



NOTICE TO QUALIFIED FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

The GATEWAY SCHOOL DISTRICT (GSD) is soliciting proposals for Financial Services from qualified financial institutions.

Submission deadline: 10:00 a.m. on the 8th day of May, 2024. Location for submission of proposals:

GATEWAY SCHOOL DISTRICT
Attn: Mr. Michael Zourelas, Business Manager/Board Treasurer
900 Gateway Campus Blvd.
Monroeville, PA 15146

Financial Services Request for Proposal (RFP) Instructions: Proposal will be available for download on Monday, April 22, 2024 on the GATEWAY SCHOOL DISTRICT website.

Any questions related to the proposal should be forwarded in writing to Mr. Michael Zourelas, Business Manager/Board Treasurer at mzourelas@gatewayk12.org. A comprehensive list of questions and answers will be kept on the District website at the link listed in the previous paragraph.

Project Notice:

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the GATEWAY SCHOOL DISTRICT, acting by and through its Governing Board, will receive up to, but not later than the above-stated time, sealed proposals for the award of a contract for the above referenced project.

The GATEWAY SCHOOL DISTRICT reserves the right to reject any or all proposals or to waive any irregularities or informalities in any proposal.

No proposal may be withdrawn for a period of ninety (90) days after the date set for the opening of proposals.

GATEWAY SCHOOL DISTRICT

FINANCIAL SERVICES REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

I. RFP PROCESS AND FINANCIAL SERVICES OVERVIEW

A. Background and Objectives

The GATEWAY SCHOOL DISTRICT (the “District”) is a local governmental unit created by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to provide education services to students living within its community. The School Board of the GATEWAY SCHOOL DISTRICT governs the District. The Board meets regularly each month to conduct that month’s business agenda.

The District operates its education, school nutrition, student activity, and construction programs primarily funded by the District, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the Federal government. In all, the District has operating revenues in excess of \$95 million and employs approximately 500 full time and part time individuals.

The objective of this request for proposal is to identify the financial institution (the “Institution” or the “Financial Institution”) that can offer the safest, highest quality service at the lowest cost to our organization. The District intends to maximize deposit availability and return on investments, and security, while minimizing cost and management time. The District is interested in obtaining the best mix of services to meet our specific financial needs.

An important aspect of this proposal is to obtain market rates of interest on all funds held in our accounts with limited associated risks. The District is both authorized and limited to the investment of excess funds by the Pennsylvania School Code. Also, the School Code allows the Board of School Directors to authorize the collateralization of our funds to be pooled with the collateral of other public bodies in accordance with Act 72 of 1971 and the United States Circular No. 92. The District expects that all funds in excess of the FDIC insurance level will be collateralized in accordance with Act 72, and further stipulates that the collateral consist of either full faith and credit obligations of the United States Government or fixed rate obligations of agencies or instrumentalities of the United States Government. The District’s intent is to specifically exclude both municipal securities and corporate securities from the collateral pool, even though these securities may be otherwise eligible as collateral by either Act 72 or by Circular 92. The District’s School Board Policy #609 “Investment of District Funds” is provided as Attachment D for reference. Act 10 investments are prohibited.

The District further requires that the listing of its specified pooled collateral be marked to market daily and that a report of that collateral be provided to the District monthly. Preference will be given to those institutions that have the collateral held by, and be valued by, an independent third party. The successful institution and custodial party will be required to sign separate depository and custodial agreements with the District. The intent of the District is to create and maintain a perfected collateral pledge as defined within the Financial Institutions Reform, Recovery, and Enforcement Act of 1989, as amended.

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B. Length of Agreement

The District is interested in establishing a stable relationship with the awarded vendor. To do this, the District would like to develop an agreement with an initial term of three (3) years. After the initial three (3) years, fees may be renegotiated should this be deemed necessary.

The District may terminate this agreement for any reason at any time by giving ninety (90) days written notice to the Financial Institution of its intention to terminate as of the date specified in the notice. Should the Institution terminate prior to the expiration of the agreement, all District costs to establish a new service agreement will be the responsibility of the terminating Institution. Also, the District can terminate the agreement immediately should information be received relating to the dwindling creditworthiness of the Institution or adverse changes to the portfolio collateralizing District funds held by the Institution.

