

## Attachment C - Contractor's Proposal

### **PROPOSAL FOR SERVICES** *Request for Proposals No. 2025-31* *Special Education Mediation System*

#### **C.3. Letter of Submittal**

Dear Ms. Moore,

This proposal is submitted by Sound Options Cadre, LLC, the successor organization to Greg Abell's Sound Options Mediation and Training Group (SOMTG). As you know, SOMTG and its cadre of mediators and facilitators have provided mediation and facilitation services to the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) since 1992. That contract will terminate in August of 2025 as a result of Greg Abell's untimely death in 2024, and his daughter Rebecca Larsen's recent decision not to renew the existing contract.

Sound Options Cadre, LLC was established by the mediators and facilitators of SOMTG, as well as SOMTG's long-standing case manager Mindy Hyde, in order to offer OSPI the opportunity to provide a seamless continuation of the very services that Washington State school districts, families, and students have relied upon for more than three decades.


Because Sound Options Cadre, LLC is the successor organization to SOMTG, its case manager, members, and mediators are already well known to and respected by OSPI's relevant constituents, including but not limited to school district personnel, families, and parent advocates. Moreover, we are intimately familiar with the philosophy and guiding principles under which SOMTG operated successfully in partnership with OSPI for so many years: **We believe that the relationships between families and schools are critically important.** As such, our facilitative approach has and will continue to emphasize collaboration between participants, with the goal of keeping families and districts working together even through enduring conflicts.

This was a founding principle of SOMTG – and the continuation of Greg Abell's legacy is a founding principle of Sound Options Cadre, LLC.

Point of Contact for Proposal:

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Very truly yours,

  
Sasha S. Philip

**Attachments:**

1. Certifications and Assurances
2. Qualification Affirmations
3. Contract Intake Form
4. Resumes:
  - a. Mindy Hyde, Case Manager, Sound Options Cadre Managing Member
  - b. Ankur Shah Delight, Mediator & Facilitator, Sound Options Cadre Managing Member
  - c. Bob Murphy, Mediator & Facilitator
  - d. Dee Knapp, Mediator & Facilitator
  - e. Felicia Staub, Mediator & Facilitator
  - f. John Rossi, Mediator & Facilitator
  - g. Julie Schaffer, Mediator & Facilitator
  - h. Kristine Sogn, Mediator & Facilitator, Sound Options Cadre Managing Member
  - i. Patricia Eastwood, Mediator & Facilitator
  - j. Paula Grow, Mediator & Facilitator
  - k. Rose Ann Featherston, Mediator & Facilitator
  - l. Sasha S. Philip, Mediator & Facilitator, Sound Options Cadre Managing Member
  - m. Tamia Pervez, Mediator & Facilitator
  - n. Tamir Hassan, Mediator & Facilitator

**PROPOSAL FOR SERVICES**  
*Request for Proposals No. 2025-31*  
*Special Education Mediation System*

**C.4. Technical Proposal**

**C.4.i. Project Approach/Methodology** – *Include a complete description of the Consultant's proposed approach and methodology for the project. This section should convey Consultant's understanding of the proposed project.*

Consultant proposes to administer a statewide system of special education mediation, to comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). In addition, Consultant proposes to manage the statewide Individualized Education Program (IEP) Meeting Facilitation Project.

The intent of this statewide special education mediation and facilitations system is to offer, at no cost to parents and school districts, a process to resolve disagreements and strengthen relationships with respect to special education services for students with disabilities.

Because Consultant Sound Options Cadre is the successor organization to Greg Abell's Sound Options Mediation and Training Group (SOMTG), its case manager, members, and mediators are already well known to and respected by OSPI's relevant constituents, including but not limited to school district personnel, families, and parent advocates.

Moreover, we are intimately familiar with the philosophy and guiding principles under which SOMTG operated successfully for so many years: **We believe that the relationships between families and schools are critically important.** As such, our facilitative approach has and will continue to emphasize collaboration between participants, with the goal of keeping families and districts working together even through enduring conflicts.

*Special Education Mediation*

Working collaboratively to define "Free and Appropriate Public Education" (FAPE) and to develop Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) can be challenging. Disagreements occur while negotiating the educational needs of a student and can lead to gridlock amongst the IEP team. Mediation offers a context in which parties can both repair their relationships and identify innovative solutions to these disagreements.

During a mediation, the Mediator will:

- Ensure that all participants can share their view of the situation,

- Make it easy for those sharing to feel their perspective has been heard and integrated into the discussion,
- Help each party understand what is most important to the other side,
- Facilitate a deeper shared understanding of the core issues contributing to the dispute, and
- Assist the participants in developing their own solutions in the best interests of the students involved

Mediation often leads to durable solutions precisely because the mediator is not evaluating any of the participants nor coming up with the solutions. Rather, the mediator fosters a shared understanding of the problem, leading the parties to realize “we are on the same team”. This insight allows them to use their shared expertise to develop solutions which have a high chance of standing the test of time.

### *IEP Facilitation*

The challenges faced by IEP teams require collective engagement and new shared learning. They require deep, adaptive work in both an individual and group context. When a group realizes their interpersonal dynamics are slowing down their work, a facilitator can help to support the team’s collaboration. This allows the team to determine FAPE for an individual student.

During an IEP team meeting, the Facilitator will:

- Hold a space for shared learning,
- Model productive listening and clear communication,
- Slow down contentious discussions to expose the underlying heart of the matter,
- Support everyone to do their best thinking,
- Highlight effective and successful techniques.

### *Recent Program Updates*

Of note, when the Washington State Special Education Mediation initiative was implemented in 1994, the program adopted a basic model of interest-based mediation practiced at the time in multiple contexts. This decision was consistent with program objectives focused on:

- providing a means of conflict engagement that results in mutually satisfactory, durable agreements about the issues in dispute, and
- increasing the capacity of individuals and systems to engage conflict at the earliest level, thus reducing the cost of conflict and enhancing participants ability to work together collaboratively.

By 2019, SOMTG observed that this model of mediation was not necessarily appropriate for all cases. For example, SOMTG found that:

- The existing model was not necessarily appropriate for some culturally and linguistically diverse families, requiring a type of engagement not always compatible with their cultural context.
- The existing model required significant face-to-face work by the participants. The level of hostility present in some cases occasionally resulted in parties who were unwilling to be in the same room for mediation.

For this reason, SOMTG, in collaboration with OSPI, expanded the models of mediation offered in order to appropriately meet the increasingly complex and diverse needs of participants. The following is a description of the models that are currently being implemented, and that Sound Options Cadre will continue to implement.

## **1. Interest-Based Approach**

This represents the model of mediation that the program adopted in 1994, and which is most familiar to many of the mediators on our roster. While individual mediators will implement variation on this model, the basic process is as follows:

- Mediator's Opening Statement
- Parties' Opening Statements – Minimally includes a district representative and a family member. May include other participants as determined by mediator and participants.
- Summary of Opening Statements and Agenda Setting
- Initial Exploration of Agenda
- Caucus – While in many cases this is an option, we encourage the mediators to provide one opportunity to meet privately with participants.
- Summary of Interests and development of options
- Drafting of Mediation Agreement

This model has proven appropriate and effective in the vast majority of cases. It has resulted in settlement in over 85% of the cases, typically necessitating only a single session.

Limitations of this model include:

- It requires key participants to practice self-advocacy and to represent themselves as primary parties to the dispute. While this is consistent with the core objectives of this program, it does not acknowledge the reality that the role of self-advocate is not a role that all have the capacity to take on. For some, their cultural orientation impacts their willingness and capacity for participation in this way. For others, a perceived imbalance of power inhibits their confidence in advocating their perspective and interests.

