

BALTIMORE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Darryl L. Williams, Ed.D. ♦ Superintendent ♦ 6901 North Charles Street ♦ Towson, MD ♦ 21204

July 7, 2020

To Whom it may Concern:

Re: MBU-523-19 – RFP Suicide Prevention, Intervention & Postvention Services Vendor Performance

On January 31, 2019, Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) issued the above referenced solicitation. BCPS was the recipient of a grant to support the social emotional wellbeing of our students and staff. This solicitation addresses a specific need to support our school community's response to coordinate and implement an evidence-based suicide pre-intervention, intervention and postvention program. The amount of the grant available for this service was \$120,000.

The intent was to provide professional development to specific staff within the school community. The specifications called for the vendor to propose a train-the-trainer model with specific outcomes. The specifications further requested that the vendor provide the number of trainees a single trainer would be capable of training during a single session. While the specifications discussed the school community it was very clear that this was not the responsibility of the award bidder(s).

The solicitation and evaluation was completed and staff recommended that the Board of Education of Baltimore County award the contract for \$120,000 to three firms. The award was made on July 9, 2019. BCPS did not award a specific amount to any single firm but intended to divide the work based on need and availability. BCPS staff began contacting the three firms in late October of 2019 to discuss a schedule for professional development.

At around the same time, BCPS became aware the EnergyMDT and their named sub-contractor BSW Academy were advertising for trainers claiming a \$5,000,000 award from BCPS over a five-and-a-half-year contract. EnergyMDT was contacted by telephone by BCPS staff and removal of the misleading information was requested. EnergyMDT complied by removing the dollar value of the contract. In December 2019, BCPS identified that EnergyMDT and their sub-contractor BSW Academy were continuing to advertise the coach training on their website in an effort to mislead potential clients and a decision was made to terminate the contract.

Due to the resignation and incomplete transfer of responsibilities, BCPS did not issue a letter of termination until June 10, 2020. At no time during the effective contract term did BCPS issue a purchase order requesting services from EnergyMDT. The contract termination will be effective on July 10, 2020. On that date both EnergyMDT and BSW Academy are to have any mention of this contract removed from their websites. EnergyMDT has already complied with this requirement. BSW Academy is still using the contract on their website to encourage clients to subscribe to and pay for training to support the contract.

The misleading information presented to potential trainers was the impetus behind the termination of the contract with EnergyMDT. The contract document specifically stated that this was a two-year contract with a potential three-year extension. The extension was pending continued availability of grant funding. Additionally, at no time did BCPS require a cadre of trainers. The intent as stated above was to train specific individuals within BCPS who would then present training internally. It was clear to BCPS that BSW Academy took the opportunity of the potential contract to sell their training product on an unlimited scale. This decision was in direct contradiction with the contract and a serious mis-representation of the relationship between BCPS and EnergyMDT.

Any questions regarding this contract may be directed to me at BCPS Office of Purchasing, 6901 N. Charles Street, Building E, Towson, MD 21204.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Melanie L. Webster".

Melanie L. Webster CPPO
Purchasing Manager

Cc: File