

City of Providence  
STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

# RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL

No. 341

EFFECTIVE July 14, 2014

RESOLVED, That the Members of the Providence City Council

hereby Authorize Approval of the following Emergency Contract Award by the Board of Contract and Supply, in accordance with Section 21-26 of the Code of Ordinances.

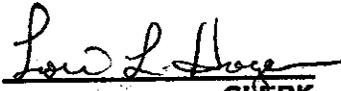
Advocacy Solutions & Gage Street Strategies      \$30,000.00 for a six month period  
(School Department)

IN CITY COUNCIL

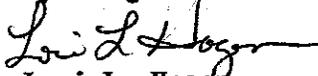
JUL 02 2014

READ AND PASSED

  
PRES.

  
CLERK  
ACTING

Effective without the  
Mayor's Signature

  
Lori L. Hagen  
City Clerk  
ACTING

RECEIVED  
CITY OF PROVIDENCE  
JUL 14 2014  
CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

MATTHEW M. CLARKIN, JR.  
INTERNAL AUDITOR  
25 DORRANCE STREET, ROOM #307  
PROVIDENCE, RI 02903  
Phone: (401) 421-7740 EXT. 577  
Fax: (401) 351-1056  
mclarkin@providenceri.com



## City of Providence, Rhode Island Office of the Internal Auditor

May 29, 2014

Ms. Lori Hagen  
City Clerk  
City of Providence  
25 Dorrance Street  
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Lori:

In accordance with Section 21-26 of the City's Code of Ordinances, I am writing to request that the following requested contract awards be submitted to the City Council and the Ways & Means Committee for approval.

- *Communications* – Request to piggyback the State of RI MPA #395 with Motorola Solutions of North Scituate, RI for an upgrade to the City's Public Safety 800 MHz NICE logging system in amount of \$202,372.
- *Communications* – Request to piggyback the State of RI MPA #395 with Motorola Solutions of North Scituate, RI for a service contract for maintenance and support services with Motorola for the City's Public Safety Radio System in an amount of \$350,000.
- *Communications* – Request to piggyback the State of RI MPA #395 with Motorola Solutions of North Scituate, RI for the purchase of sixty (60) portable radios for the officers currently enrolled in the Providence Police Academy for an amount of \$170,761.20.
- *Communications* – Request to piggyback the State of RI MPA #395 with Motorola Solutions of North Scituate, RI for an encumbrance for parts and repairs as needed to the Motorola Mesh and Motorola 800 Mhz trunked radio system for the City's Public Safety Radio system in an amount not to exceed \$80,000.

In accordance with Section 21-26 of the City's Code of Ordinances, I am writing to request that the following requested contract awards be submitted to the City Council and the City Council's Education Subcommittee for approval.

- *School Department* – Approval of emergency award for Communication Consultant to Advocacy Solutions & Gage Street Strategies at a fee of \$5,000 per month with a maximum cap of \$30,000 for a six month period.

Sincerely,



Matthew M. Clarkin, Jr.

Internal Auditor

Cc: Alan Sepe, Director of Operations  
Francisco Ramirez, Director of Purchasing  
Judith Petrarca, Purchasing Administrator – School Department

ANGEL TAVERAS  
Mayor

# Providence Schools

Providence Public School District  
Purchasing Office  
797 Westminster Street  
Providence, RI 02903-4045  
tel. 401.456.9264  
fax 401.456.9292

SUSAN F. LUSI, Ph.D.  
Superintendent

May 15, 2014

The Honorable Angel Taveras  
Board of Contract & Supply  
City Hall  
Providence, RI 02903

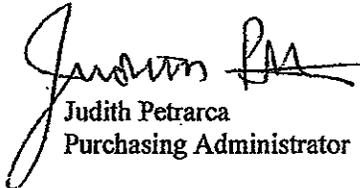
Dear Mayor Taveras:

An emergency bid was issued thru the City of Providence for a Communication Consultant for the Providence School Department. Bids were due in the Purchasing Department at City Hall on April 14, 2014. One proposal was received from Advocacy Solutions & Gage Street Strategies at a fee of \$5,000 per month. Work week would be approximately 20 hours per week. The reason for this emergency bid is that the Director of Communications is out on leave.