- We are experiencing a number of cases where the level of hostility between the parties leads them to request a model of mediation that does not require them to engage in face-to-face negotiations. In addition, some attorneys are advising their clients to request a “shuttle” model of mediation. This model is one that facilitates the attorney’s ability to have greater control over what is communicated and how it is communicated. It is a model that some attorneys believe provides them the opportunity to better serve their clients.

## **2. Pre Mediation / Conflict Coaching Model**

This model was introduced to us by members of our roster of mediators who mediate for King County and the City of Seattle. The model was developed and piloted by the King County ADR program and was initially designed for employment/workplace disputes. The primary ways in which this model differs from the model described above include:

- The mediator meets in caucus with the participants prior to meeting jointly. In this context, the mediator hears the content of what would be shared in a typical Opening Statement. The mediator then “uses the time to build rapport, work with the conflict narrative, and coach the parties toward a new and more productive conversation.”
- This most typically involves separate 1.0 to 1.5-hour pre-mediations coaching session with the district team and parent team in the morning followed by joint session in the afternoon.
- Joint session begins with mediator summarizing, as agreed to by the parties, the private sessions and suggesting the agenda for proceeding.
- In the King County implementation of this model the mediator connects with the parties two-weeks post mediation to assess the status of the parties in relationship to the conflict and to each other.

A distinction in this model is that it challenges the value of the clients retelling their stories in joint session. This is based on the following beliefs:

- Repeating our story again and again cements it in our minds,
- the story become infused with meaning,
- telling the story re-traumatizes the teller, and
- “venting” in open statements deepens the divide between people.

The values in this model include:

- Providing an opportunity to coach those who may be resistant to mediation and the context of meeting face-to-face with parties to the conflict.

- Parties entering joint session having worked with the mediator and are potentially more ready to enter into joint exploration and problem solving. Time spent in joint session is potentially more focused on moving forward.
- It provides an opportunity for the mediator to do pre-work with participants that does not fall within the scope of intake and case development.

### **3. Shuttle Mediation**

In this model, the participants are in separate meeting rooms and the mediator is the primary conduit of communication, shuttling back and forth between the parties. We have offered this model in a very limited number of cases when it is the only way we can get parties to “the table”. It is also the model preferred by some of the attorneys participating in mediation.

Our concern with this model is that it does not address the primary objectives for this resource that have been in place since 1994. A shuttle model focuses on settlement and provides little opportunity to access the transformative potential of mediation. We are also concerned that if we offer this model, some educators and families who are highly conflict averse will select this option so as to avoid the challenge of face-to-face engagement.

The value is that it brings people into the process that otherwise might not do so. From our experience to date, this has resulted in settlement and has mitigated further escalation of the conflict.

### **4. Multiple Sessions**

In some very complex and contentious case, we see the potential for multiple sessions employing multiple models. For example, we might use the Pre-Mediation / Conflict Coaching Model in the first session to address significant relational issues compromising the party’s capacity to effectively collaborate. This could be followed by a second session using an Interest-Based Approach to focus on the programmatic needs of the student.

As SOMTG discussed the expansion of its approaches to Mediation, it also considered the potential ramifications on the role of the facilitator in supporting the IEP team. The following summarizes our current implementation in this context.

- We generally apply a model of IEP Facilitation in which the facilitator avoids taking a directive approach to the meeting but instead, works with LEA personnel who “run the meeting” with the facilitator supporting effective engagement. This model was designed to address input from educators and parents as to the preferred support from a facilitator. In some cases, in which the IEP team wants/needs the facilitator to take a more directive

hands-on approach, our intake process assesses that particular desire, in order to better address the needs and expectations of the IEP Team.

- In a very small number of cases there may be value in offering limited coaching to parents and educators to prepare them to participate in a highly contentious IEP meeting.

**C.4.ii. Work Plan** – *Include all project requirements and the proposed tasks, services, activities, etc., necessary to accomplish the scope of the project defined in this RFP. This section of the Technical Proposal must contain sufficient detail to convey to members of the evaluation team the Consultant's knowledge of the subjects and skills necessary to successfully complete the project. Include any required involvement of OSPI staff. The Consultant may also present any creative approaches that might be appropriate and may provide any pertinent supporting documentation.*

### ***1 - Outreach***

OSPI offers Special Education Mediation and Facilitation to parents/guardians and educational service districts across the state. The more parents/guardians and districts know about Special Education Facilitation and Mediation, the more likely they are to benefit from the services offered.

As such, outreach to Education Service Districts and family advocacy groups is an important step in the continued success of the program. This outreach is primarily done by the Program Manager and can take the following forms:

- Introductory emails to target organizations
- Sending educational resources (digital and printed) to target organizations
- Offering virtual talks and workshops to target organizations
- Compiling and sending aggregate feedback and results to target organizations

### ***2 - Mediation Case Procedures***

The Case Manager will work with both interested families and school districts in Washington State to explain how to access Special Education Mediation and IEP Meeting Facilitation. Either the parent/guardian or the school district can request these services. Entering into Mediation or having a facilitator at an IEP meeting is voluntary and must be agreed upon by both the family and the school district.

The Case Manager will help parties understand the parameters of the process and set up. Participation in mediation and/or facilitation, and deciding on the date, time, participants, location, are all voluntary and are not dictated by Sound Options Cadre, but agreed upon by the primary parties (parent/guardian/Special Education Administrator) prior to confirmation of the meeting. During intake for a mediation request, the Case Manager will discuss with the parties the issues in dispute, who should participate in the mediation, and the location for mediation. Participants will be asked to propose dates and must be agreed upon by both parties before confirming. All parameters must be agreed upon by both parties; Sound Options Cadre does not dictate anything other than



mediation must be a full day (business day) commitment. If mediation is taking place over Zoom, it can be a six-hour commitment or split into two days back to back.

## ***2.1 - Case Intake***

The Case Manager will:

- Keep record of conversations with parties in case notes and the time spent (ex. 3 hours); record in Excel Spreadsheet and Mediation Database
- Assign a case number, and log the case number on the intake sheet, in the Excel spreadsheet and in the Mediation Database. Case numbers read as follows: Mediation Case # 200734. This number means the case was logged in 2020, in July and it was the 34<sup>th</sup> case requested that calendar year. Facilitation case numbers work the same with an F at the end of the number, *e.g.* 200735F
- Email intake letters to primary parties acknowledging the receipt of this request
- Set up the mediation by discussing and verbally confirming all parameters (location, date, participants, issues etc.) with primary parties
- Assign Mediator(s): Mediators are typically assigned by geographic location and availability on a rotating basis. Mediators who will be doing a Zoom session are chosen based on availability. If parties decide they want to choose a mediator, resumes of three available mediators are sent out and each participant has the opportunity to strike one.
- Mail/email letters
  - Intake letters: mail/email to family/guardian and Director of Special Education for the school district upon initial intake with brochure explaining mediation in more detail.
  - Confirmation letters: Once the mediation is set up, mail/email confirmation letters to the family and district, and a packet to the mediator/facilitator.
  - “Unable to Reach” letter: If a party does not respond to a request after approximately two weeks, send a “unable to reach” letter with a specific date for them to respond by (usually 10-14 days).
  - “Closed Case” Letters: When a party declines mediation or parties are unable to schedule a mediation, “closed case” letters are mailed/emailed to the primary parties. Record the date the case is closed in the mediation database. Save a copy of both letters for our files.

