hand-delivered in a sealed envelope marked **“RFP # 7458066 2013 YOUTH RISK BEHAVIOR SURVEY(S)”** to:

RI Dept. of Administration
Division of Purchases, 2nd floor
One Capitol Hill
Providence, RI 02908-5855

NOTE: Proposals received after the above-referenced due date and time will not be considered. Proposals misdirected to other State locations or those not presented to the Division of Purchases by the scheduled due date and time will be determined to be late and will not be considered. Proposals faxed, or emailed, to the Division of Purchases will not be considered. The official time clock is in the reception area of the Division of Purchases.

In addition to the multiple hard copies of the proposals required, respondents are requested to provide their proposals in electronic format (CD ROM, Diskette, or Flash Drive). Microsoft Word/ Excel or PDF format is preferable. Only one (1) electronic copy is requested. This CD or diskette should be included in the proposal marked “original”.

To be considered qualified, offerors must demonstrate:

- Previous experience with population based self-administered health-related surveys, particularly with the Youth Risk Behavior Surveys (YRBS), Youth Tobacco Survey, or other surveys of chronic disease risk factors. Should experience with administering YRBS be noted, please state whether or not those surveys resulted in ‘Weighted Data,’ as defined by the CDC. Also, please discuss the offeror’s experience with conducting middle school YRBS.
- Availability of the resources necessary for performance of the YRBS, including a Survey Administration Coordinator and other staff with the necessary credentials and qualifications and the organizational capability to notify districts and schools concerning the YRBS; solicit approval from districts and schools to conduct the survey and schedule survey dates; generate random classroom samples; disseminate parental permission slips; recruit, hire, train, and compensate classroom survey administrators; transport surveyors via an appropriate conveyance with a licensed driver; provide onsite coordination and troubleshooting at schools; pay schools \$500 stipends for their participation in the YRBS; examine and correct completed survey forms; bundle and mail survey forms to the CDC contractor; provide general administrative support functions; and prepare a written survey process report. The offeror may also include any other relevant information concerning its capacity to coordinate all aspects of the 2013 YRBS.

RESPONSE CONTENTS

Responses should include the following:

- 1) A completed and signed three-page R.I.V.I.P generated bidder certification cover sheet downloaded from the RI Division of Purchases Internet home page at www.purchasing.ri.gov.
- 2) A completed and signed W-9 downloaded from the RI Division of Purchases Internet home page at www.purchasing.ri.gov.
- 3) A letter of transmittal signed by an owner, officer, or authorized agent of the firm or organization, acknowledging and accepting the terms and conditions of this Request, and tendering an offer to the HEALTH. The signature of the official with legal authority to bind the organization into a contractual agreement must also be included.
- 4) A **separate sealed** Cost Proposal is required as described below (an original plus four (4) copies). The Cost for notifying school districts, high schools, and middle schools about the YRBS; soliciting approval from districts and schools to conduct the survey; scheduling survey dates; generating random school samples; disseminating permission slips to parents; recruiting and coordinating classroom survey administrators to conduct the survey; providing general administrative support functions; and submitting completed survey materials to CDC. The proposal will present compensation and level of effort for each position in the staffing plan in the Technical Proposal (see below), associated fringe benefit costs and the basis for calculation, and direct costs for operating expenses (e.g., materials, supplies, purchased services, and mileage). The cost proposal will include a completed Cost Proposal (Section 6: Budget and Budget Narrative) for the period of operations and a budget justification linking each item to the Technical Proposal workplan. The total cost for the 2013 YRBS must not exceed \$125,000.
- 5) A separate Technical Proposal (see below) describing the qualifications of the applicant and experience with similar programs, as well as the workplan proposed for this requirement. The Technical Proposal, excluding attachments, must not exceed 16 pages in length.

The Technical Proposal (not to exceed 16 pages, excluding attachments) must contain the following sections:

Executive Summary

The Executive Summary is intended to highlight the contents of the Technical Proposal, and to provide State evaluators with a broad understanding of the offeror's technical approach and ability, including prior experience and ongoing relationships related to youth based surveys of health behaviors.

Offeror's Organization and Staffing

This section shall include identification of all staff and/or subcontractors proposed as members of the project team, and the duties, responsibilities, and concentration of effort which apply to each (as well as resumes, curricula vitae, or statements of prior experience and qualifications).

