



**MONTGOMERY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

Request for Proposals (RFP)

Conversion School

September 3, 2019

Montgomery County Board of Education

307 South Decatur Street • P.O. Box 1991 • Montgomery, AL 36102-1991

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www.preparingstudentsforlife.com

Introduction

As authorizers of Public Charter Schools, the Montgomery Public Schools (MPS) School Board is pleased to explore the option of seeking proposals for a high quality conversion charter school in the district. For this endeavor, MPS is seeking proposals from Education Service Providers (ESPs) with a preference for experienced Education Management Organizations to administer all of the educational services of a school or feeder pattern within our district.

Characteristics of the Schools the District is Most Interested in Authorizing

MPS is committed to receiving applications for converting a school or feeder pattern. We are seeking applicants who can provide design, implementation, and/or management services to support the district's vision. In order to assist you in your application, we are providing you with specific information about the types of charter applications we are most interested in receiving. This information was gathered through gap-analysis and research.

In response to the research and needs assessment process, MPS is seeking proposals that will specifically do the following for at-risk students:

- Identify foundational gaps and accelerate the learning of students identified as two or more grade levels behind peers
- Prepare students who are proficient with state literacy expectations by grade 3
- Utilize an embedded Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Math (STEAM) approach for all grade levels

In meeting these goals, the conversion charter will engage and empower the learner through technology and enable teachers and leaders to prepare students to be a productive member of a globally diverse society. This focus is directly aligned with the priorities outlined in the MPS Strategic Plan.

An "at-risk" student is defined as a student who has an economic or academic disadvantage that requires special services and assistance to succeed in educational programs. The term includes, but is not limited to, students who are members of economically disadvantaged families, students who are identified as having special education needs, students who are limited in English proficiency, students who are at risk of dropping out of high school, and students who do not meet minimum standards of academic proficiency.

We are seeking an ESP who will collaborate with Montgomery Public Schools to, decrease the identified achievement gaps on both proficiency and growth between student subgroups. Secondly, we anticipate a measurable increase in the satisfaction level of parents and guardians whose at-risk students are served by the charter school. Thirdly, we anticipate that the charter school will demonstrate that the expectations set forth can be met in a financially sound and responsible manner, within the financial resources allocated to the charter school under Act No. 2015-3.

Evaluation Process

Complete petitions for charter schools proposing to open for 2020-2021 must be submitted online through <https://charter.tools/> no later than 4:00 pm on Tuesday, September 17, 2019. All requested content must be included and all formatting guidelines must be followed in order for an application to be considered complete. The evaluation process will include four steps of review and are summarized as follows:

1. Initial Review of Charter Application

The Superintendent and/or Superintendent's designee will complete the initial review of the charter application to determine if the applicant has met all the requirements to be considered for full review. Incomplete petitions will not be considered for 2020-2021 and must be resubmitted in a subsequent annual application round. If the application is determined to be complete, the charter application will move on to **Step 2**. If the application is not complete, the review process will terminate, and the applicant will be issued a denial letter with the reason and area of incompleteness noted.

2. Academic Review of Charter Application and Operational Review of Charter Application

This review will be completed by review team members specific to each area of the application using the <https://charter.tools/> program. The applications will be reviewed for program innovation, a demonstrably effective curriculum and academic plan, solid financial planning, depth and breadth of community support, evidence of strong academic leadership and an effective board, and carefully designed accountability measures.

3. Full External Team Review

Once each area has been reviewed by team members specific to each area, an external review team will review the application(s). Once the full review team has scored each application using the application rubric, applicants who have submitted a complete petition will be scheduled for an applicant interview.

4. Capacity Interview and Public Hearing

An interview will be scheduled for each applicant where the review team will ask clarifying questions. The number of people to be interviewed and to be present at the capacity interview is determined by the applicant group. Please limit the number to no more than ten, if possible. In addition to a capacity interview, a public hearing will be held in the community where the school is to be located.

5. Board Review as Authorizer

The team will then submit the application(s), completed scored rubric, and details of the discussions from the full review to the MPS Superintendent for final review. The Superintendent will then present the application to the Montgomery Public Schools Board of Education for final review and approval or denial.

The board may, pursuant to Alabama Act 2015-03, approve or deny the application within 60 days of the submission of a complete application, by a resolution adopted at a public meeting of the Board. If the Board approves the application, it may include reasonable and appropriate conditions that the applicant must satisfy prior to the execution of a charter contract. If the Board denies the application, it will provide an explanation for the reasons for the denial.

Applicant Code of Conduct

The Superintendent and members of the MPS School Board are obligated by state law to make decisions in the best interests of children, free from personal or political influences. Similarly, charter school applicants have the responsibility of respecting and upholding the integrity of the charter school application process.

Specifically, charter school applicants shall not:

1. Initiate, or attempt to initiate, any activity with the Superintendent or an MPS School Board member that is prohibited by the Code of Governmental Ethics;
2. Direct any communications, including application documents, to the superintendent or an MPS School Board member at any point during the application submission and evaluation process.

It is the responsibility of the charter applicant to ensure proper citation and acknowledgement of any sources included within the application. Any charter application that is found to be plagiarized will be submitted for disqualification. Charter school applicants in violation of these requirements may be deemed ineligible for consideration of charter school approval.

Public Disclosure

All charter school proposals submitted to MPS are considered public records and are subject to public release. Redaction of personal information is an applicant responsibility. Applicants are requested to provide redacted submissions of any file that includes personal information.

In addition, applicants are advised that neither School Board members, the Superintendent, nor district staff will comment on the contents of any application submission during the review and evaluation period, outside of the established public processes for this purpose (School Board meetings, Public Hearing); in the event of media inquiries, the district will refer individuals to an applicant's primary contact using the information included in this application.

2019 Request for Proposals Timeline for August 2020 Opening

Milestone	Date
Release of RFP	September 3, 2019
Applicant Workshop This session will provide those interested in applying for a charter in this cycle with an overview of the process; walkthrough of the application; and a walkthrough of the timeline	Please call Kristy Hatch 223-6840 for appointment
Application Due	September 17, 2019
Evaluation Teams, Review Proposals, Applicant Interview, and Public Hearing	September 18-30, 2019
MPS Application Decision	October 1, 2019