

Request for Qualifications
Early Literacy and Math Specialists / Coaches
Proposal Due Date: November 30, 2020

Purpose

The Big Lift is a collective impact effort comprised of over 300 organizations from various sectors who have united to tackle a single challenge: third grade reading proficiency. In San Mateo County, only 31% of low-income third graders read proficiently at third grade. The Big Lift aims to boost children's reading proficiency through four coordinated, aligned interventions: (1) High-quality preschool for three- and four-year-olds to prepare them for kindergarten, (2) Inspiring and enriching summer learning experiences for rising kindergartners-third graders to prevent summer learning loss, (3) Efforts to reduce chronic absenteeism from preschool through third grade using evidence-based attendance reminders for families, and (4) Family engagement activities focused on home literacy practices and other supports.¹ The Big Lift provides these interventions to 3,000 low-income preschool-third graders annually across seven participating school district communities. (For more information on The Big Lift, please see www.thebiglift.org).

The Big Lift's local evaluation efforts demonstrate that targeted language/literacy interventions, in combination with general quality support for preschool classrooms, are having the largest impacts on children's kindergarten readiness. The Big Lift is interested in expanding some of the most successful practices in order to test them at scale and ensure more children served are ready for kindergarten.

This Request for Qualifications seeks applications from candidates interested in contributing to this exciting, high profile collective impact initiative. **Selected individuals will work directly with small groups of children** to support their development of foundational early literacy and math skills, while also promoting their overall social-emotional and cognitive development. Individuals will also work with teachers on the integration of content addressed in small group work into the overall classroom learning environment. Multiple consultant positions are available.

Given the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, individuals hired for this role will have an opportunity to mitigate the effects of severe learning loss on at-risk children in San Mateo County. Consultants will therefore play an integral role in the county early childhood response to COVID-19. This is an opportunity to make a profound difference in the San Mateo County community, helping to ensure the county's most vulnerable preschool age children are still ready to succeed and thrive in kindergarten and beyond.

Consultants will perform the following tasks:

- Work in a designated number of preschool classrooms, providing small group support 3-5x/week in each classroom.
- Assess preschool children's early language, literacy and math skills using valid assessments and provide targeted supports to address areas of weakness.
- Use evidence-informed strategies to holistically address early language, literacy and math skill development, while using early childhood development principals to keep activities fun and engaging for children. Respond to children's cues, interests, cultural backgrounds and lived experiences to adapt strategies as needed.
- Consult with classroom teachers on a regular basis to review strategies used, inform them of progress and advise on how to extend the activities into the larger classroom environment.
- Participate in meetings and trainings with Big Lift administrative staff and content experts to align practice across all specialists and coaches in classrooms.
- Help with the creation and implementation of an accessible, high level scope and sequence for preschool classrooms.

¹ The Big Lift is presently in the following school districts in San Mateo County: Cabrillo Unified School District, La Honda-Pescadero Unified School District, Jefferson Elementary School District, South San Francisco Unified School District, Ravenswood City School District, Redwood City School District, and San Bruno Park School District.

- Enter data on services provided into The Big Lift centralized database (Vertical Change)

Hourly rates for this work are expected to range between \$70-\$90 / hour. Individuals will be hired as independent contractors.

COVID-19 Considerations

Upon hiring, consultants will engage initially in planning and preparation for in-person services. The planning/preparation phase is expected to last 1-2 months. Given the evolving COVID-19 public health crisis, in-person support provided will strictly adhere to applicable local and state public health and education requirements. All possible health and safety precautions will be taken, and outdoor small groups will be arranged if/where possible to further mitigate risk. In-person child care and preschool programs are operational in keeping with state and local regulations. Services are expected to fall under the category of 'specialized support services', which are permitted during this time.

Note: In order to be considered for one of the consultant positions, candidates must be available for in-person work with preschool age children during the 2020-21 school year. All health and safety precautions will be followed. Small group support will be provided outside wherever possible.

Desired Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree (minimum requirement)
- A combination of one or more of the following: CA child development permit, CA multiple subject teaching credential, early childhood education units and/or comparable training or education
- 5-10 years experience teaching and/or coaching in an early childhood and/or early elementary (Transitional Kindergarten – Second Grade) setting
- Extensive, specialized training or education in early language and literacy and/or early math
- Experience providing targeted language, literacy and/or math supports to children and/or coaching support to teachers.
- Bilingual Spanish-English, Chinese-English, Tagalog-English, and Arabic-English highly encouraged

Application Process

1. Submit your resume
2. Submit a narrative that answers the following questions in no more than 2-3 pages:
 - a. Describe why you are interested and motivated to serve as an early literacy and math specialist for The Big Lift
 - b. Describe your formal education experience that makes you qualified for this role
 - c. Describe your teaching experience that makes you qualified for this role
 - d. Describe your specific expertise in evidence-based early language, literacy and math practices, and how you gained that expertise, including any special trainings and certifications that you have
 - e. Describe your experience providing targeted early language, literacy and/or math support to children
 - f. Describe any experience providing training and coaching to support evidence-based language, literacy and math practices in preschool through second grade classrooms
 - g. Indicate the languages in which you are proficient

Timeline

- **Application Deadline:** Applications are encouraged to be submitted by November 2, 2020, but will also be accepted on a rolling basis thereafter.
- **Candidate notification:** December 2020 – January 2021

If you have any questions about this RFQ and proposed roles for consultants, please don't hesitate to contact Diana Harlick at dharlick@smcoe.org.