

**Request for Qualifications
Elementary, Middle and High School Expanded Learning Opportunities**

COVER SHEET

Organization Information:

Organization name: Refugee Women's Alliance

Organization address: 4008 Martin Luther King Jr. Way S., Seattle, WA 98108

Describe your legal status and, if applicable, state of incorporation (for example, Washington State non-profit corporation, Washington State partnership, sole proprietorship):

Washington State Non Profit

Application Components and Checklist (submit in this order)

- Cover Sheet
- Key People
- Previous Experience
- Tracking to Success
- Women and Minority Inclusion; Non-discrimination

Contact Information:

Contact person: Someireh Amirfaiz

(please print clearly)

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Signature: _____

Date: _____

Additional information is provided in Attachment 3.

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Part 1 – RFQ Response

Key People

Refugee Women’s Alliance (ReWA) is a non-profit, multi-ethnic organization that promotes inclusion, independence, personal leadership, and strong communities by providing refugee and immigrant women and their families with culturally and linguistically appropriate services. We achieve this by hiring and investing in the professional development of refugees and immigrants from the same countries as our clients. With 140 staff speaking 37 different languages and dialects, ReWA has uniquely qualified staff members prepared to deliver the City of Seattle’s proposed services.

The key staff delivering expanded learning opportunities are qualified bilingual, bicultural youth workers and educators who have many years of experience working with staff and administration within Seattle Public Schools (SPS). Through a partnership with the SBOC/Seattle World School, these staff members operate the 21st Century Community Learning Center and several other sites providing homework assistance, cultural exploration, literacy instruction, and math skill development. Staff members at minimum hold a Bachelor’s Degree from an accredited university, Washington State teaching certifications, or work as Instructional Assistants (IAs) within SPS during the school day. Staff are well trained in best practices for English Language Learner (ELL) students and receive professional development on an ongoing basis. At the program level, staff are trained extensively on and utilize the Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA) tool offered by the David P. Weikert Center on Youth Program Quality to measure program quality and inform planning. All key staff members track student academic progress and grade matriculation within this program.

Key staff members include:

- **Melaku Lichebo** is a Lead Coordinator of the 21st Century After School Program and has taught in SPS as an instructor for 12 years. He works as an Instructional Assistant during the school day as well as in the After School Program and speaks Amharic, Tigrinya and English. He has extensive experience helping students to track progress and achieve meeting grade-level standards on state tests, including math, reading, science, and writing.
- **Alfred Tran** is an After School Program Youth Tutor with 10 years of experience working in SPS. He works as an Instructional Assistant during the school day as well as an After School Program Youth Tutor and speaks Chinese, Vietnamese, and English with a specialization in teaching English as a Second Language (ESL). He has experience helping students to track progress through grade reports for core subjects and achieve grade matriculation.
- **Rualdo de leon Pulanco** is a Youth Program Tutor with 20 years of teaching experience. He speaks Spanish and English. He has experience helping students to track progress through grade reports for core subjects and achieve grade matriculation.

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Megan Isakson is ReWA's Youth Program Manager and will lead the project to achieve proposed outcomes and indicators. Megan holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology from the University of San Francisco and has ten years of experience working with youth and families from low-income, diverse communities through education and non-profit youth programs. She has a proven track record as a manager and coordinator of federal and locally funded youth programs, as measured by the growth of the program and academic improvement and participation of youth during her tenure. She is the contract manager for all ReWA expanded learning programs tracking achievement of key outcomes and indicators including standardized state test scores, WELPA, academic improvement, and grade matriculation.

Previous Experience

In the past two years, ReWA has served 64 elementary students, 217 middle school students, and 303 high school students. These students include over 560 refugee and immigrant youth at three program sites in Seattle. Our student population is extremely diverse. We serve elementary, middle, and high school refugee and immigrant students, primarily in South Seattle. The majority of our students are identified as Asian/Pacific Islander (60%) and African/African American (36%). Nearly 100% of the youth we serve are English Language Learners (ELL).

The 2010-2011 Washington State Report card reveals that for ELL students:

- 5th Graders: 71.9% did not meet the standard in reading, compared to 27.9% of all students
- 8th Graders: 73.8% did not meet the standard in math, compared to 38.4% of all students
- 10th Graders: 93.3% did not meet the standard in science, compared to 47.5% of all students

The ELL students and families we serve are struggling to survive in the US and living in extreme poverty. Parents often have little or no English language proficiency and struggle to find jobs. As a result, incomes are low and below 30% of median income; families are surviving on less than \$20,000 a year. This qualifies more than 95% of our students for the free and reduced price lunch program with SPS.

Through 24 years of providing culturally competent and responsive services, ReWA has extensive experience in collecting data and reporting on program outcomes, including working with outside evaluators and funders to develop effective evaluation tools. We have worked together with the City of Seattle to develop rigorous evaluation procedures for our After School Youth Program through our Human Services Department contracts. We've also worked closely with Seattle Public Schools to develop rubric for literacy and math assessments.

