

**Washington County Schools  
Request for Qualifications (RFQ)  
for  
Professional Design Services  
Districtwide Facility Study**

November 10, 2021

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**STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS (SOQ)**

This is an invitation and request to receive Statement of Qualifications from interested Design Consulting firms. Services to be provided include customary design services related to a Districtwide Facility Study.

Responses to this Request for Qualifications will be received at the time and location designated within and shall include the information requested hereafter.

Washington County Schools (WCS) intends the solicitation process to fully comply with NCGS § 143-64.31 for the procurement of professional design services, to announce all requirements for said services, to select firms qualified to provide such services on the basis of demonstrated competence and qualification for the type of professional services required without regard to fee at this stage, and thereafter to negotiate a contract for those services at a fair and reasonable fee with the best qualified firm. If a contract cannot be negotiated with the best qualified firm, WCS shall terminate negotiations with that firm and initiate negotiations with the next best qualified firm. Selection of a firm shall include the use of good faith efforts by WCS to notify minority firms of the opportunity to submit qualifications for consideration by WCS. WCS reserves the right to waive technicalities and informalities and, at its sole discretion, to reject any and all responses to the RFQ.

**DISTRICTWIDE STUDY – ANTICIPATED SCOPE**

Washington County Schools is a public school district located in Washington County, along the US Highway 64 corridor in eastern North Carolina. Current district facilities include five school campuses, a pre-K center, and various central office support service buildings.

The school district has a reported districtwide facility capacity of 2,510 students. The current ADM is 1,100+ students. The age of the district's school buildings ranges from 21 to 82 years, with the majority being older structures. Certain structures are suffering from both aged conditions and building envelope issues. All facilities are located in a warm and humid environment (NCSBC Climate Zone - 3a) and subject to semi-marine conditions.

Washington County Schools has recently completed certain building studies that will be made available for use as part of this work.

The goal of the comprehensive districtwide facility study is to assist Washington County Schools in developing the districtwide facilities improvement plan which will most effectively serve the needs of students and staff in Washington County. Core to this effort is to improve the learning environment for all students and staff across the district through facility modernization, while simultaneously reducing operational cost through gains in operational efficiencies. The effort is expected to produce multiple options for consideration. Each option will include an order of magnitude cost estimate to implement the plan per school. The study will also include:

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- Evaluation of each existing school facility's site, buildings, systems, and infrastructure.
- Necessary repairs, construction and / or renovations.
- Evaluation of school locations and travel efficiencies.

For the options developed, the study should also consider:

- Evaluation of central office facilities for location and any strategy / cost associated with relocation, etc.
- Project phasing.
- Recommendations for any facilities / campuses proposed for discontinued use as a school.
- Impact to current deferred maintenance needs.

Operational cost considerations should compare efficiencies between proposed options in the following areas:

- Staffing
- Student transportation
- Child nutrition
- Maintenance transportation and service response
- Energy and utilities savings

The selected Design Consultant's team will be expected to provide the turnkey professional services necessary for the study's completion.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMISSION – MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS**

*Submittals shall contain all elements outlined in this section. The submittal shall be prepared simply and economically, and shall provide concise answers to the requested information in the order and format prescribed. Failure to do so may result in disqualification from further consideration. Emphasis will be placed upon clarity and completeness of the submitted response.*

The Statement of Qualifications shall be organized as follows:

**1. Letter of Interest (1 letter page):**

This document should be prepared and signed jointly by the Partner-in-Charge, Project Manager, and Project Architect proposed for this project. The letter is purposed to allow personal expression to the following:

- a) Firm introduction / history
- b) Expertise in similar studies for K-12 public school facilities
- c) Other statements the firm desires to convey its unique qualifications

**2. Relevant Experience (50%):**

- a) Provide the following data for district facility studies completed by the firm in the last 10 years. For each study, include the following information:
  - District / Owner Contact Information (current name, address, phone, email)
  - Location / County

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- District capacity at time of study
  - Current ADM
  - Number of schools facilities / campuses by grade tiers
- b) Briefly discuss your firm's history and familiarity with districtwide facility studies. Include information on the targeted purpose of each study.
- c) Briefly discuss your firm's history and familiarity with school facility evaluations related to aged existing facilities.
- d) Briefly discuss your firm's experience in planning, design, and construction of public K-12 schools in North Carolina.
- e) Briefly discuss your firm's approach to districtwide assessments and development of viable options for consideration.
- f) Briefly discuss your firm's philosophy on school safety and security and how it impacts site and building decisions related to determining the most viable options.
- g) It is Washington County Schools desire to maintain facilities that greatly enhance the learning environment for all students, staff, and community stakeholders. Simultaneously, economic sustainability, air quality, material durability, ease of maintenance, and energy performance are also critical considerations with regard to life cycle costs and building longevity. Briefly discuss your teams experience and strategies to ensure these goals are incorporated into the proposed options.
- h) Describe any litigation / settlements involving work by your firm.

