



# **EMPOWERING CREATIVE MINDS LLC PROPOSAL FOR SERVICES –YONKERS PUBLIC SCHOOLS PROPOSAL 9 – PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND COACHING SESSIONS FOR TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS – SMART SCHOLARS SEPTEMBER 20, 2024**

## **OVERVIEW**

Empowering Creative Minds LLC is pleased to submit this proposal for services to support Yonkers Public Schools in achieving its goals to develop building capacity and sustainability of the Smart Scholars Program at Roosevelt High School – Early College Studies (RHS-ECS) by providing professional learning and coaching sessions to instructional leaders and administrators. Empowering Creative Minds LLC has 15 years of experience in teaching World Languages, 6 years teaching at the university level, and its founder has facilitated workshops for teachers and administrators in the district for the past 8 years.

### **The Objective**

Empowering Creative Minds LLC will create a series of professional learning and coaching sessions based upon RHS-ECS’ goals for the 2024 – 2025 academic year:

- Enhance RHS-ECS’ social media presence.
- Build capacity to sustain continuous improvement through administrators and instructional leaders.
- Focus on instructional strategies to move from teacher-centered to student-centered learning to improve student outcomes.

These goals are aligned with the district’s goals outlined in the district’s three-year strategic plan:

- Student Achievement
- Professional Development
- Data-Driven Instruction
- Support Student Needs
- Stakeholder and Community Involvement/Engagement

An outline of the services to be provided consist of:



### Enhancement of Social Media Presence – Coaching

- Continuing to develop and implement the processes or procedures and corresponding responsibilities
- Expand online content to include documentaries and video clips of how the Smart Scholars Program promotes a college-going culture

### Administrators and Instructional Leaders – Professional Learning and Coaching Sessions

- Data-Driven Instruction
- Pedagogy and Instructional Strategies
- Learning Walks/Peer Observations
- Departmental/Professional Learning Communities mini-workshops

### The Opportunity

The professional learning and coaching sessions are proactive steps in building the capacity and sustainability of the Smart Scholars Program. Building capacity helps to minimize dependency on one staff member or outside experts as sources of knowledge and expertise thereby allowing RHS-ECS educators to gradually assume more responsibility as leaders. Coaching sessions will serve the same purpose of supporting the team tasked with enhancing the social media presence of the program; and the administrators and instructional leaders responsible for observing and supporting teachers to further develop their pedagogy. Lastly, professional learning sessions are important to enhance pedagogy so that learners are performing at grade level and ready to participate in rigorous high school and collegiate courses, which are an inherent component of the Smart Scholars Program.

Empowering Creative Minds LLC's goals associated with this proposal include the following:

- Goal #1: Create professional learning and coaching sessions within the identified timeline.
- Goal #2: Provide coaching sessions for the enhancement of RHS-ECS' social media presence.
- Goal #3: Design professional learning sessions for administrators and instructional leaders.
- Goal #4: Provide coaching sessions to administrators and instructional leaders.



## OUR PROPOSAL

Empowering Creative Minds LLC is a Certified Woman-Owned Business Enterprise (WBE) and professional educational consulting firm serving primary and secondary schools. We provide instructional coaching and professional development for educators to meet the ever-changing needs of 21st-century learners. Our coaching programs fuse pedagogy with instructional strategies that meet the demands of the real world and support student-focused achievement. Our programs include a variety of topics:

- Curriculum Development
- Strategic Planning
- Data-Driven Instruction
- Inquiry-Based Learning
- Student Engagement
- Social-Emotional Learning
- Professional Learning Communities

Empowering Creative Minds LLC has 15 years of experience in teaching World Languages, and 6 years teaching at the university level in World languages, business, and teacher preparation programs. Its founder created distance learning lessons for Spanish and Italian for Yonkers Public Schools in the spring of 2020 and thematic units on social justice issues in 2021. Dr. D'Ugo has facilitated various professional learning sessions for Yonkers Public Schools World Language teachers and administrators on a variety of topics related to language acquisition over the last 8 years. In addition, she has facilitated a series of interactive professional learning sessions on Keeping Learning on Track (KLT), that support teachers in adopting formative assessment strategies, and Accountable Talk.

### Rationale

RHS-ECS, formerly the Early College High School, was initially granted funding for the Smart Scholars Early College High School Program (Cohort 3) in 2010. Through the Smart Scholars Early College High School Program,

...institutions of higher education (IHEs) partner with public school districts to create early college high schools that provide students with the opportunity and preparation to accelerate the completion of their high school studies while earning a minimum of twenty-four but up to sixty transferable college credits at the same time. (New York State Education Department, n.d.)