The Providence School Department/Administration respectfully requests the Board of Contract and Supply to award this service to Advocacy Solutions & Gage Street Strategies in an amount not to exceed \$30,000.00 for a six month period. The scope of work will include strategic communications planning, message development, crisis communications support, public and community relations and providing communications strategy support for media inquires, interviews and public/community meetings. (Proposal and bid specs are enclosed.)

Funds are available in account: Local. 

Respectfully submitted,

  
Judith Petrarca  
Purchasing Administrator

MINORITY/WOMEN PARTICIPATION \$ 0 / 0 %

---

An Equal Opportunity Employer. The Providence School Department does not discriminate on the basis of race, age, sex, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, color, disability or veteran status. Vision: The Providence Public School District will be a national leader in educating urban youth. Mission: The Providence Public School District will prepare all students to succeed in the nation's college's and universities, and in their chosen professions.

**PROVIDENCE SCHOOL DEPARTMENT – COMMUNICATION CONSULTANT**

The City of Providence is conducting an emergency bid for a Communication Consultant for the Providence School Department. The bids are due on Monday, April 14, 2014 and must be received by 3:00PM in the Purchasing Department located at:

Providence City Hall  
Purchasing Department, RM 408  
25 Dorrance Street  
Providence, RI 02903

**Scope of Work**

- Strategic communications planning – develop a plan to provide a roadmap for strategic, targeted and integrated communications activity, including proactive pitching to generate positive media coverage
- Advise and provide communications strategy support to prepare District staff for media inquiries, interviews and public/community meetings
- Message development – develop clear and consistent messages that accurately and appropriately convey various District policies
- Crisis communications support – provide crisis communications support, developing and executing plans to resolve crisis as they arise, including message development, public and community relations, and event management as needed
- Public and community relations – lead proactive media relations and crisis communications activities. Write and prepare media advisories, press releases and materials for distribution. Draft and prepare responses to media inquiries, conduct targeted pitch campaigns, and coordinate integrated media response plans
- Estimated number of hours is 15-20 hours per week

**Required Information**

- Submit a portfolio of relevant work performed
- Submit an hourly rate proposal

***Note: Travel expenditures/allowance will not be considered.***

# Providence Schools

**A public relations support proposal to assist the  
Providence School Department**

**April 2014**

**A Joint Proposal by:**

**Advocacy Solutions & Gage Street Strategies**

## **Situation Analysis**

The Providence Public School Department (PPSD) faces a wide array of communications challenges, even when fully staffed. From communicating progress about turning around low performing schools, to United Providence Academy developments, to student transportation issues, to a new teacher contract, to crisis communications situations, PPSD needs to be constantly communicating with the press, parents, and key third party stakeholders.

With Christina O'Reilly out on maternity leave, the district will be without its Director of Communications for several months. During this period, and beyond, PPSD needs professional communications support to end the 2013-2014 school year, develop a strategic communications plan for the 2014-2015 school year, update the press and public about a new teachers contract, and to help get the new school year off to a successful start in the fall.

Having worked with PPSD and the Central Falls School District in the past, the Advocacy Solutions - Gage Street Strategies team understands the unique and difficult communications challenges faced by urban school districts. Often overburdened with the challenges of implementing school reforms and the day-to-day management of multiple schools serving thousands of students, effective communications with the media and other constituencies is often a low priority item, only exacerbated by a lack of dedicated communications staff.

From our experience, we know that urban school districts have countless positive stories to tell. They just need help getting the word out. And in telling these positive stories, space is created for the media, parents, and policy makers to believe that change is indeed possible and worth fighting for.

The Advocacy Solutions - Gage Street Strategies team looks forward to working with PPSD to tell these stories and to bring the residents of Providence together to believe in a vision of reform and great public schools for all of our students.

## **Strategic Communications Planning & Message Development**

Led by Arianne Lynch, we will work hand-in-hand with Superintendent Lusi to develop a six month strategic communications plan that will address the district's most pressing communications challenges. This plan will contain key messages, sub-messages, target audiences (local and state-wide), and an editorial calendar to execute against. This plan will serve as the guiding document for PPSD communications during the 2014-2015 school year.

## **Frontline Public & Community Relations**

The Advocacy Solutions - Gage Street Strategies team will convene weekly communications meetings with Superintendent Lusi and other district leadership in order to identify pro-active stories as well as develop response materials for reactive / crisis communications stories the press is asking for PPSD comment on. Each meeting will result in a series of action items ranging from authoring blog posts, press releases, fact

sheets, op-eds, etc. to pitching the media and organizing community forums. The goal is to constantly be communicating PPSD developments in-line with the district's strategic communications plan.