## ***2.2 - Set Up and Debrief***

- Set Up: Discuss issues with mediator/facilitator/s prior to mediation/facilitation, including potential issues for discussion, age of student, special needs, etc.
- Debrief: After the mediation, debrief with mediator/facilitator/s about the outcome, experience, and technicalities of the mediation/facilitation

### ***2.3 - Additional Protocols for On-line Mediations***

Many mediations now happen on-line. To ensure an efficient process, minimize distractions, and address potential equity issues, intake has additional responsibilities when organizing an on-line mediation.

#### ***2.3.1 - On-line Intake Protocol***

- Assess party's willingness and ability to participate in mediation using an on-line platform (e.g. Zoom)
- Inquire as to participants Internet connection and reliability; device to be used (PC, laptop, tablet, smart phone, landline phone), Discuss potential challenges with Chromebooks and Chrome OS
- Determine willingness to participate with both video and audio access. Reach agreement with parties as to level of access. (In alignment with our commitment to self-determination, parties will agree to level of participation on Zoom, (video and audio, audio only)
- Identify and address issues or distractions that may inhibit participation
- Clarify confidentiality - who may listen, no recording, etc.
- Determine the schedule that participants can commit to during the day. Single session? Multiple sessions?
- Obtain names and positions for all participants in the meeting with their emails (for DocuSign Agreement to Mediate).

#### ***2.3.2 - On-line Scheduling, mediator hand-off, and paperwork***

- Send modified confirmation letter to parties and mediator
- Provide email and phone contact information for all participants to the mediator only
- Send, in advance of mediation, Agreement to Mediate via DocuSign with populated names listed.
- Send signed Agreement to Mediate to mediator after all signatures are obtained
- Optional, based on need: Practice Zoom as part of supporting primary parties prior to mediation
- Confirm which SOC staff will be available the day of mediation to provide support

#### ***2.3.3 - On-line case completion and closure***

- Facilitate the signing of the PDF formatted Mediation Agreement with DocuSign, unless mediator wants to use their own DocuSign account (SOC staff)
- Email Survey Monkey link to all participants after the meeting (if done over Zoom)
- Get mediator evaluation and expense form from mediator

- Have the mediator send paperwork electronically to the office (notes, expense sheet, mediator evaluation)

#### ***2.3.4 - Mediator Zoom Checklists***

Due to the nature of on-line meetings and the increased privacy and security concerns, Mediators too have additional responsibilities during on-line Mediations.

##### ***2.3.4.1 - Pre-mediation Preparation***

- Configure the “Chat” feature to enable chat messaging from parties to mediator only
- Disable recording feature for all parties
- Set-up break-out rooms in advance of mediation (or within the mediation session)
- Enable waiting room feature
- Password protect each meeting-convey password expectations to participants
- Disable feature to annotate another’s screen when screen sharing
- Set constraints on file-sharing option
- Use screen share or white board for the agenda and mediation agreement
- Understand how to remove participants and place limits on their participation
- Refresh how to take breaks with a countdown timer to return (put people back in the waiting room?)
- Remove option for others to rename themselves

##### ***2.3.4.2 - During the Mediation Session***

Wait until all participants are in the waiting room and then let everyone in at the same time

- Lock the meeting after it has started
- Privacy, who is participating/listening, multi-tasking, breaks, tech issues, etc. This should be addressed during Mediator’s opening statement.
- Clarify process for dealing with any emergencies that might occur during the mediation
- Verbally review the Agreement to Mediate document that has been signed by all
- Use screen share to share mediation agreement (disable parties’ ability to annotate)
- Put parties in waiting room while finishing the document and sending to SOC to send to parties for signature
- Use DocuSign

### ***3 - Facilitated IEP Case Procedures***

The Case Manager will work with both families and school districts in Washington State to explain how to access Special Education Mediation and IEP Meeting Facilitation. Either the

parent/guardian or the school district can request these services. Having a facilitator at an IEP meeting is voluntary and must be agreed upon by both the family and the school district. The Case Manager will help parties understand the parameters and set up of the process. Participation in facilitation is voluntary. The logistics (date, time, participants, location) are determined by the IEP Team which includes parents/guardians, and are not dictated by Sound Options Cadre. Once primary parties have communicated agreement on the logistics, the meeting will be confirmed. During intake for a Facilitated IEP meeting request, the Case Manager will discuss with the parties the objectives for the IEP meeting. And, will help primary parties determine what they need from the facilitator. Do they want a “guide by the side” or do they need a more directive approach?

### ***3.1 - Case Intake***

The Case Manager will:

- Keep record of conversations with parties in case notes and the time spent (ex. 3 hours); record in Excel Spreadsheet and FAC IEP Database.
- Assign a case number and log on intake sheet, in Excel spreadsheet and in the Mediation Database. Case numbers read as follows: FAC Case # 250723F. This number means the case was logged in 2025, in July and it was the 23rd case requested that calendar year.
- Email/mail intake letters to primary parties acknowledging the receipt of this request; See attached sample letter.
- Set up the facilitation by discussing and verbally confirming all the parameters (location, date, participants, issues etc.) with primary parties.
- Assign Facilitator: Facilitators are typically assigned by geographic location and availability on a rotating basis. Facilitators who will be doing a Zoom session are chosen based on availability. District will host the Zoom meeting
- Email/Mail letters
  - Intake letters: email/mail to family/guardian and Director of Special Education for the school district upon initial intake with brochure explaining FAC IEP meetings in more detail.
  - Confirmation letters: Once the Facilitation is set up, mail/email a confirmation letter to the Facilitator along with a Facilitator packet. See attached sample letter.
  - “Unable to Reach” letter: If a party does not respond to a request after approximately two weeks, send a “unable to reach” letter with a specific date for them to respond by (usually 10-14 days).
- Refer to FAC IEP Request Intake Questions below:
  - What are the IEP Team objectives/agenda (discuss with parent and district)?
  - Reason for requesting a facilitator: Is this a traditional IEP mtg., or is it to resolve an impasse from a previous meeting? If so, what is/are the issues?

- What is the history with this particular IEP/engagement; how many other times have you met? Where is the team at in the process? What is needed to move forward? Is there anything specific to this situation of which to be aware?
- IEP Team leader and members – Will the District lead this meeting or SOC Facilitator(s)? What is the team’s expectation of the facilitator?
- Expectation of Facilitator; do you need him/her to be more directive or a “guide by the side”?
- What will this neutral person provide that the team doesn’t? What will that look like?

### ***3.2 - Set Up and Debrief***

- Set Up: Discuss neutral issues with facilitator prior to IEP meeting; this includes potential issues for discussion, age of student, special needs etc.
- Debrief: After the facilitation, debrief with the facilitator about the outcome, experience, and technicalities of the facilitation.

### ***3.3 - Additional Protocols for On-line Facilitated IEP Meetings***

Many facilitations now happen on-line. To ensure an efficient process, minimize distractions, and address potential equity issues, intake has additional responsibilities when organizing an on-line facilitation.