This program targets traditionally underrepresented students in postsecondary education. Students receive additional academic support from the school/college partnerships to ensure they perform at grade level and are ready to participate in rigorous high school and collegiate courses. This “dual or concurrent enrollment” program aims to increase high school graduation and college



completion rates while reducing student tuition costs because of less time required to complete a college degree (New York State Education Department, n.d.).

Although internal resources have been relied on to fulfill professional development and mentoring requirements, a need has been identified to build additional capacity among staff to ensure the sustainability of continuous improvement through professional learning and coaching sessions. In addition, the administrative team has identified (based on data) the need for professional learning sessions to further enhance teacher pedagogy aligned with RHS-ECS' and district's goals outlined in its three-year strategic plan and district foci.

Coaching is an essential component of a professional development program. In addition to enhancing skills, knowledge, and capacity, coaching creates relationships with educators that allow educators to feel supported and willing to take risks to improve their practices (Aguilar, n.d.).

Professional learning is an inherent part of a district or school's strategy to continuously strengthen educators' best practices by allowing educators to stay up to date with trends while keeping them engaged in an ever-changing educational environment. These sessions are designed to allow collaboration among participants, are linked to specific content and standards, incorporate active learning and coaching, provide models and examples, are sustained and continuous; and are aligned to school and/or district goals, standards, assessments, and other professional learning activities (Archibald, Coggshall, Croft, & Goe, 2011; Darling-Hammond, Hyler, & Gardner, 2017; Labone, & Long, 2016). Customized workshops provide staff with tools that empower them to work collaboratively, acquire and apply new skills, promote student achievement, and cultivate the talents of teachers who aspire to become educational leaders.

## Execution Strategy

Our execution strategy incorporates proven pedagogy, extremely qualified personnel, and a highly responsive approach to managing deliverables. A description of our project methods, including how the project will be developed, and a proposed timeline of events are presented in the ensuing sections.

## Project Approach

Dr. Ida M. D'Ugo, founder of Empowering Creative Minds LLC, will manage the project. Outlined below are a series of steps associated with the project approach:

- 1) During a meeting held on August 27, 2024, with Ms. Rexha, Dr. Rodriguez, and Mr. Mack, goals and instructional foci were shared for the 2024 – 2025 academic year.
- 2) Ms. Judon and Mr. DeChent will review the proposal and provide feedback to Empowering Creative Minds LLC.
- 3) Once approved, the timeline for execution will be initiated. Ms. Judon will also advise Dr. D'Ugo if any additional documentation is required by Yonkers Public Schools prior to commencing the design of the professional learning and coaching sessions.

## Proposal 9 –Professional Learning and Coaching Sessions



- 4) Ms. Judon will be provided weekly updates via phone (or video conference) and e-mail.
- 5) Empowering Creative Minds LLC will evaluate the professional learning sessions on their framework and content.

## Project Deliverables

The following is a complete list of project deliverables:

Deliverable	
Deliverable #1	Coaching Sessions – Enhancement of Social Media Presence
Deliverable #2	Professional Learning Sessions – Administrators and Instructional Leaders
Deliverable #3	Coaching Sessions – Administrators and Instructional Leaders

## Timeline for Execution

Key project dates are outlined below. Dates are best-guess estimates and are subject to change until a contract is executed.

Description	Start Date	End Date	Duration
<b>Project Start</b>	TBD	TBD	
Planning Session – Phase 1 Enhance Social Media Presence	TBD	TBD	6.5 hours
Coaching Sessions (13)	TBD	TBD	13 hours
<b>Phase 1 Complete</b>			<b>19.5 hours</b>
Phase 2 – Planning for 16 Professional Learning Sessions – Administrators and Instructional Leaders	TBD	TBD	16 hours
Completion of PowerPoint/Multimedia Presentations for 16 professional learning sessions – Topics TBD	TBD	TBD	48 hours
Facilitation of 16 Professional Learning Sessions	TBD	TBD	12 hours
<b>Phase 2 Complete</b>	<b>TBD</b>	<b>TBD</b>	<b>76 hours</b>
Planning Session – Phase 3	TBD	TBD	15 hours
Coaching Sessions (30)	TBD	TBD	30 hours



Phase 3 Complete		TBD	45 hours
Project End		August 31, 2025	140.5 hours

## EXPECTED RESULTS

Empowering Creative Minds LLC’s proposal for Yonkers Public Schools provides a series of professional learning and coaching sessions for teachers and administrators. For teachers and administrators, educational technology, school district guidelines, and state curriculum standards are constantly changing, creating challenges for administrators and teachers to keep up with trends and best practices in the field. Professional learning sessions promote the professional growth of teachers into better educators by enabling them to create rigorous, relevant, and tailored instruction for today’s students. Research by the U.S. Department of Education’s Institute of Education Sciences concluded that [student achievement can improve by as much as 21 percentile points](#) attributed to teachers’ participation in well-designed professional development programs.