C. Selection Criteria

The District will evaluate each proposal received based upon the following criteria:

- Creditworthiness – 10 points
- Online banking / automated systems – 15 points
- Cost and flexibility of services – 20 points
- Investment of funds – 5 points
- Funds deposited and collateralized in accordance with all Federal, State and Local Laws, and in accordance with the further limitations in this request as they relate to collateralization requirements – 10 points
- References from other governmental clients (specifically addressing customer service) – 10 points
- Bank branch(s) proximity to District Office (All financial institutions submitting proposals for the local deposit services must have a branch physically located within the District or provide courier service) – 15 points
- Interest rate and/or earnings credit rate paid on all time deposit accounts – 15 points

D. Terms and Conditions

It is important to note this is a request for professional services, and not a competitive bid. The District is not required to conduct its request for professional services in accordance with competitive bidding laws.

The terms and conditions of this proposal are that the District:

- Reserves the right to reject any or all proposals for any reason or no reason.
- Reserves the right to waive any irregularities or informalities and select the best proposal in the opinion of the District.
- May render the bid invalid due to unauthorized modifications of bid specification forms or terms.

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- The District will not conduct meetings prior to the submission of the proposals. The proposals received will be evaluated using the specified criteria and up to three financial institutions will be scheduled for interviews.

E. Instructions for Submission of Applications

- Submission deadline: 10:00 a.m. of the 8th day of May, 2024. Location for submission of proposals:

GATEWAY SCHOOL DISTRICT
Attn: Mr. Michael Zourelis, Business Manager/Board Treasurer
900 Gateway Campus Blvd.
Monroeville, PA 15146

A provider must submit one (1) copy of the proposal and an electronic copy on a flash drive in a sealed envelope, clearly marked "GSD Financial Services RFP." Late applications will not be evaluated.

- Proposals must be signed by an official authorized to bind the contractor to the provisions of this RFP.
- The District will not accept faxed or electronic submission of proposals.
- Provider may ask for minor program modifications before the award of the RFP. The process to request minor modification is as follows:
 - Provide a written request to modify original RFP. This document must include what modifications are being requested and how modifications continue to meet the requirements of the RFP.
 - This request should be submitted in writing to Mr. Michael Zourelis, Business Manager/Board Treasurer via email at mzourelis@gatewayk12.org.
 - Within five (5) business days of request received, District will issue a decision. The District reserves the right to request additional information. If additional information is requested, the District will issue a decision within five (5) business days of additional information being received. Responses will be posted on the District website.

F. Schedule

1. Proposals received by: May 8, 2024, at 10:00 a.m.
2. Interviews (if needed): early May 2024
3. Award announcement: no later than June 24, 2024
4. Contract review and execution: July 2024

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5. Contract start date: tentatively by the end of July 2024 (date may be adjusted by the District as needed)

G. Directions for Completion of Application

All applicants must provide applicant information using the standard forms provided:

- Attachment A – Applicant Contact Information;
- Attachment B – Proposed Fee Schedule; and
- Attachment E – Certification of Proposal Documents.

A secondary packet of information should be submitted to support the information requested in Attachment C – Additional Information to be Provided.

II. SCOPE OF FINANCIAL SERVICES

This section describes the services the District intends to use as a customer. There are questions embedded in this section which are repeated in the proposal instructions.

Our objective in requesting services is to more effectively and efficiently operate our cash management system. The District uses services when it believes there is a beneficial cost/benefit relationship. Should you determine that additional services would be beneficial, please include these additional services as well as any associated costs in your response.

The services are organized based on the following categories:

- Collection Services
- Disbursement Services
- Investment Services
- Reporting

The District has determined that it prefers to have a local financial partner to accept daily deposits and transactions. Financial institutions with no local presence (no physical branch location within district boundaries) that can provide courier services for deposits should indicate same and provide a pricing structure including those services. Vendors with a local presence should also provide a pricing structure for courier services as a source of comparison. Please provide pricing for courier service and indicate the cost / frequency of courier pickups.