#### **Frontline Public & Community Relations Support**

The Advocacy Solutions - Gage Street Strategies team will be responsible for coordinating all media requests and proactive outreach including:

- Providing strategic communications and media relations training to administrators, staff, and volunteers as necessary.
- Building and maintaining media/outreach lists.
  - National, state, and local print and broadcast media
  - Community-based publications
  - New media/blogs
  - Maintaining a stakeholder contact/distribution database
  - Identifying and developing newsworthy stories and pitches
- Drafting op-eds and letters to the editor and matching them with the appropriate authors and outlets.
- Developing customized talking points documents.
- Arranging editorial board meetings with nationally recognized outlets and prominent statewide publications.
- Monitoring media and tracking earned placements and relevant coverage of key issues.

#### **Social Media**

Blogs, Facebook, and Twitter are all important tools to help PPSD communicate key messages and updates to students, teachers, and the media.

PPSD should launch a blog dedicated to updates and positive stories about the district's schools, principals, teachers, students, staff, and parents. Blog content will include profiles of excellent work being done to improve learning in Providence schools as well as feature positive media coverage of PPSD efforts. The blog will create an excellent record of everything PPSD is doing to transform the district and help counter political attack claims of inaction and failure to communicate.

Much of the same content should also be posted on a dedicated PPSD or Superintendent Facebook page and tweeted via a dedicated Twitter account. Note that many reporters subscribe to Twitter feeds for updates and story ideas. It is therefore an excellent tool to communicate PPSD's everyday efforts to improve the district.

The Advocacy Solutions - Gage Street Strategies team will be responsible for launching and maintaining these social media resources.

#### **Crisis Communications**

Urban school districts almost inevitably face difficult crisis communications situations. With intense media focus leading to worried students and parents, it is critical for the

district to respond as soon as possible with the appropriate facts and action items to address the crisis situation. We recognize that each crisis situation is unique and will work closely with Superintendent Lusi and PPSD staff to create a customized plan for resolving each crisis situation. Through these efforts, our goals are always to mitigate damage to PPSD's reputation, to eliminate harm to any stakeholders by responding quickly, truthfully and completely, and to build increased trust and goodwill.

The Advocacy Solutions - Gage Street Strategies team will provide these crisis communications services to PPSD on an as needed basis.

### **Fee Proposal**

For the scope of strategic communications, message development, frontline public and community relations, and crisis communications services outlined above, the Advocacy Solutions - Gage Street Strategies team proposes a fee of \$5,000 per month for a 6 month term (May 1, 2014 – October 31, 2014). We anticipate spending approximately 20 hours per week executing the work detailed above.

## **Your Team**

### **Arienne Lynch / Founder & Managing Director / Gage Street Strategies**

With expertise in government relations, strategic communications, and grassroots advocacy Arienne leads the development and implementation of integrated public affairs strategies for a range of clients and causes.

Prior to founding Gage Street Strategies, Arienne served as Deputy Chief of Staff to Providence Mayor Angel Taveras, and led integrated public affairs campaigns as a senior employee at Advocacy Solutions and the Clarendon Group. She also served as the director of recruitment and clinical education for the Central Rhode Island Area Health Education Center and as grassroots advocacy coordinator for the American Cancer Society's Rhode Island office.

Arienne is a member of the board of directors at the Sophia Academy and received her B.A. in Political Science with a Minor degree in History from the University of Connecticut.

### **Chris Hunter / Managing Director / Advocacy Solutions**

Chris is an expert at designing and executing successful issue campaigns with a strong focus on stakeholder coalition building and electronic advocacy techniques.

Chris has run successful referendum, issue, and public awareness campaigns for several health care, higher education, telecommunications, and financial services clients including Wal-Mart, Genentech, Blue Cross Blue Shield of America, Walgreens, and Verizon.

A nationally recognized expert on Internet privacy and free speech issues, Chris joined Advocacy Solutions after five years as a public policy researcher at the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania.

Chris holds a B.A. from Boston College and an M.A. from the University of Pennsylvania.

### **Sarah Beron / Account Manager / Advocacy Solutions**

Sarah manages an array of integrated public affairs accounts in the education, health care, non-profit and corporate sectors. From crisis communications to media relations work, her analytical skills and eagerness to tackle projects from the group up make her a versatile team player.

