



# City of San Antonio

## Agenda Memorandum

**File Number:**18-5961

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**Agenda Item Number:** 8.

**Agenda Date:** 11/13/2018

**In Control:** Early Childhood Education Municipal Development Corporation Board of Directors

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**DEPARTMENT:** Pre-K 4 SA

**DEPARTMENT HEAD:** Sarah Baray, Ph.D.

**COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED:** Citywide

**SUBJECT:** Professional Services Agreement with Teachstone Training, LLC

### SUMMARY:

Teachstone Training, LLC's (Teachstone) Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS®) is a one-of-a-kind instrument for assessing instructional quality in early childhood programs. CLASS measures the three domains of teacher-child interactions associated with children's learning and development-Emotional Support, Classroom Organization, and Instructional Support-and is the only observational teacher assessment tool that measures the teacher behaviors linked by research to student outcomes. CLASS is also the only measurement of instructional quality recognized and supported by the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) and the only measure designed for use in the full range of early learning classrooms, infant through third grade.

Because CLASS is unique in its capacity to reliably measure instruction quality in early childhood classrooms, CLASS was selected by Westat, Inc., the external evaluator of Pre-K 4 SA, to assess the quality of instruction at the Pre-K 4 SA Education Centers. Since 2014, every Pre-K 4 SA Education Center classroom has been assessed annually using CLASS. The resulting data are used to drive performance improvements at Pre-K 4 SA. CLASS has also been adopted by the National Head Start Association and is used in Head Start classrooms throughout San Antonio.

A primary objective of Pre-K 4 SA Competitive Grants program is to raise the level of instructional quality in early learning programs across the city. Key to achieving this goal is the ability to gather reliable data on classroom instructional quality. Currently, child development centers and school districts in San Antonio do not have a sufficient pool of trained personnel and resources to implement a research-based method of measuring, evaluating, and improving teacher-student interactions within their own organizations. Pre-K 4 SA aims to increase the capacity of early learning programs in San Antonio to reliably measure instructional quality by

expanding the pool of certified classroom observers.

In order to track trends and measure the effects of the Competitive Grants program, instructional quality must be measured using the same or similar instruments. However, an instrument similar to CLASS does not exist. None of the other classroom observation protocols, such as Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS), CLI Engage, Performance Matters and Texas Rising Star, measures the full construct of instructional quality or the full continuum of early learning classrooms infant through third grade. For this reason, Pre-K 4 SA seeks to enter into a Professional Services Agreement with Teachstone Training, LLC, the sole provider of CLASS.

Pre-K 4 SA requests approval to establish a contract with Teachstone Training, LLC in the amount of \$250,000 for a period of up to five years. This consists of a three-year contract with two annual options to renew. The Scope of Work includes materials and services to certify reliable CLASS observers:

- An on-site trainer to conduct 2 day trainings for up to 17 participants per each session.
- Training materials, including a CLASS Manual, CLASS score sheets, CLASS Master Code Justifications, and CLASS Observation Training Participant Guide.
- A 2 month Video Library access for participants.
- Online reliability testing access and automated feedback for participants.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

The City of San Antonio Early Childhood Education Municipal Development Corporation (Pre-K 4 SA) awards grants to public independent school districts (ISDs)/charter schools, accredited private/parochial schools, and licensed childcare centers (CDCs) that serve four-year-old prekindergarten students that allow entities to demonstrate success in improving program and teacher quality through bundles of training, materials, and services based on best practices in early childhood education. The City of San Antonio began its prekindergarten initiative in August 2013 to dramatically enhance early childhood education to ensure future vitality and long-term economic health for San Antonio. Pre-K 4 SA is designed to serve 3,700 students annually with 2,000 of these students being served directly at a Pre-K 4 SA Education Center and 1,700 students supported through competitive grants to local schools and child development programs.

## **ISSUE:**

Pre-K 4 SA staff requests Board consideration to authorize the execution of a Professional Services Agreement with Teachstone Training, LLC in an amount not to exceed \$250,000. The term of the agreement is for a period of five years. This consists of a three-year contract with two annual options to renew. Pre-K 4 SA would continue to certify its staff and awardee organizations.

The Small Business Economic Development Advocacy (SBEDA) Ordinance requirements were waived due to the lack of small, minority, and/or women businesses available to provide these goods and services.

## **ALTERNATIVES:**

If the Board does not approve the execution of the Agreement, Pre-K 4 SA will not be able to measure the effectiveness of grantee pre-k programs.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

Funds for this agreement are budgeted and available within the FY 2019 Operating Budget. Future contract year funds are contingent upon approval of the annual operating budget by the Board of Directors.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends the Board authorize the execution of the Professional Services Agreement with Teachstone Training, LLC in the amount of \$250,000 for five years. This includes a three year contract with additional annual renewal options for two years.