Workplan/Approach Proposed

This section shall describe the offeror's understanding of the State's requirements, including the result(s) intended and desired, the approach and/or methodology to be employed, and a workplan for accomplishing the results proposed. The description of approach shall discuss and justify the approach to be taken for each task, and the technical issues that may be confronted. The workplan shall include a proposed project schedule (by task and subtask), a list of tasks, activities, and/or milestones that will be employed to administer the project, the assignment of staff members and concentration of effort for each.

- 5) The strategy and timetable for disseminating parental permission slips in each school, including a mechanism for parents to return completed slips to the school.
- 6) The strategy and timetable for recruiting, training, scheduling, confirming, transporting, and replacing (when necessary) a corps of classroom survey administrators to conduct the YRBS in high schools and middle schools statewide.
- 7) The strategy and timetable for confirming logistics of the YRBS administration with each school, providing onsite coordination, troubleshooting, and backup on the survey date, and conducting the YRBS in each selected classroom.
- 8) The strategy and timetable for developing a tracking system to monitor key survey activities from soliciting approval and scheduling the YRBS to conducting the survey and paying the incentive stipend and all steps in between.
- 9) The strategy and timetable for providing general administrative support functions, including maintaining inventories of survey materials, photocopying and sending materials to districts and schools, maintaining supplies of number 2 pencils, developing a database with contact information, producing labels for mailings, compiling and delivering permission slips, bundling and labeling classroom survey materials, sorting completed survey materials, examining and correcting completed survey forms for errors, bundling completed survey forms and mailing them to CDC, and processing invoices and paying stipends.
- 10) The strategy and timetable for assuring the security of survey materials and district, school, and student confidentiality and anonymity.
- 11) The strategy and timetable for tracking the level of effort (i.e., hours dedicated to the contract) of various survey staff positions.

COST (not to exceed \$125,000)

25 POINTS

Total cost for conducting the 2013 YRBS.

Calculated as (lowest responsive cost proposal divided by this cost proposal) times 25 points.

SECTION 6: BUDGET AND BUDGET NARRATIVE

BUDGET SPECIFICATIONS

Applicant agencies must submit a budget. Budgets must include all functions specified in the RFP. Budgets may not exceed the total award amount of \$125,000.

This component consists of two parts:

1. Financial budget summary that lists allowable expenses, and
2. Budget narrative that is a detailed description and justification of each budget line item entry.

<u>Allowable Expense Category</u>	<u>Amount Requested</u>
1. Personnel (Name, Position, FTE-Full Time Equivalent, PTE-Part Time Equivalent, Hourly Wage) <i>Survey Administration Coordinator</i> <i>Classroom Survey Administrator</i> <i>Administrative Support</i> <i>Driver (if necessary)</i>	\$ _____
2. Fringe Benefits (Percent and detail breakdown of each benefit, such as FICA, unemployment, workers comp., medical, dental, vision, vacation time, personal time, sick leave, etc. Also indicate the fringe benefit rate for the organization.)	\$ _____
3. Consultants (Include Name, Position, Hourly Wage)	\$ _____
4. Travel (Include both local and out-of-state travel. Reimbursement for mileage expenses is not to exceed \$0.555/mile or the current rate effective for RI State employees.)	\$ _____
5. Printing/Copying (Include printing expenses associated with the project.)	
6. Supplies (List office and program supplies allocated to the project. Refreshments are not an allowable expense)	\$ _____
7. Telephone (Include telephone expenses associated with the project.)	\$ _____
8. Postage (Indicate postage expenses allocated to the project.)	\$ _____
9. Subcontracts (No more than 25% of total grant request can be used to subcontract with any for-profit entity. This line should not be used for payments to individuals.)	\$ _____
10. Other /School Stipends (\$500 each participating school)	\$ _____
TOTAL:	\$ _____

CONCLUDING STATEMENTS

Notwithstanding the above, the State reserves the right not to award this contract or to award on the basis of cost alone, to accept or reject any or all proposals, and to award in its best interest.

Proposals found to be technically or substantially non-responsive at any point in the evaluation process will be rejected and not considered further.

The State may, at its sole option, elect to require presentation(s) by offerors clearly in consideration for this award.

The Technical review Committee will present written findings, including the results of all evaluations, to the State Purchasing Agent, or her designee, who will make the final selection for this requirement.