Coaching is an essential component of a professional development program. In addition to enhancing skills, knowledge, and capacity, coaching creates relationships with educators that allow educators to feel supported and willing to take risks to improve their practices (Aguilar, n.d.). It provides a structure for educators to reflect, grow, and refine their methods. Coaching is a method for improving teacher and leader practices and student outcomes (Aguilar, 2020).

Empowering Creative Minds LLC’s proposal for Yonkers Public Schools provides a plan to enhance RHS-ECS’ social media presence and improve knowledge of pedagogy.

## PRICING

The following table details the pricing for delivery of the services outlined in this proposal. This pricing is valid for 30 days from the date of this proposal:

Category #1	Price
Planning Session – Phase 1 Enhance Social Media Presence	\$ 1,137.50
Coaching Sessions (13)	\$ 2,275.00
<b>Total Services Cost Category #1</b>	<b>\$ 3,412.50</b>
Services Cost Category #2	



Phase 2 – Planning for 16 Professional Learning Sessions – Administrators and Instructional Leaders	\$ 2,800.00
Completion of PowerPoint/Multimedia Presentations for 16 professional learning sessions – Topics TBD	\$ 8,400.00
Facilitation of 16 Professional Learning Sessions	\$ 2,100.00
<b>Total Services Cost Category #2</b>	<b>\$13,300.00</b>
<b>Services Cost Category #3</b>	
Phase 3 – Planning for Administrators and Instructional Leaders	\$ 2,625.00
Coaching Sessions (30)	\$ 5,250.00
<b>Total Services Category #3 Costs</b>	<b>\$ 7,875.00</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 24,587.50</b>

Disclaimer: The prices listed in the preceding table are estimates for the services discussed. This summary is not a warranty of the final price. Estimates are subject to change if project specifications are changed before a contract is executed.

## QUALIFICATIONS

Empowering Creative Minds LLC provides high-quality products and services based on the following:

- 15 years’ experience of its founder as a World Language teacher
- 8 years’ experience of its founder as a facilitator of professional learning sessions for World Language teachers and administrators on a variety of topics related to language acquisition, student portfolios, and Checkpoints A and B assessments
- Recognition of its founder as the “2019 -2020 Secondary School Teacher of the Year” for Yonkers Public Schools
- Editorial Board Member, *The New York State Association of Foreign Language Teachers Language Journal*
- Facilitator at two American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese (AATSP) National Conferences
- Member of the district-wide Seal of Biliteracy Committee (2017 – 2020)
- Facilitator of a series of interactive professional learning sessions on Keeping Learning on Track (KLT), that support teachers in adopting formative assessment strategies, and Accountable Talk
- 100% dedication to the successful completion of the project



## CONCLUSION

Empowering Creative Minds LLC looks forward to working with Yonkers Public Schools and supporting your efforts to promote building capacity and enhancing pedagogy. Empowering Creative Minds LLC is confident that we can meet the challenges ahead and are ready to partner with you in delivering professional learning and coaching sessions.

If you have any questions related to this proposal, please contact me at your convenience by email at [info@ecminds.org](mailto:info@ecminds.org), or by phone at 914.263.5402 or 914.512.8971. I will be in touch with you this week to schedule a follow-up discussion of the proposal.

Thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Ida M. D'Ugo'.

Ida M. D'Ugo, Ed.D.  
Founder





## References:

Aguilar, E. (2020). *Coaching for equity*. Jossey-Bass.

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Darling-Hammond, L. Hyler, M. E., & Gardner, M. (2017). *Effective professional development. Research brief*. Learning Policy Institute. [https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/Effective\\_Teacher\\_Professional\\_Development\\_BRIEF.pdf](https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/Effective_Teacher_Professional_Development_BRIEF.pdf).

Labone, E., & Long, J. (2016). Features of effective professional learning: A case study of the implementation of a system-based professional learning model. *Professional Development in Education*, 42(1), 54–77.

Scherff, L. (2018, January 4). *Distinguishing professional learning from professional development*. Institute of Education Sciences (IES) Home Page, a part of the U.S. Department of Education. [https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/pacific/blogs/blog2\\_DistinguishingProfLearning.asp#:~:text=In%20contrast%2C%20professional%20learning%2C%20when.in%20their%20own%20teaching%20contexts](https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/pacific/blogs/blog2_DistinguishingProfLearning.asp#:~:text=In%20contrast%2C%20professional%20learning%2C%20when.in%20their%20own%20teaching%20contexts).