Sarah currently serves as a director on the board of the Public Relations Society of America, Southeastern New England Chapter. She brings with her experience from two public relations firms and the Office of Rhode Island Secretary of State A. Ralph Mollis.

Sarah holds a B.A. in Media Communication from Roger Williams University.

## Case Study: Helping to Transform Central Falls High School

**CLIENT:** Mass Insight Education -- Central Falls School District



**ISSUE:** In the wake of being declared persistently low performing, Central Falls High School adopted a transformation model to reform the school's culture and improve student performance. Following adoption of the transformation model, the school received national media attention and generated strong public opinions after a decision to fire the entire teaching staff. Facing doubts from parents and politically motivated attacks from reform opponents, the leadership of Central Falls High School needed to better communicate the goals and progress of the transformation plan.

**CAMPAIGN:** To help Central Falls High School better communicate transformation plan elements and progress to key constituencies, Advocacy Solutions:

- Conducted media outreach to local and national media outlets to rebut misinformation that had been generating negative media cycles.
- Launched and managed the Central Falls High School Transformation website ([www.cfhsTransformation.org](http://www.cfhsTransformation.org)) to keep parents, students, teachers, and the wider community informed of progress in implementing the transformation plan.
- Advised and provided communications strategy support to prepare school department staff for media inquiries, interviews, and meetings with political stakeholders.
- Wrote the copy for, designed, and distributed an internal newsletter and recruitment brochure showcasing improvements at the high school.
- Provided government relations support regarding legislative issues impacting the high school's transformation plan and other reform efforts.

**RESULTS:** The Central Falls High School Transformation has received strong support from students, teachers, parents, community members, and key education stakeholders. Media coverage of the transformation has become far more balanced, and elected leaders have recognized the progress being made towards transformation goals.

## Case Study: Saving Rhode Island's First Charter Public School

**CLIENT:** Academy for Career Exploration (formerly known as the Textron Chamber of Commerce Providence Public Charter School)



**ACADEMY FOR  
CAREER  
EXPLORATION**

**ISSUE:** Citing poor math performance and inadequate leadership the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education recommended the closure of the Academy for Career (ACE), Rhode Island's first charter public school. With the recommendation issued at the end of the academic year, ACE faced an uphill battle pleading its case before the Board of Regents, without the ability to easily contact and engage the school's students, parents and faculty during their summer vacation. Facing panicked students and faculty members as the media continued to report the news and word of mouth spread, ACE's leadership engaged Advocacy Solutions to lead its crisis communications, proactive public relations and advocacy strategy to keep the school open.

**CAMPAIGN:** To help keep ACE's doors open and maintain its reputation and credibility, Advocacy Solutions:

- Developed and executed an integrated public affairs plan to educate community and political stakeholders about the school and support its charter renewal.
- Managed proactive and reactive media outreach to local and state media outlets to promote positive information about the school and respond to misinformation.
- Advised and provided communications and political strategy support to prepare school leadership for media inquiries, interviews and outreach to local and state decision-makers.
- Held training sessions on public policy advocacy and media/messaging for board members, teachers and faculty, as well as students, parents and school supporters.
- Created and maintained the "Friends of ACE" Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/FriendsofACE](http://www.facebook.com/FriendsofACE)) to facilitate communication with school supporters and community members over summer 2012.
- Developed supportive school collateral and strategic communications documents, including talking points and testimony, sample letters to the editor, op-eds, media advisories and press releases, as well as internal communications materials.

**RESULTS:** ACE received a groundswell of support from its faculty and staff, students and families, the media and local decision-makers. After making over 85 positive local and state media impressions, recruiting nearly 100 active Facebook supporters and engaging hundreds of community members to attend and testify at Board of Regents meetings, the Board of Regents unanimously voted to defer the Department's recommendation and grant the school a conditional renewal for two years.

## **Thank You**

The Advocacy Solutions - Gage Street Strategies team appreciates the opportunity to submit this proposal for your review. Any questions or correspondence regarding this proposal should be directed to:

Chris Hunter  
Managing Director  
Advocacy Solutions, LLC  
4 Richmond Square, Suite 300  
Providence, RI 02906-5117  
Telephone: 401-831-3700  
Email: [chunter@advocacysolutionsllc.com](mailto:chunter@advocacysolutionsllc.com)

Thank you for your consideration.