Please review Attachment B to see how vendors should break down services.

A. Collection Services

Collection services are those services related to the acceleration of the availability of funds for investment or disbursement.

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Wire Transfers In:

The District uses wire transfers to receive funds from financial institutions for investment and other purposes. The District intends to consider these incoming wire transfers as available for use immediately. If necessary, adjustments will be made for any lost interest or charges resulting from a “fail” to consummate an incoming wire transaction.

ACH Deposits:

All deposits received via ACH should require no prior notification of the bank and should be available for use immediately.

Remote Deposit Services:

The District provides various educational services for which cash and checks are received for payment. A staff member prepares and deposits these funds as needed. The District utilizes remote deposit scanners to process check deposits. Please provide a proposal for check scanners to be provided to the District business office to scan checks to the bank for deposit.

Over the Counter Deposits / Courier pick up:

As noted above, the District will utilize remote deposit (if available). If necessary, a staff member may need to deliver the prepared deposits to the bank for processing or will have them available for pick-up via courier service.

The check-clearing time is vital in an effective cash management system. Uncollected funds are not available for immediate investment. Any check presented for deposit by 2:00 p.m. local time shall be available same-day and interest shall accrue concurrently. Any check presented for deposit after 2:00 p.m. local time shall be available next-day and interest shall accrue concurrently.

Please provide us with your check-clearing method and policy for checks that are drawn on other than local banks to identify the time it will take for the deposited funds to become collected and available for investment.

B. Disbursement Services

Disbursement services are those relating to the disbursement of funds from the financial institution.

Wire Transfers

Wire transfers are initiated by the District to transfer funds from our financial accounts to other financial institutions for investment and debt service purposes. The District also uses wire transfers to disburse selected withholdings through payroll to corresponding vendors and financial institutions.

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The District currently initiates wire transfers online. Pre-existing approved wire transfer templates do not require further approval after the initial template approval. New transfer templates shall require approval by two parties at the District and the institution will call the business office to verify the new template. Please detail your process for approving and verifying wire transfer requests.

If necessary, adjustments will be made for any lost interest or charges resulting from a “fail” to consummate an investment transaction.

Direct Debits

Direct debits are transacted by outside vendors for monthly federal and state withholding taxes, state retirement payments, and wage garnishments.

Automatic Clearing House (ACH) Payments

The District pays employee reimbursements and other outside vendors via ACH. Information is submitted electronically to our financial institution for processing next day for files sent before 5:00 p.m. local time.

The District utilizes ACH to process payments to any outside vendor (after submission of voided check) through our accounts payable department that will accept this form of payment. Please provide recommendations on how the District can utilize this method to reduce the number of paper checks being processed. Also include any rebates that may apply for processing payments via this method.

Direct Deposit ACH

Most employees utilize direct deposit for paychecks. Normally, payroll information is submitted to the banking institution for processing at least two days prior to the transfer date.

Institutions must be able to accept Text (.txt) files; Standard ACH format, multiple file submissions on the same pay-date, and electronic transmission uploaded to your servers.

Please provide us with an explanation of your financial institution’s capabilities and suggestions for specific implementation including delivery requirements and a realistic timetable. (See Attachment C – Additional Information to be Provided) Please also provide the steps and timeline of how a single or multiple direct deposit(s) can be withdrawn in the case of a mispayment or cancelled payment.

Sweep Account

Currently, the District uses the sweep account structure to have the total amount of daily float fully invested. Please provide a description of the financial institution’s options for fully investing funds and maximizing interest earned. In accordance with applicable laws, please provide a detailed description of your account structure including the basis for determining the amount of

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funds invested (i.e. reserve requirements, collected funds, etc.). (See Attachment C – Additional Information to be Provided)

Controlled Disbursement Account

The District does not presently have a controlled disbursement account. However, should this seem useful for your cash management system and increase our net interest earnings, the District will explore this possibility. Please include this service as a possible additional service to be considered in your response to Attachment C – Additional Information to be Provided.