#### ***3.3.1 - Intake***

- Assess party’s willingness and ability to participate in a facilitated IEP meeting using an on-line platform (e.g. Zoom)
- Send out NEXT STEPS email to the Special Education Director and parent/guardian. This outlines what they need to do together to prepare for the meeting.
- Inquire as to participants Internet connection and reliability
- Device to be used (PC, laptop, tablet, smart phone, landline phone)
- Discuss potential challenges with Chromebooks and Chrome OS
- Willingness to participate with both video and audio access. Reach agreement with parties as to level of access. In alignment with our commitment to self-determination, parties will agree to level of participation on Zoom (video and audio, audio only)
- Identify and address issues or distractions that may inhibit participation.
- Identify who will be leading the meeting (facilitator or IEP Case manager)
- Clarify parameters of confidentiality
- Clarify how documents will be shared over Zoom or other virtual platform
- Clarify how chat features will be used in the meeting
- Clarify how parties will request breaks and communicate directly with the facilitator
- Determine schedule that participants can commit to during the day

- Obtain email and phone contact information for District representative and IEP Case manager, as well as for family
- Obtain first/last names and roles/organization for all participants in the meeting with their emails (for DocuSign Agreement to Facilitate)

### ***3.3.2 - Scheduling, facilitator hand-off, and paperwork***

- Send a confirmation letter to the facilitator
- Include phone contact information on the confirmation letter, for any tech difficulties during the meeting
- Send, in advance of meeting, Agreement to Facilitate via DocuSign
- Send signed Agreement to Facilitate to facilitator after all signatures are obtained
- Optional, based on need: Practice Zoom as part of “reminder” call
- Confirm which case manager will be available the day of to provide support

### ***3.3.3 - Case completion and closure***

- Email Survey Monkey link to participants after mediation (if done over Zoom)
- Obtain facilitator evaluation and expense form from facilitator
- Have mediator send any hard copy paperwork to the office (notes, expense sheet, facilitator evaluation, any surveys returned)

## ***4 - Record Retention***

- Keep files of mediations and IEP facilitation confirmation letters, signed FAC Consent forms; keep mediation confirmation letters, signed Agreements to Mediate, and original signed Mediation agreements.
- Keep files of all returned Evaluation Surveys for Facilitated IEP Meetings and Mediations from participants which include: (parent/district/other and Mediator/Facilitators.
- Once evaluations are returned, copy each one, file the original and mail a copy to the mediator/facilitator; debrief as necessary.

## ***5 - Communication***

- Respond to all telephone and email inquiries

## ***6 - Maintain Databases***

- Mediation data: Maintain and enter information into the OSPI database as necessary.
- Facilitated meeting data: Maintain and enter into the IEP database as necessary

## ***7 - Bookkeeping***

- Internal team will collaborate and interface with external bookkeeper to assist with bills and budget issues as necessary.
- Prepare monthly billing statements as described below in the monthly section for OSPI.

## ***8 - Billing***

- Prepare monthly billing for OSPI.
- Prepare the monthly mediation and IEP facilitation report for OSPI. Include this report with the monthly invoice.
- Prepare ahead and attach copies of the sub-contractor expense reports and receipts. Bookkeeper will create a QuickBooks invoice to mail along with documentation.

## ***9 - Reports***

### ***9.1 - Quarterly Reports***

Prepare quarterly reports for OSPI. This report includes the number of cases opened and their results tallied. The report also includes the financial information for the quarter for all mediations and facilitations, as well as the time/hours spent for case management. This report also includes a tally of all the evaluation data from mediations and facilitations for the quarter.

### ***9.2 - Annual Report***

Prepare annual report for OSPI. A complete copy of this report including evaluation comments is mailed to OSPI. A mini version of the report without evaluation comments is mailed to all the ESD Special Education Directors as well as to the members of the Special Education Cadre. This report is also available to interested parties.

## ***10 - Special Education Mediator/Facilitator Roster***

- Send communication to the special education mediator/facilitator roster members keeping them apprised of what is going on with the program. Keep copies of all of their ADR Consultant Agreements annually.
- Keep copies of their UBI numbers.
- Keep copies of their updated resume information on file. This is utilized when we need to implement the mediation selection process other than geographic location and availability.
- Keep an updated roster of all mediators/facilitators with their contact information.
- Plan the annual training and retreat for the roster members. This typically takes place in the fall. Communicate with cadre to determine dates. Determine whether or not it will be virtual or in person. If in person, select and arrange the location, accommodations and food for the

meeting. Work with the Program Manager to develop an agenda that is relevant to what is going on in the field and help to arrange speakers for the event.

## **11 - Insurance**

Work with the Insurance Agency to renew our liability insurance annually and if there are any insurance needs such as a certificate for certain contracts during the year.

**C.4.iii. Project Schedule** – *Include a project schedule indicating when the elements of the work will be completed and when deliverables, if any, will be provided.*

The following deliverables will be provided directly to the OSPI Contract Manager, with due dates to be confirmed in collaboration with the OSPI Contract Manager after the contract is awarded:

	<b>Deliverable</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
1	Progress reports, including the number of mediations and IEP meeting facilitations, with each invoice.	By the 15th of each month
2	Mediation and IEP meeting facilitation evaluations and copies of mediation agreements.	January 16, 2026 April 17, 2026 July 17, 2026 August 28, 2026
3	Information on mediation requests and mediations provided from the Contractor's database.	January 16, 2026 April 17, 2026 July 17, 2026 August 28, 2026
4	<p>Summary Report:</p> <p>The report will include sections describing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Program Activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ System Administration and Program Awareness</li> <li>○ Mediation and Case Administration</li> </ul> </li> <li>● IEP Meeting Facilitation and Case Administration</li> <li>● Evaluations from Mediation Participants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Parents</li> <li>○ Districts</li> <li>○ Advocates/Other</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Evaluations from the Mediator</li> <li>● Selections from Mediation Participant Evaluations</li> <li>● Evaluations from IEP Meeting Facilitation Participants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Parents</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	August 28, 2026



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Districts</li> <li>o Advocates/Other</li> <li>● Evaluations from the Facilitator</li> <li>● Selections from Facilitated IEP Participant Evaluations</li> </ul>	
5	<p>In the event that the contract is renewed in subsequent years</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Summary of Mediation data from past years</li> <li>● Summary of IEP Facilitation data from past years</li> </ul>	Tbd

**C.4.iv. Deliverables** – *Fully describe deliverables to be submitted under the proposed contract. Deliverables are the services and materials Consultants provide as described in contract agreements*

To accomplish the general objectives of the proposal, Consultant proposes to do the following:

ID #	Deliverable	Metric
1	Toll-free phone number for accessing mediation and IEP facilitation resources	Available on website
2	Intake system for processing mediation and IEP meeting facilitation requests, coordinating logistical decisions about the time and location of mediation sessions and IEP meeting facilitations, including communicating LEA responsibilities around scheduling to the LEA	# Cases Opened # Cases Scheduled # Sessions
3	Use of an interpreter service, using a vendor from a pre-approved list of interpreters and translators, in support of intake and mediations with non-English speaking participants. Interpreter services would be provided by the LEA during facilitated IEP meetings	# Interpreters requested # Sessions interpreted
4	Website that includes information on IEP meeting facilitation, mediation, training options and conflict engagement and technical assistance	Available on website
5	Translation of program documentation in support of IEP Facilitation and Mediation, upon request of parties and OSPI, using a vendor from a pre-approved list of interpreters and translators	Available on website
6	List of IEP team meeting facilitators	Available on website
7	List of qualified contract mediators	Available on website
8	Means of assigning cases to Contractors on a random, rotational, or otherwise impartial basis	N/A
9	Mediation agreement forms, updated as needed, meeting 508 accessibility requirements as defined in Section I.D., and any other	Available on website

	forms that may be required in accordance with IDEA or to implement the contract requirements	
10	Monthly reimbursement system for mediators and IEP meeting facilitators.	N/A
11	Up to fifty (50) mediation sessions. A mediation session is defined as one (1) day and may be offered on full-day or half-day increments.	# Sessions provided
12	Up to sixty (60) IEP meeting facilitations with up to five (5) of those facilitation sessions reserved for Superintendent to use in resolving complaints. An IEP Facilitation session is defined as one (1) day and may be offered on full-day or half-day increments.	# Sessions provided
13	Notification to Superintendent of any concerns regarding the mediation system.	N/A
14	Brochures describing the mediation and IEP team meeting facilitation processes meeting Accessibility Guidelines as defined in Section I.D.	Available on website
15	Mediators with training in effective mediation techniques and special education laws and regulations. Training of mediators shall occur at least annually. Contractor shall provide documentation that mediators have been trained at least annually upon request by the Superintendent.	N/A
16	A neutral location for participants who cannot agree to mediate virtually or at a district location. Contractor shall secure location and invoice for this cost (not to exceed \$2,000 per year)	# Neutral locations secured