**3. Project Team (30%):**

- a) Identify your proposed consultant team for this project. Include any necessary supplemental information supporting the "Relevant Experience" items above.
- b) Comment on the collaboration of your proposed team on previous districtwide studies and other relevant work on public K-12 facilities.
- c) Provide resumes for the key personnel / rolls who will work on the study (including consultants). Resumes should include professional qualifications: education, certifications, licensures, and other relevant experience including work on completed studies.

**4. Capacity / Schedule / Proximity / SOQ organization (20%):**

- a) Discuss firm's staffing and project backlog in the office from which the study will be produced.
- b) Discuss the team's current workload and ability to begin the work in earnest and with a sustained effort upon receiving a contract. For proposed key personnel, list all current active assigned projects by size, type, and dollar value. Include current work phase for each project.
- c) Firms shall include in its response a proposed milestone schedule it believes sufficient to effectively complete the work proposed by this study.

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- d) Provide information as to the location of the firm's office from which this project will be produced and managed. Include major sub-consultants.
- e) WCS recognizes and appreciates the time it takes firms to develop a clear and thorough RFQ response. Thus, we will consider completeness, organization, clarity, and the thoroughness / content of the responses as part of our evaluation.

**5. Evaluation Criteria:**

The Review Committee (consisting of county manager, superintendent, finance officers, member of DPI Cares Support team, a WCS BOE member and representative from the county commissioners), will use a qualifications-based process to select the most qualified Respondent using a weighted scoring system to evaluate proposals on the following criteria:

- a) Relevant Experience (50%).
- b) Project Team (30%).
- c) Capacity / Schedule / Proximity / overall SOQ submission (20%)

Upon completion of the committee's review, a list of shortlisted firms will be developed for interviews. We anticipate interviewing a minimum of (3) firms, but no more than (6).

**6. Supplemental Information:**

It is unnecessary to provide supplemental information on the first submittal. However, WCS reserves the right to request additional information it deems necessary to evaluate firms for selection.

**7. Submission Materials:**

Submission materials shall include **both** hard copies and electronic media, delivered by the time and date outlined below in the Submittal Deadline section.

Physical Submittal Requirements:

1. Provide (15) printed hard copies of the SOQ submission. The physical size of all submission materials shall be in 8 ½ by 11 format, bound securely (only table in item 2.a. may be 11 x 17 landscape). Please avoid redundant and repetitious materials, limit the overall submittal packet to approximately 20 pages (printed on both sides).
2. Provide (2) USB drives, each containing a complete SOQ submission in PDF format.

Electronic Requirements:

1. Email a complete SOQ submission in PDF format to [lcarr@wcsnc.org](mailto:lcarr@wcsnc.org).

**8. Submittal Location and Deadline:**

Send your physical submittal, packaged and marked as follows:

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**Statement of Qualifications**  
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and deliver to:

**Washington County Schools**  
**802 Washington Street**  
**Plymouth, North Carolina, 27962**

**ALL required Submission Materials are to be received no later than 12:00 p.m., Friday, December 10, 2021.**

**9. Firm Selection Schedule:**

The following schedule is anticipated to select a Design Consultant firm for this project:

|                                          |                   |
|------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| RFQ Issued/Advertised:                   | November 10, 2021 |
| Qualifications Package due:              | December 10, 2021 |
| Design firms notified for interview:     | December 16, 2021 |
| Design Consultant Interviews:            | January 4, 2022   |
| Contract Approval by Board of Education: | January 2022      |

**10. Other Requirements:**

Interested firms should familiarize themselves with Board Policies relating to this work and entering school property. Board policies can be viewed on the WCS website at [www.wcsnc.org](http://www.wcsnc.org).

Any firm responding to this RFQ must hold a current license in good standing with the North Carolina Board of Architecture. Sub-consultants must also hold a current license in good standing with the appropriate North Carolina governing agency for each discipline.

The selected firm will be required to provide certification documenting compliance with the Lunsford Act / Criminal Background Check and requirements as outlined in the NCGS Chapter 14 for personnel who will be on school sites as part of the performance of this work.

The selected firm is required to comply with all local, state, and federal applicable laws when providing services for Washington County Schools, including E-Verify and requirements of the Affordable Care Act.

Washington County Schools requires the following minimum insurance for firms associated with this work:

|                                |                |
|--------------------------------|----------------|
| a. Workman's Compensation      | Statutory      |
| b. Public Liability            | Combined Limit |
| Bodily Injury: Each Person     | \$1,000,000.00 |
| Bodily Injury: Each Accident   | \$1,000,000.00 |
| Property Damage: Each Accident | \$1,000,000.00 |
| c. Professional Liability      | \$1,000,000.00 |

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**11. Submittal Questions:**

Address any questions via email to:

Linda Jewell Carr  
Superintendent  
lcarr@wcsnc.org

**12. Contact Policy:**

Until a contract resulting from this RFQ process is executed, no employee, agent or representative of any professional services provider shall make available or discuss it's proposal with the media in any form, electronic or printed, or with any elected or appointed official or officer of WCS, or any employee, agent or other representative of the WCS.