Account Reconciliation Service

The District currently receives a monthly listing of cleared checks from our financial partner. We are interested in establishing electronic file uploads to automate our bank reconciliation process. Please detail your process and format for sending electronic reconciliation documents. The information transmitted should include check number, amount, and date paid. It should be in a text (.txt) file format that will be defined by the District.

Procurement Card Services

The District currently has VISA procurement cards through the eProcure program through the Pennsylvania School District Liquid Asset Fund (PSDLAF) to pay vendors for small transactions. Although we are very pleased with this program, we are interested in reviewing options (if applicable). Please provide details of your procurement card services along with a rebate schedule and fee structure for using these cards. Also provide any rebates that may apply to accounts payable transactions that can be paid through the VISA (or equivalent) payment network via a file upload to the bank.

C. Investment Services

The effective and efficient management of cash on hand accelerates receipts of funds, delays disbursement of funds, and minimizes idle cash balances. A truly exceptional system will invest cash on hand at market rates with very little or no risk associated with the program.

Since financial institutions have many differing investment products, please provide us with your detailed suggestions relating to the investment vehicle you will provide us. These suggestions must include the following information: (See Attachment C – Additional Information to be Provided)

- Provide the method used to fully collateralize our account balance in excess of FDIC. Should a repurchase agreement be considered, please explain the type of investment, which will be used in this buy/sell agreement. A separate repurchase agreement will be required for these types of transactions. Also, describe the safekeeping arrangement for the investments held relating to the repurchase agreement. Preference will be given to banks that require the collateral to be held and valued by third parties.

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- Explain the calculation of the daily interest rate including the specific interest index and source of information (i.e. Wall Street Journal).
- Explain the calculation of interest earned on a monthly basis (i.e. 360-365 day basis, average daily balance, average monthly interest rate, calculated daily based on daily rate and daily balance).
- Provide description of the amount of cash balance on which the interest calculation is based such as collected funds and reserve amounts.
- Any additional information you deem necessary for the District to fully understand your suggested investment vehicle.

The District, by policy, is extremely conservative and adverse to risk. However, a well-administered cash management system can provide market rates of return without exposure to risks.

D. Reporting

The Financial Institution will, on a monthly basis, provide the District with a detailed statement of activity listing each transaction and ending daily bank balance in hard copy and online format for all accounts held. Also, a listing of the cleared checks in numerical order must be provided. This listing should include the check number, check clearing amount, and the date the check was cleared. This report must include a total of cleared checks for the month. Images of the cancelled checks must be made available to the District online or by request for up to 18 months of the cleared date. The District reports should be available by the third (3rd) business day of the following month. Please include in your proposal a description of the bank statement format.

The District requires daily access to bank transactions via the internet. This access must allow for the reporting of daily bank activity. Available information must include reporting on bank activity starting with the prior day activity and going back at least 18 months. Please include what browser(s) are compatible with the online platform.

The District expects that all funds in excess of the FDIC insurance level will be collateralized in accordance with Act 72, and further limited to only federal securities. The District REQUIRES that the listing of pooled collateral is marked to market daily, preferably by an independent third party, and that a report of this collateral is provided to the District monthly.

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III. BANK CREDIT EVALUATION

Although properly structured collateral offers the District very good insurance against financial institution credit problems, the District would be remiss in not evaluating the prospective bank's creditworthiness.

The District will utilize Standard and Poor's ratings to evaluate your financial institution. Should your institution be rated unfavorably by this rating system, the District will notify you of this fact and allow you to respond accordingly. Additionally, please include your audited financial statements for our review. (See Attachment C – Additional Information to be Provided)

IV. BANKING SERVICE FEES

Banking services can be paid for by one of two methods. The District requests that your proposal response include both the compensating balance and the direct charge methods.

Please provide the itemized cost and the annual costs for each service listed on Attachment B – Proposed Fee Schedule. Please provide us with your compensated balance calculations and your policies relating to the evaluation of this established balance. Detail separately the cost and description for any item not specifically listed on Attachment B.

V. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Any Institution that knows of any District official having a material direct or indirect financial interest in such proposer's Institution shall be required to submit a written statement, along with the Form of Proposal, detailing such interest. Failure to disclose such a known financial interest shall result in the Institution's disqualification from further consideration of award of this contract.

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**ATTACHMENT A
APPLICANT CONTACT INFORMATION**

NAME OF BANK: _____

CONTACT PERSON: _____

STREET ADDRESS: _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP: _____

TELEPHONE NUMBER: _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

WEBSITE ADDRESS: _____

FAX NUMBER: _____

**ALL PROPOSALS MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE GATEWAY SCHOOL DISTRICT BY 10:00 A.M. ON
THE 8TH DAY OF MAY, 2024. Location for submission of proposals:**

GATEWAY SCHOOL DISTRICT
Attn: Mr. Michael Zourelis, Business Manager/Board Treasurer
9000 Gateway Campus Blvd.
Monroeville, PA 15146

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**ATTACHMENT B
PROPOSED FEE SCHEDULE**

(For historical units – July 2022 through June 2023, please refer to the supplementary chart – Summary of Analysis Statements)

	Annual Units	Unit Cost	Annual Cost		Annual Units	Unit Cost	Annual Cost
Demand deposit services				Miscellaneous branch services (continued)			
Interest bearing account fee	57			Currency furnished (\$10 units <50k)	449		
Account maintenance	24			Cash verification OTC-10.00 units	113		
Account balance fee	11,476			Coin furnished (rolls)	48		
Regular deposit ticket	410			Account reconciliation services			
Deposit items-ON US (N)	405			Partial reconciliation monthly services	12		
Deposited items - transit	440			Partial reconciliation item	2,552		
Paid items	3,835			Image maintenance	12		
Print image statement-maintenance	24			ARP image items	2,552		
Print image statement-per check	531			Image output CD	12		
Returns	5			Online per stop individual entry	4		
Reclears	5			ACH services			
Stop payment	1			ACH monthly service fee	24		
Dual statement delivery	36			ACH file processed	71		
Remote capture services				ACH debit/credit originated	14,362		
Capture tickets	93			Addenda originated/received	138		
Check images	2,860			Debits received	430		
Monthly fee	12			Credits received	241		
Balance related fees				ACH return item	10		
Overdraft handling	7			ACH return NOC reporting	11		
Cash logistics services				ACH NOC item	17		
Currency deposited / \$100	205			Funds transfer services			
CLS deposit adjustment	1			Book transfer	71		
Cash deposit transaction	493			Domestic wire transfer	56		
CLS mixed deposit surcharge	283			Online template storage	19		
CLS check deposit surcharge	92			Incoming wire transfer	2		
Miscellaneous branch services				Book transfer received	71		
Over the counter deposits	36			Wire transfer repair	2		

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**ATTACHMENT B
PROPOSED FEE SCHEDULE (Continued)**

(For historical units – July 2022 through June 2023, please refer to the supplementary chart – Summary of Analysis Statements)

	Annual Units	Unit Cost	Annual Cost		Annual Units	Unit Cost	Annual Cost
Information services				Investment services			
Previous day account	36			MMDA sweep service	84		
Online template storage	4			Safety deposit box			
Online information reporting monthly	12			Safety deposit box monthly fee			
Online previous day transaction 2 year	6,988			Other			
Online ACH special report	32			Deposit bags			
Online module fees	60			Check stock			
				Positive pay	12		

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**ATTACHMENT C
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION TO BE PROVIDED**

1. Please indicate any deviations from the conditions relating to banking services contained in Section II – Scope of Financial Services.
2. Provide the check clearing method and policy to identify the time deposited items become available for (a) investment and (b) disbursement.
3. Provide an explanation of your financial institution’s capabilities relating to transmitting direct deposit data along with suggestions for specific implementation including delivery requirements and realistic timetable.
4. Currently the District preauthorizes all direct deposit accounts before setting up direct deposit accounts. The District would like direction on whether the financial services partner recommends the continuation of this process and the fees related to this process.
5. Describe the structure of the sweep account, including the basis for determining the amount of funds invested and the method of properly collateralizing funds. Should repurchase agreements be utilized, describe the specific transaction and the recording of transaction.
6. Describe the delivery system for receiving reconciliation services and the associated fees.
7. Describe the financial institution’s electronic reporting capabilities to include: balance and transaction inquiry, transaction initiation (both intra-bank and ach and fed wire system) and stop payment initiation. Include time of day information is made available and deadlines for transfers. Include list price for various services discussed.
8. Provide a detailed description of the investment vehicle utilized for both the collateralization and investment services. This must include the information requested elsewhere in this proposal.