Furthermore, while meeting the aforementioned deliverables, consultants must ensure:

- i. That mediations are conducted in a timely manner and in a location convenient to the parties.
- ii. Parties are offered the opportunity to complete an evaluation of the mediation session or IEP meeting facilitation at mediations and IEP meeting facilitations. The Contractor shall retain original completed meeting evaluations (mediation and facilitations) for seven (7) years.
- iii. The provision of client evaluations on a quarterly basis to the Superintendent.
- iv. The mediation program is operated in compliance with relevant state and federal requirements.
- v. The Contractor and mediators maintain student confidentiality and otherwise operate according to state and federal laws regarding mediation and IDEA.

Additionally, consultant must reimburse subcontractors providing mediation and IEP meeting facilitation services as follows:

- i. Mediation sessions are defined by a single (1) whole day or two (2) half days.
- ii. Mediation provided in a face-to-face context should include expenses (travel/per diem).
- iii. Mediation provided in an online context may be scheduled in half-day increments.
- iv. IEP Facilitation may be defined as half-day sessions (four (4) hours) OR as full-day sessions (six (6) hours).
- v. Any pre-mediation or pre-facilitation contact between the parties and mediator/facilitator shall be reimbursed.
- vi. Any Mediation session or IEP Facilitation meeting that is canceled by parties (district or family) within twenty-four (24) hours of the confirmed time will result in reimbursement for the contracted Facilitator or Mediator at the expected reimbursement rate.
- vii. In select few cases, IEP Facilitations and Mediation sessions may be scheduled with a “co-facilitator” or “co-mediator.”
- viii. IEP Facilitation and Mediation cases in which “co-mediators” or “co-facilitators” are utilized, both mediator and facilitator will be reimbursed for the case equally (full-day of mediation, half-day of mediation, half-day facilitation, or full-day facilitation). The reimbursement rate will not be split among the two (2) contractors.

**C.4.v. Performance-Based Contracting** – *RCW 39.26.180 requires that, to the extent practicable, Washington State agencies enter into performance-based contracts. Performance-based contracts identify expected deliverables and performance measures or outcomes and are contingent on the contractor providing such deliverables or achieving performance outcomes.*

*Bidders are encouraged to structure Technical and Cost proposals in a performance-based manner that identify payment(s) tied to deliverables identified in Section C.3.iv.*

Some of the above deliverables are “fixed” and must be in place in order to provide services. Other deliverables are performed on a rolling basis and have metrics conducive to performance-based contracting.

The following deliverables from section C.4.iv are suitable for performance-based contracting, and will be billed monthly based on the performance of the preceding month:

ID #	Deliverable	Metric	Billing Frequency
	<i>Provide:</i>		
3	Use of an interpreter service, using a vendor from a pre-approved list of interpreters and translators, in support of intake and mediations with non-English speaking participants. Interpreter services would be provided by the LEA during facilitated IEP meetings.	# Interpreters requested # Sessions interpreted	Monthly

11	Up to fifty (50) mediation sessions. A mediation session is defined as one (1) day and may be offered on full-day or half-day increments.	# Sessions provided	Monthly
12	Up to sixty (60) IEP meeting facilitations with up to five (5) of those facilitation sessions reserved for Superintendent to use in resolving complaints. An IEP Facilitation session is defined as one (1) day and may be offered on full-day or half-day increments.	# Sessions provided	Monthly
15	Mediators with training in effective mediation techniques and special education laws and regulations. Training of mediators shall occur at least annually. Contractor shall provide documentation that mediators have been trained at least annually upon request by the Superintendent.	Presence	Once per year, after annual training
16	A neutral location for participants who cannot agree to mediate virtually or at a district location. Contractor shall secure location and invoice for this cost (not to exceed \$2,000 per year)	# Neutral locations secured	

**C.4.vi. Outcomes and Performance Measurement** – *Describe the impacts/outcomes the Consultant proposes to achieve as a result of the delivery of these services including how these outcomes would be monitored, measured, and reported to the state agency.*

*Note: Mere repetition of the work statement in Section 1 will not be considered responsive.*

While mediation and facilitation are used to help parties come to agreement around specific conflict issues, our philosophy emphasizes supporting the long-term relationship between the parties as well as the resolution of their specific conflict issues.

We propose the following major outcomes:

- Mediation and Facilitation resolve the participants' disputes.
- Mediation and Facilitation improve the relationship of the participants.
- Mediation and Facilitation improve the efficacy of the IEP team.

We measure our own efficacy towards these outcomes through post-session survey data.

ID #	Outcome	Survey Questions
1	Resolve the participants' disputes	"The dispute was resolved to my satisfaction."

		“The IEP team was able to reach agreement.”
2	Improve the relationship of the participants	<p>“The mediation session will benefit the relationship of the parties.”</p> <p>“The mediation helped me understand the other party’s perspective.”</p> <p>“The Facilitated IEP Meeting will benefit the relationship of the team.”</p>
3	Improve the efficacy of the IEP team	<p>“The mediation helped the parties involved get along better.”</p> <p>“The Facilitated IEP Meeting improved our team’s effectiveness.”</p>

**C.4.vii. Risks** – *Define risks you identify as being significant to the success of the project. Include how you would propose to effectively monitor and manage these risks, including reporting of risks to the Agency’s contract manager.*

*Examples may include:*

- *A proposal for minimizing staff turnover and its impact on the Agency’s contract management staff.*
- *A business continuation plan that illustrates how you will monitor and manage through times of labor disruption, loss of facility, and/ or key staff/ personnel*

Sound Options Cadre’s most significant assets are our institutional knowledge, our mediation and IEP facilitation expertise, and our collective experience in the field of special education dispute resolution, all of which were developed under the leadership of Greg Abell over the past three decades.

Our institutional knowledge is primarily concentrated in Mindy Hyde, who has been the primary Case Manager for SOMTG for the past eight years. We firmly believe that Ms. Hyde’s continued participation is critical to a smooth transition. As such, the loss of Ms. Hyde poses our greatest risk.

The three major factors that could lead to losing Ms. Hyde are:

1. A change in her health,
2. A rupture in the relationship between Sound Options Cadre and Ms. Hyde, and
3. An inability to compensate Ms. Hyde fairly for her contribution.

We propose to manage this risk by:

1. Including Ms. Hyde in any and all major decision-making as a managing member of Sound Options Cadre,
2. Waiting a minimum of one year before making changes (if any) to the systems implemented by Ms. Hyde,
3. Providing compensation commensurate with Ms. Hyde's value and experience,
4. Hiring a second (part-time) Case Manager to alleviate the burden on Ms. Hyde and create redundancy, and
5. Training other members and subcontractors of Sound Options Cadre in case management in order to ensure the continuity of case intake work.

A second major risk is the loss of our mediation expertise, as concentrated in the mediators and facilitators on our roster.

