

BOARD OF EDUCATION
The School District of South Orange and Maplewood
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MEMORANDUM

To: Cheryl Schneider, Business Administrator

From: Steve Gardberg, Asst. Business Administrator

Date: May 14, 2014

Re: Request for Proposals (RFP) Food Service Management Company 2014-15

- Evaluation & Recommendation -

Background

The current Food Service Management Company contract with Pomptonian expires June 30, 2014. Pomptonian, after winning the one (1) year RFP bid for the 2009-10 school year, was renewed each of the four following years, which is the maximum allowed per 18A:18A-1 et seq and 40A:11-4.5. The South Orange-Maplewood School District, therefore, was required to advertise for Food Service Management Company for the 2014-15 school year.

Procurement Method

Pursuant to 18A:18A-1 et seq. and 40A:11-4.5, the Business Administrator may utilize Competitive Contracting instead of Competitive Bidding for the management and staffing of the District's food service operations. Therefore, this was not a bid, but rather a Request for Proposal (RFP). As such, the District shall award the contract to the Contractor whose proposal is determined to be the most advantageous, price and other factors considered.

Request For Proposals (RFP)

The Food Service Management Company RFP was advertised on April 3, 2014, and five (5) Contractors received and reviewed our Specifications. On April 14, a facility 'walk-through' site survey tour of Columbia High School was held to acquaint the two (2) Contractors in attendance.

Proposal Opening

Two (2) proposals were submitted and opened on May 2, 2014, with the following bids:

Contractor	Estimated Profit	Is the Profit a Guarantee?	Actual Guarantee	Is Guarantee Capped?
Metz*	\$132,057.06	No	\$150,000.00	Yes
Pomptonian	\$106,925.00	Yes	\$50,000.00	No

* See the Recommendation section

RFP Evaluation Method

In accordance with the methodology in 18A:18A-4.4b and contained within the RFP, an interview format and score sheet were used with all prospective Contractors. Questions were taken directly from the specification requirements, footnoted and constructed to enable the District to ascertain if the Contractors possessed all or some of the required competencies/skills. The questions had a predetermined ranking system related to the answer responses to ensure the process was fair and consistent. The four (4) criteria that were considered in evaluating the proposals are as detailed in the following table, weighted based upon importance to the District. The points awarded ranged from 1 to 5 in .50 increments, with 5 being the highest.

A. Program Price	
B. Capability and Record of Performance	
C. On-Site Manager and Management Team	
D. Proposed Program	

Evaluation Committee

A panel of five (5) District staff members, representing a cross section of all Custodial Services stakeholders, to serve on the Evaluation Committee:

- Elementary level was represented by the supervisor of Health, PE & Nursing
- Secondary level was represented by the High School Principal
- Food Services was represented by the Director
- Parents were represented by a Jefferson Elementary School PTA member
- Business Office was represented by the Assistant Business Administrator

Evaluation of Proposals

On April 8, the Evaluation Committee interviewed each of the two (2) Contractors that submitted proposals as above. Questions were asked and responses were graded in each of the sections (A through D) of the Evaluation Criteria. Score sheets were completed by each committee member after each interview, then collected, sequestered and tabulated by the Assistant Business Administrator. As per the RFP Specification, after points were awarded by the evaluators, a weighting factor was applied, and thus a total score derived. Each of the Contractors met our specifications. The results, in order of overall performance, are as follows.

Contractor	Total Weighted Avg. Score	Summary
1. Pomptonian	4.3	Top score in 3 of 4 categories, elaborated in Recommendation
2. Metz	3.4	Errors in proposed operating statement, Less familiar with District, Minimal NJ experience

Recommendation

It is the Evaluation Committee's recommendation to the Board of Education to approve Pomptonian as the Food Service Management Company to the South Orange-Maplewood School District. Pomptonian was the highest-scoring Contractor in the Evaluation Committee's interview and vetting process, *having the highest scores in three of four criteria*. Regarding program expenses and revenues, Metz's guarantee of \$150,000 is capped, while Pomptonian's of \$50,000 is not capped. Metz's proposal indicates that in the event that the program does not realize the guaranteed profit/loss, they will remit the amount of any shortfall or the amount of the FSMC management fee, whichever is less. Metz's projected management fee is \$75,485, suggesting a maximum guarantee significantly lower than \$150,000 based on the terms of their proposal. Other stipulations in the proposal suggest that the guarantee will also be lowered based on a number of conditions that Pomptonian already factored in to their guarantee figure.

* Metz's proposal contained calculation errors that, if corrections were allowed, would decrease the guarantee to \$125,000.00 and estimated profit to \$92,248.41, compared to Pomptonian's guaranteed profit of \$50,000.00 and estimated profit of \$106,925.00. The existence of these calculation errors further puts into question Metz's other projections, making the profit guarantee and long-term success less certain.

The committee's overall impression of Pomptonian was the company's firm financial proposal; commitment to training (particularly in food safety); helping Districts to share new menu ideas; and supporting our District-employed director in times of acute staffing needs (eg. office personnel out for injury). Also, Pomptonian has 50+ years of experience in school food service in New Jersey, with a heavy concentration in North Jersey. Managers share what's working or not working at nearby Districts, helping us to learn and adapt faster.

The Food Service Management Company contract from Pomptonian proposes an estimated \$106,925 profit to the District for the 2014-15 school year, including all food, paper/cleaning, administrative and labor expenses (including the District-employed Director's salary) and a management fee of \$88,500.