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9. Credit criteria:

Please include copies of your last two (2) years audited financial statements. The successful financial institution is required to provide the District with subsequent annual audit reports as they become available.

Each financial institution will submit with its proposal the following statistics based on information contained in the FFIEC Uniform Bank Performance Reports, or in similar reports for fiscal years July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025, 2025-2026, and 2026-2027 (if available) and based upon Federal Reserve Bank definitions:

- a. Primary capital to total assets
- b. Equity growth to asset growth.
- c. Loan loss reserve to total loans
- d. Total relationships or accounts with deposits in amounts over \$1,000,000

The District will compare the ratios of submitting financial institutions vs. the average of their peers.

Each financial institution will disclose whether it has ever been under warning, investigation, or notice of management supervision of the resolution trust corporation, FDIC, Federal Savings & Loan Insurance Corporation, Federal Home Loan Bank board, or other similar current or former Federal or State regulatory agencies. If awarded, the financial institution must provide immediate notification if such warning, investigation, or notice is received in the future.

Each bidder will disclose whether it was acquired, did acquire or will be acquired or acquiring another financial institution (if so, specify the institution, date of acquisition, and amount of assets acquired).

Include the names, addresses and phone numbers of at least five current business clients, preferably School Districts and other governmental units as references.

10. Please provide a service fees summary

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| (A) Check images provided online or as requested? | Yes/No |
| (B) Permit redeposit of NSF checks? | Yes/No |
| (C) Assess FDIC insurance cost? | Yes/No |
| (D) Assess 10% reserve requirement? | Yes/No |
| (E) Provide all check stock & three part deposit tickets free of cost? | Yes/No |
| (F) Provide night deposit bags and facilities free of cost? | Yes/No |
| (G) Safety deposit box services? | Yes/No |
| (H) Positive Pay services | Yes/No |

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11. Using the service fees summary, prepare the calculation of the compensating balance. Also, provide your policies relating to the evaluation of this established balance.
12. Explain the calculation of the earnings credit rate, and provide monthly earnings credit rate history for September 1, 2022 through October 1, 2023, and basis of rate. Please list the index by which the earnings credit rate will be benchmarked. (Example: federal funds rate plus 50 basis points, 90 day treasury rate plus 50 basis points)
13. Provide monthly history of interest rates applied to checking account balances for the period September 1, 2022 through October 1, 2023. If your financial institution uses sweep investment funds, provide monthly averages for the same period and indicate all fees assessed for investment sweep.
14. Describe your customer service philosophy, standards, and structure and how they will be provided to the District. Include the contact information for the dedicated customer service representative(s) for the District.
15. Describe any incentives offered by your financial institution to District employees for direct deposit pay, as well as any other services and / or benefits offered to the District under this proposal.

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ATTACHMENT E - CERTIFICATION OF PROPOSAL DOCUMENTS

The provider certifies by signing this document that they:

1. Have carefully read and fully understand the information in the RFP.
2. Have the capability to successfully undertake the scope of work herein and complete the responsibilities and obligations of the proposal being submitted.
3. Represent that the information contained in the proposal is true and correct.
4. Did not in any way collude, conspire or agree, directly or indirectly, with any person, firm, corporation, review committee member, school board member, GSD employee or other proposer in regard to the amount, terms or conditions of this proposal.
5. Acknowledge that the GSD has the right to make any inquiry it deems appropriate to substantiate or supplement information supplied by the proposer.

Company Name _____

Signature _____

Printed Name _____

Title _____

Date _____