Sound Options Cadre currently has 13 mediators on its roster, all of whom worked with Greg Abell under the prior contract held by SOMTG. Some of these mediators worked with SOMTG for more than a decade.

To address the risk of loss of expertise, it is our intent to:

1. Diversify the ownership team,
2. Actively recruit diverse (age, gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, etc.) mediators to train with our more experienced mediators
3. Organize regular meetings to continue to foster our existing philosophy of sharing knowledge and experiences among our roster members

A third risk factor is our ability to remain current with respect to changes and developments in the special education field. We intend to mitigate any such risk by attending and becoming active members of the Center for Appropriate Dispute Resolution in Special Education (CADRE).

A fourth risk we have considered is the disruption to the administrative/contract management services as a direct result of Greg's absence. His daughter, Rebecca Larsen, assumed these responsibilities from 2024 to present. Her decision to close SOMTG and seek other opportunities prompted our formation of Sound Options Cadre, LLC, in order to provide as much continuity of services and personnel as possible. In order to mitigate the inevitable disruption caused by OSPI having to contract with a new service provider, Ms. Larsen has agreed to provide regular

consultation services to Sound Options Cadre, LLC, throughout the upcoming contract year. This will help us continue to manage our contract, maintain data collection, complete reports and address any operating questions that arise.

**PROPOSAL FOR SERVICES**  
*Request for Proposals No. 2025-31*  
*Special Education Mediation System*

**C.5. Management Proposal**

**C.5.i. Project Management/Team Structure/Internal Controls**

*Provide a description of the proposed project team structure and internal controls to be used during the course of the project, including any subcontractors. Identify staff, including subcontractors, who will be assigned to the potential contract, indicating the responsibilities and qualifications of such personnel, and include the amount of time each will be assigned to the project.*

*Provide an organizational chart of your firm indicating lines of authority for personnel involved in performance of this potential contract and relationships of this staff to other programs or functions of the firm. This chart must also show lines of authority to the next senior level of management. Include who within the firm will have prime responsibility and final authority for the work.*

**1 - Team Structure**

Our proposed project team structure involves four owner-managers, two staff members in charge of intake, and a roster of trained mediators and facilitators. In addition, the current Sound Options Mediation and Training Group (SOMTG) contract administrator, Rebecca Larsen, has agreed to provide consultation services to Sound Options Cadre, LLC on a regular basis throughout the initial contract year.

**1.1 - Ownership**

Sound Options Cadre, LLC is a member-managed LLC. All of its member-managers are experienced in mediation and facilitation and have pre-existing relationships with SOMTG.

The member managers are jointly responsible for program management. This includes all aspects of the business and contract apart from intake, case management, mediation, and facilitation.

It is the responsibility of the member managers to hire and supervise intake staff, recruit and train facilitators and mediators, and manage communication regarding the contract with OSPI.

According to the articles of incorporation, the members-managers may choose a Chief Executive Member. While in practice the member-managers aim to make decisions by consensus, the Chief Executive Member has ultimate and final decision-making authority and prime responsibility for the work in this contract.

**1.2 - Intake Staff**

Fulfillment of this contract, if awarded, consists of 1) program management, and 2) service delivery.



As noted above, the member-managers are responsible for program management.

The staff member responsible for service delivery is known as the Lead Case Manager. There will necessarily be a high degree of collaboration between the member-managers and the Lead Case Manager. The Lead Case Manager is the acknowledged expert in how mediation and facilitation cases evolve.

Due to the high volume of requests for facilitation and mediation, case management requires more than one person.

The Associate Case Manager reports to the Lead Case Manager and follows their own set of cases from the initial intake call or email through the entire case lifecycle.

### ***1.3 - Roster of facilitators and mediators***

The roster of experienced facilitators and mediators is the third part of the team structure. These professionals all serve as service delivery subcontractors to Sound Options Cadre, LLC, though they may also play other roles, such as member-owners.

## ***2 - Internal Controls***

The primary administrative and financial responsibility lies with the Chief Executive Member. The member-managers work as a team, collaborate, and mutually supervise each other's program management.

Member-managers will have informal roles and areas of expertise, but are expected to fluidly take over responsibilities when necessary.

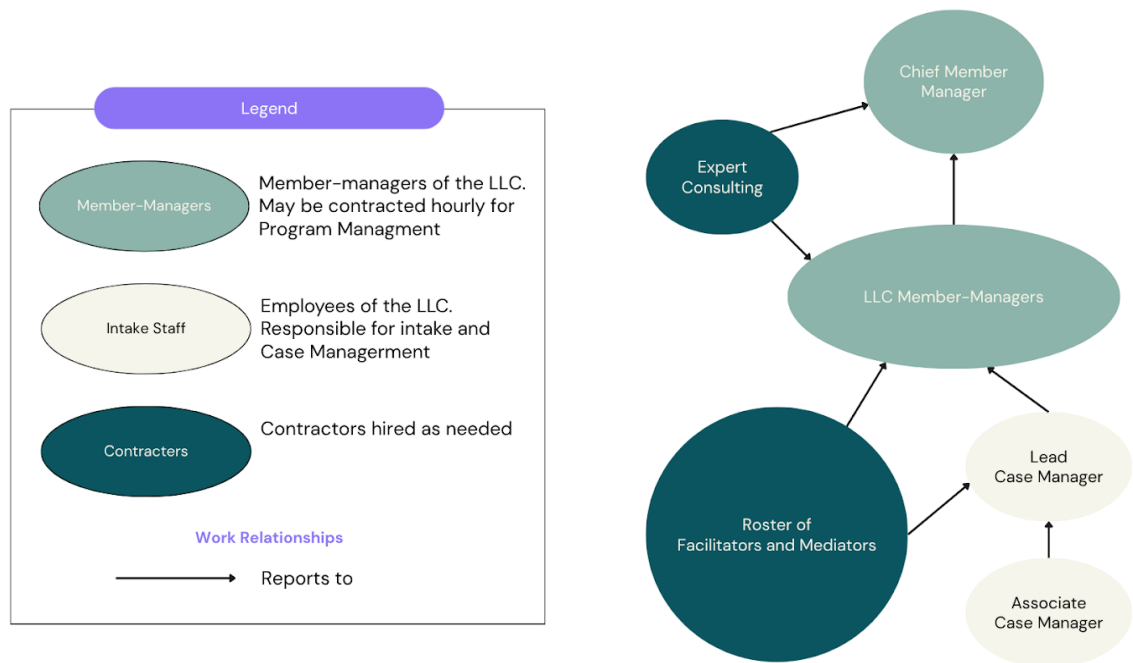
The staff team structure includes clear lines of responsibility and reporting. Internal controls include segregation of financial duties, documented approval processes for all expenditures, and monthly project reviews to monitor progress towards strategic goals, quality of service delivery, and budget compliance.

Subcontractors – mediators, facilitators, and interpreters – do not submit invoices, but are paid by the program management team based on internal records of sessions conducted. All subcontractors are required to follow standard reimbursement policies for in-person travel when applicable.