Specifically in the past two years, ReWA has developed and implemented quality

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programming geared to meet the needs of the “whole” child—a holistic service delivery model that aims to address the complex needs of our students. This model has proven to help achieve significant gains in both the academic and social development of our students.

The primary focus of our programs is academic based and supports student achievement through homework help, English language literacy development, and specific subject tutoring. Through rigorous academic work, goal setting, and support of bilingual/bicultural youth program staff, 100% of the students we served from 2009-2011 matriculated to the next grade level. At our two community-based sites in Seattle, 90% students improved semester grades in one or more core subject areas including math, English/language arts, and science, and 92% improved English language or literacy skills. At our 21st Century Community Learning Center program in the 2010-2011 school year, 82.8% of regular participating students (who attend the program for 30 days or more) increased their standardized test scores in reading. Similar gains were made in math, with 84.4% of regular participants increasing standardized test scores.

Consistent communication and collaboration with schools and community partners has been instrumental in aligning both academic and social supports for students and families. Over the past eight years at the SBOC/Seattle World School, ReWA family advocates and after school staff have worked in partnership with school administration to provide ongoing translation/interpretation supports for students and families as well as monthly family engagement opportunities. The “Family Engagement Action Team” of community and school partners, chaired by ReWA’s Youth Program Manager, meets monthly to discuss opportunities to support student and families. After School program staff at our community-based sites in South Seattle speak regularly to our students’ teachers, counselors, and support staff to ensure the academic needs of our students are being met.

ReWA also collaborates with other organizations to enhance the services we provide to clients, including partnerships with Vietnamese Friendship Association, Horn of Africa Services, Catholic Community Services, City of Seattle Parks and Recreation, Powerful Voices, Woodland Park Zoo, Jack Straw Productions, and Rainier Valley Food Bank out of shared motivations to serve refugee and immigrant youth and families and improve academic and socioeconomic success.

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Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

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Secondary Bilingual Orientation Center/Seattle World School

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Refugee School Impact Grant - Seattle Public School

Veronica Gallardo, Director of ELL and International Programs

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While students within ReWA's programs have a strong desire to succeed, they face a great number of barriers to performing well academically and adjusting socially. They are typically newcomer refugees who have experienced war, trauma, and displacement. Challenges and barriers include:

- **Language:** All students are Early Language Learners (ELL), many with no native language literacy or basic math skills, and the majority have limited or no previous education. This makes the process of learning a new language and new subjects very time intensive and difficult.
- **Acculturation:** Students are faced with learning a new language and a new culture at the same time. For students who have not spent much time in highly structured educational settings, the behavioral norms and expectations for US schooling and interpersonal relationships are unfamiliar and uncomfortable.
- **Mental Health Issues:** Many students are political or economic refugees who have experienced trauma, deprivation, and/or victimization before they arrived in the US. Studies estimate that refugees suffer from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) at rates 10 times higher than the age-matched general population. These issues contribute to difficulty learning, low self-esteem, displaced anger, and disciplinary issues.

These and other barriers contribute to the achievement gap between our refugee and immigrant students and their native-born peers, putting our students at a high risk of failing their classes, not meeting standard on state tests, and not graduating on time.

ReWA engages long-term with youth to provide academic support, bilingual support, and family outreach through wraparound services to help youth overcome these challenges and barriers and achieve academic success. We provide diverse case management services, from weekly contact with students and parents through a combination of home visits, phone calls, or meetings at the school to providing linkages to family support services. We also proactively engage youth in academic enrichment

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activities including taking field trips to local college and university campuses to explore post-secondary education options, as well as helping students find work experience or employment opportunities.

Tracking to Success

Within the last two years, ReWA has tracked academic outcomes and indicators through:

- Daily attendance
- Regular access to student academic progress through the SOURCE
- Quarterly and semester student grade reports
- Standardized test scores
- Teacher survey evaluations that track literacy reports and grade matriculation
- Lexile Reading Measurement
- Entry Assessment Mathematics Evaluation (EAMES)

Our organization uses this data on an ongoing basis to track, report, and continuously improve student outcomes. In 2011, through a number of measures, ReWA reported the following student outcome improvements:

- 91.6% of students improved English literacy skills
- 82.8% of students increased their reading skills
- 84.4% of students increased their math skills
- 92.4% of students made level gains in academic progress
- 100% of students matriculated to the next grade level
- 100% of students improved social skills development
- 88.9% of students completed homework to their teachers' satisfaction

Additionally, ReWA's Youth Program staff meet monthly to evaluate program quality, assessing each student's academic and social development, and generating plans at the program and individual student level. We use a variety of resources to develop these plans based on need, including the above academic reports; teacher and school counselor feedback; home visits with parents; and conferences with students. In this way, all content areas—including literacy, reading, writing, science, math, and social skills—are evaluated to inform our student academic and enrichment planning.

(Data Sample: Please see attached report.)

Woman and Minority Inclusion; Non-discrimination

ReWA will not subcontract or hire additional employees for this program.