### 3 - Roles & Responsibilities

Role	Role Type	Responsibilities
Program Management (~20 hours / week)	Contract work by member-managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Supervise and support Case Manager.</li> <li>- Supervise and liaise with all subcontractors.</li> <li>- Organize and conduct professional development.</li> <li>- Outreach to school districts and parent advocates.</li> <li>- Recruit and train mediators.</li> <li>- Design data security protocols.</li> <li>- Contract management, monitoring, and reporting.</li> <li>- Managing document signing.</li> <li>- Completing monthly invoice and expense reports.</li> <li>- Compiling feedback data.</li> <li>- Liaise with OSPI.</li> </ul>
Lead Case Manager (~40 hours / week)	Salaried staff position	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Conduct intake and case management for Mediations and IEP Facilitations.</li> <li>- Respond to requests for service, work with families and districts to determine the appropriate forum for their dispute.</li> <li>- Schedule mediation or facilitation with families and districts.</li> <li>- Assign mediators or facilitators as appropriate.</li> <li>- Debrief mediations and facilitations.</li> <li>- Train and supervise Associate Case Manager.</li> <li>- Report service metrics to Program Manager</li> <li>- Implement data security protocols</li> </ul>
Associate Case Manager (~20 hours / week)	Hourly staff position	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Conduct intake and case management for Mediations and IEP Facilitations.</li> <li>- Respond to requests for service, work with families and districts to determine the appropriate forum for their dispute.</li> <li>- Schedule mediation or facilitation with families and districts.</li> <li>- Assign mediators or facilitators as appropriate.</li> <li>- Debrief mediations and facilitations.</li> <li>- Consult with Lead Case Manager as needed.</li> <li>- Follow data security protocols</li> </ul>
Facilitation and Mediation (As needed)	Contract work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Conduct Mediations and Facilitations</li> <li>- Pre-session coaching when needed</li> </ul>

#### 4 - Organizational Chart



#### C.5.ii. Experience of the Consultant/Staff/Subcontractors

*Relevant Experience – Describe how the Consultant meets the minimum qualifications and, if applicable, the desired qualifications. Include other relevant experience that indicates the qualifications of the Consultant, and any subcontractors, for the performance of the potential contract.*

Consultant meets all stated minimum qualifications, as well as all stated desirable qualifications, as outlined in the Request for Proposals.

#### Minimum qualifications:

*Licensed to do business in the State of Washington*

Consultant is licensed to do business in the State of Washington as Sound Options Cadre, LLC.

*Experience in alternative dispute resolution, mediation, conflict resolution, etc.*

All managing members of Sound Options Cadre, LLC and all named subcontractors of Sound Options Cadre, LLC are current employees and subcontractors of SOMTG. SOMTG and its cadre of mediators and facilitators, under the leadership of Greg Abell, have provided special education mediation and facilitation services to the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) since 1992.

While the length and breadth of each individual's experience in alternative dispute resolution, mediation, conflict resolution, etc., differs, everyone currently affiliated with Sound Options Cadre, LLC was hand-selected and trained by Greg Abell for their experience and their suitability to the work of special education mediation and facilitation. Resumes of all members and currently known subcontractors have been provided as attachments to *C.3. Letter of Submittal*.

*Expertise in special education law (IDEA, federal and state implementing regulations), processes, and procedures and specifically, IDEA and Washington state requirements for mediation.*

Sound Options Cadre, LLC was established by the current mediators and facilitators of SOMTG, as well as its current case manager, in order to offer OSPI the opportunity to provide a seamless continuation of the very services that Washington State school districts, families, and students have relied upon for more than three decades. Because Sound Options Cadre, LLC is the successor organization to SOMTG, its case manager, members, and mediators are already well known to and respected by OSPI's relevant constituents, including but not limited to school district personnel, families, and parent advocates.

Having been hand-selected and trained by Greg Abell, we are uniquely experienced in special education law, processes, and procedures, and specifically IDEA and Washington State requirements for mediation and IEP facilitation.

Moreover, we are intimately familiar with the philosophy and guiding principles under which SOMTG operated successfully in partnership with OSPI for so many years: **We believe that the relationships between families and schools are critically important.** As such, our facilitative approach has and will continue to emphasize collaboration between participants, with the goal of keeping families and districts working together even through enduring conflicts.

*Demonstrated business infrastructure to create and maintain a statewide mediation and IEP facilitation system.*

Sound Options Cadre, LLC will use the existing business infrastructure, databases, online service providers, and IT systems of SOMTG to provide a seamless transition.

### **Desirable Qualifications:**

*Experience working with diverse populations.*

As indicated above, all managing members of Sound Options Cadre, LLC and all named subcontractors of Sound Options Cadre, LLC are current employees and subcontractors of SOMTG. As a result of our work with school districts and families across the State of Washington, everyone currently affiliated with Sound Options Cadre, LLC has the requisite experience working with diverse populations, including intersectionalities of diversity.

*Experience as a neutral facilitator or mediator.*

As indicated above, all managing members of Sound Options Cadre, LLC and all named subcontractors of Sound Options Cadre, LLC are current employees and subcontractors of SOMTG. As such, each individual currently affiliated with Sound Options Cadre, LLC has significant experience as a neutral facilitator or mediator, specifically including but not limited to

special education mediations and facilitated IEP meetings. Resumes of all members and currently known subcontractors have been provided as attachments to *C.3. Letter of Submittal*.

*Related Contracts – Include a list of contracts the Consultant has had during the last five (5) years that relate to the Consultant's ability to perform the services needed under this RFP. List contract reference numbers, contract period of performance, contact persons, phone numbers, and email addresses.*

N/A.

Please note that Consultant Sound Options Cadre, LLC is the successor organization to SOMTG, which has provided mediation and facilitation services to the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) since 1992. Because Sound Options Cadre, LLC was established specifically for the purpose of submitting this proposal and continuing the work previously done by SOMTG, Consultant is unable to disclose any related contracts. However, the managing members, as well as the subcontracted mediators and facilitator of Sound Options Cadre, LLC are the same individuals that have provided these services under the terms of SOMTG's existing contract with OSPI.

### **C.5.iii. References**

*List names, addresses, telephone numbers, and fax numbers/email addresses of three (3) business references for whom work has been accomplished and briefly describe the type of service provided for them.*

#### **Rebecca Larsen**

Contract Manager, Sound Options Mediation and Facilitation Group  
PO Box 11457  
Bainbridge Island, WA 98110  
Phone: 206-842-2298  
Email: rebeccal@somtg.com

Case management (as provided by Mindy Hyde and Kristine Sogn)  
Special education and IEP facilitation services (as provided by Sasha S. Philip, Ankur Shah Delight, Kristine Sogn, and the other 10 mediators listed in these submissions).

#### **Dr. Scott K. Irwin**

Director of Elementary School Special Education  
Northshore School District  
425-408-7738  
sirwin@nsd.org

Special education and IEP facilitation services.

#### **Kerri Feeney, Attorney at Law**

Feeney Law Office, PLLC  
1177 Jadwin Avenue #4  
Richland, WA 99352  
Phone: (509) 946-5200  
Fax: (509) 946-2411  
Kerri@Feeneylaw.net

Special education and IEP facilitation services.

**Kristina Baker**

Executive Director of Special Education and Student Support  
Spokane Public Schools  
Phone: (509)354-7296  
KristinaB@spokaneschools.org

Special education and IEP facilitation services.

**Deborah L. Wagner**

Former Director, Special Services at Lake Washington School District  
6226 Beverly Blvd  
Everett, WA 98203  
Phone: 253-335-3126  
debleewag@gmail.com

Special education and IEP facilitation services.

**Joan Lawson**

Director of Special Services Operations, Compliance & Placement Partnerships  
Issaquah School District  
5150 220th Ave SE  
Issaquah, WA 98029

Special education and IEP facilitation services.

**C.5.iv. Past Performance**

*Provide information regarding past performance by indicating if the Consultant has received notification of contract breach in the past five (5) years. This does not lead to automatic disqualification. However, OSPI reserves the right to disqualify Consultant proposals based on the Consultant's historical performance, as outlined above in Section B. General Information for Consultants, 11. Responsiveness*

Consultant has NOT received notification of contract breach in the past five (5) years.

**C.5.v. Examples/Samples of Related Projects/Previous Work**

*Provide any examples or samples of previous work on projects related to mediation, IEP facilitation, and special education dispute resolution.*

Consultant Sound Options Cadre, LLC is the successor organization to Greg Abell's Sound Options Mediation and Training Group (SOMTG). As you know, SOMTG and its cadre of mediators and facilitators have provided mediation and facilitation services to the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) since 1992. That contract will terminate in August of 2025 as a result of Greg Abell's untimely death in 2024, and his daughter Rebecca Larsen's recent decision not to renew the existing contract.

Because Sound Options Cadre, LLC was established by the current mediators and facilitators of SOMTG, as well as SOMTG's long-standing case manager, specifically for the purpose of submitting this proposal and continuing the work previously done by the same group of individuals under the auspices of SOMTG, Consultant has no independent examples or samples of previous work on projects related to mediation, IEP facilitation, and special education dispute resolution.

However, the resumes of all individuals currently affiliated with Sound Options Cadre, LLC – notably SOMTG's case manager and SOMTG's existing mediators and facilitators – are attached to the document *C.3 Letter of Submittal*. Moreover, any and all examples or samples of these individuals' previous work on projects related to special education mediation, IEP facilitation, and special education dispute resolution can be found in OSPI's existing database.

#### **C.5.vi. Subcontractors**

*Identify any known or potential subcontractors who will be assigned to the potential contract.*

The following individuals have committed to continuing to provide special education mediation and IEP meeting facilitation services as members or subcontractors of Sound Options Cadre, LLC.

1. Sasha S. Philip, current SOMTG Mediator & Facilitator  
CEO, Sound Options Cadre, LLC
2. Kristine Sogn, current SOMTG Mediator & Facilitator  
Sound Options Cadre, LLC, Managing Member
3. Ankur Shah Delight, current SOMTG Mediator & Facilitator  
Sound Options Cadre, LLC, Managing Member
4. Mindy Hyde, current SOMTG Case Manager  
Sound Options Cadre, LLC, Managing Member
5. Bob Murphy, current SOMTG Mediator & Facilitator
6. Dee Knapp, current SOMTG Mediator & Facilitator
7. Felicia Staub, current SOMTG Mediator & Facilitator
8. John Rossi, current SOMTG Mediator & Facilitator
9. Julie Schaffer, current SOMTG Mediator & Facilitator
10. Patricia Eastwood, current SOMTG Mediator & Facilitator
11. Paula Grow, current SOMTG Mediator & Facilitator
12. Rose Anne Featherston, current SOMTG Mediator & Facilitator
13. Tamia Pervez, current SOMTG Mediator & Facilitator
14. Tamir Hassan, current SOMTG Mediator & Facilitator

Please note that the resumes of all currently known members and subcontractors are attached to document *C.3. Letter of Submittal*.

**PROPOSAL FOR SERVICES**  
*Request for Proposals No. 2025-31*  
*Special Education Mediation System*

**C.6. Cost Proposal**

**C.6.i. Identification of All Costs**

<b>ID #</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Detailed Description</b>	<b>Billed</b>	<b>Obligation</b>
1	Appropriate Dispute Resolution (ADR) Services: Mediations  Up to 50 mediation sessions and 20 hours of pre-session coaching	Full-day (6-hour) sessions (\$1000) Half-day (3-hour) sessions (\$800)  Pre-session coaching (\$100/hour)	Monthly	Not to exceed \$52,000
2	Appropriate Dispute Resolution (ADR) Services: IEP Meeting Facilitations  Up to 60 facilitation sessions and 20 hours of pre-session coaching	Full-day (6-hour) sessions (\$1000) Half-day (4-hour) sessions (\$800)  Pre-session coaching (\$100/hour)	Monthly	Not to exceed \$62,000
3	Travel	Travel expenses for in-person mediations and facilitations	Monthly	Not to exceed \$10,000
4	Language Interpretation  Up to 5 full-day interpreted mediation sessions.	Daily rate per interpreter (\$2500) Two interpreters generally required	Monthly	Not to exceed \$25,000
5	Neutral Location  Up to 4 days of confidential conference room rental.	If parties cannot agree to mediate virtually or at a district location, contractor shall secure a neutral location and invoice for this cost.  Daily conference rate depends on location (\$500-\$1000)	Monthly	Not to exceed \$2,000
6	Program Management	- Supervise and support Case Manager - Supervise and liaise with all subcontractors	Monthly	\$50,000 per year



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organize and conduct professional development</li> <li>- Outreach to school districts and parent advocates</li> <li>- Recruit and train mediators</li> <li>- Design data security protocols</li> <li>- Contract management, monitoring, and reporting</li> <li>- Managing document signing</li> <li>- Completing monthly invoice and expense reports</li> <li>- Compiling feedback data</li> <li>- Liaise with OSPI</li> </ul>		
7	Lead Case Manager (1.0 FTE position)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Conduct intake and case management for Mediations and IEP Facilitations</li> <li>- Respond to requests for service, work with families and districts to determine the appropriate forum for their dispute</li> <li>- Schedule mediation or facilitation with families and districts.</li> <li>- Assign mediators or facilitators as appropriate</li> <li>- Debrief mediations and facilitations</li> <li>- Train and supervise Associate Case Manager</li> <li>- Report service metrics to Program Manager</li> <li>- Implement data security protocols</li> </ul>	Monthly	\$100,000 per year
8	Associate Case Manager (0.5 FTE position)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Conduct intake and case management for Mediations and IEP Facilitations</li> <li>- Respond to requests for service, work with families and districts to determine the appropriate forum for their dispute</li> <li>- Schedule mediation or facilitation with families and districts</li> <li>- Assign mediators or facilitators as appropriate</li> </ul>	Monthly	\$50,000 per year

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Debrief mediations and facilitations</li> <li>- Consult with Lead Case Manager as needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Follow data security protocols</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
9	Cadre Training	Annual continuing education on mediation, facilitation, and IDEA-related topics.  1.5 days of training		Not to exceed \$8000
10	Cadre Insurance	Professional liability insurance		Not to exceed \$3,500
Subtotal				\$362,500
10% Indirect Costs				\$36,250
Total				<b>\$398,750</b>

#### C.6.ii. Travel Costs

ID #	Activity	Detailed Description	Billed	Obligation
3	Travel	Travel expenses for in-person mediations and facilitations	Monthly	Not to exceed \$10,000

#### C.6.iii. Subcontractor Costs

ID #	Activity	Detailed Description	Billed	Obligation
1	Appropriate Dispute Resolution (ADR) Services: Mediations  Up to 50 mediation sessions and 20 hours of pre-session coaching	Full-day (6-hour) sessions (\$1000) Half-day (3-hour) sessions (\$800)  Pre-session coaching (\$100/hour)	Monthly	Not to exceed \$52,000
2	Appropriate Dispute Resolution (ADR) Services: IEP Meeting Facilitations	Full-day (6-hour) sessions (\$1000) Half-day (4-hour) sessions (\$800)  Pre-session coaching (\$100/hour)	Monthly	Not to exceed \$62,000

	Up to 60 facilitation sessions and 20 hours of pre-session coaching			
4	Language Interpretation  Up to 5 full-day interpreted mediation sessions.	Daily rate per interpreter (\$2500) Two interpreters generally required	Monthly	Not to exceed \$25,000

#### **C.6.iv. Indirect Costs**

Indirect costs are estimated at 10% of the total budget, and will not exceed the maximum amount that may be charged per OSPI's indirect costs policy.