



CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG BOARD OF EDUCATION

**Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center
600 East Fourth Street, 5th Floor
Charlotte, NC 28202**

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL SERVICES FOR A SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH PARTNER

January 13, 2023

I. INTRODUCTION

1.1 WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education ("Board" or "CMS") is requesting informal proposals ("RFP") from qualified firms or individual consultants interested in providing Executive Search Consultant Services for the position of Superintendent for CMS to express their interest by responding to this RFP.

This RFP is open to any service provider who would like to respond, and the Board encourages participation from minority-owned, women-owned, and veteran-owned businesses. It is not the intention of this RFP to put this service out for bid. The objective of this RFP is to select a search firm to assist the Board and facilitate the search process for a new Superintendent.

1.2 BACKGROUND

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education is seeking a new Superintendent to implement solutions to accelerate student achievement, engage families and the community in student success, and continue to address the challenges to learning presented by the global pandemic. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools educates more than 141,000 students in 181 schools working with more than 18,000 staff members. CMS is proud of its diverse mix of students who represent 184 countries and speak 204 languages and dialects. Our student population is primarily 35.9% Black, 29.6% Hispanic or Latino, 24% white, and 7% Asian.

The Board seeks an experienced Superintendent who is familiar with our schools' successes and challenges. The Superintendent must have a strong belief in the innate talent of every student and demonstrate an unrelenting pursuit in closing opportunity and achievement gaps that exist between students. The successful candidate must be committed to uplifting student voice, bringing families into decision-making, and supporting teachers, educators, and all school staff in the success of our students. The Board seeks a candidate who has a solid foundation in instruction and how students learn, as well as a belief that learning does not happen in a vacuum and is most effective when students feel supported and have access to services that prioritize their physical and mental health. Candidates must have demonstrated experience improving outcomes and closing opportunity gaps for students of color, multi-lingual learners, students with disabilities, and students of diverse socio-economic backgrounds. The Board operates under a [Student Outcomes Focused Governance](#) framework.

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg School system is governed by a nine-member school board, comprised of six district members and three at-large members, who serve four-year staggered terms. The Board is charged with hiring, supervising, and evaluating the Superintendent. The Board is also the corporate policy-making body for the district, and the Superintendent and staff provide the leadership to cause Board policies to be implemented. The Superintendent, as the Board's chief executive officer, is responsible for ensuring that academic and business operations are being carried out in accordance with the lawful rules of the Board as either set forth by Board action or in Board policy. The Superintendent is also responsible for accomplishing reasonable interpretation of the Board's goals within the boundaries provided by the Board's guardrails, Board policy, State, and Federal law. The Superintendent is obligated to implement the school district's policies and budget. Therefore, it is essential the Superintendent demonstrates: a) educational leadership; b) administrative and leadership skills; and c) the ability to communicate and interface effectively with the community and its institutions. A specific job description will be developed by the Search Committee and selected search firm.

1.3 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community Engagement is key to the success of our school system. This superintendent search process began in the fall of 2022 with Community Engagement, which included listening sessions, stakeholder interviews, and online surveys. Although these community engagement efforts were thorough and the feedback aligned with the Board’s vision and values, additional Community Engagement by the selected search firm will be needed to ensure community input is representative of all geographic, demographic, and socio-economic groups in our county. This may require targeted survey collections and a final public engagement session(s) as deemed necessary by the Search Committee. All completed community engagement information is available at <https://charmeckschools.org/superintendentsearch>.

1.4 TIMELINE

The Search Committee intends to work with urgency to appoint a Superintendent by April/May 2023. This search will be conducted at an accelerated pace given the competitive marketplace for superintendents. We are looking for a search partner that can deliver excellent services to enable the Board to attract strong, innovative candidates for this position. Interested firms or individuals must be willing to commit the necessary staff resources to accommodate our appointment timeline.

The table below shows the preliminary timeline. Dates are subject to change by the Search Committee. Any changes will be posted at <https://charmeckschools.org/superintendentsearch>. The deadline for responding to this RFP is **Thursday, February 2, 2023**.

* Week Starting	Board	Action	Milestone	Date	Time	Location
1/2/2023	Jan 4 - Committee Meeting	Create and Approve Timeline and Review and Revise RFP	Search Kickoff	1/4/2023	11:00 AM	CMGC
1/9/2023	Jan 10 - Board Meeting	BOE Approves Timeline & RFP Process		1/10/2023	6:00 PM	CMGC
	Jan 10 - Committee Meeting	Finalize RFP		1/10/2023	Post Board	CMGC
	Jan 13 - RFP Goes Live	RFP Goes Live & Press Release	RFP Live			
1/14/2023		RFP live				
1/23/2023	Jan 25 - Committee Meeting	RFP live		1/25/2023	9:00 AM	CMGC
1/30/2023	Committee Meeting	Committee Search Firm Evaluation				
	Feb 2 - RFP Closed		RFP Closed			
2/4/2023	Committee Meeting	Committee Search Firm Selection & Finalize Contract				
	Board Meeting	BOE Approves Search Firm Contract	Search Firm Selected			
2/13/2023	Board Meeting	Search Firm / Board Working Sessions				
2/20/2023		Search Firm launches Search	Launch Search			
2/27/2023		Search Firm Recruiting				
3/4/2023	Committee Meeting	Search Firm Recruiting				
3/13/2023	March 17 - Applicant Deadline	Search Firm Application Deadline & Committee Evaluation	Application Deadline			
3/20/2023	Committee Meeting	Committee Narrow Finalists	Select Finalists			
3/27/2023	Small Group/Individual	Finalists: Candidate Interviews & Evaluation				
4/3/2023	Board Meeting	Meet to Select Superintendent	Select Superintendent			
4/10/2023		Contract Negotiations & Transition Planning	Spring Break			
4/17/2023		Transition Planning				
4/24/2023	April 25 - Board Meeting	Approve Contract, Effective Start Date and Transition Plan	Superintendent Hire Approved	4/25/2023	6:00 PM	CMGC

II. SCOPE OF WORK

Services expected from the search partner include:

- 1) Assisting the Search Committee in conducting a search that generates a diverse pool of highly qualified candidates, including women and people of color.
- 2) Identifying, conducting background checks for, vetting, and soliciting applications from superior candidates locally and nationally.
- 3) Maintaining communication with candidates and responding to certain candidate inquiries and information requests.
- 4) Screening the initial applicant pool and providing a report on each applicant, using criteria developed in partnership with the Search Committee.
- 5) Sourcing and recommending candidates with whom the Search Committee will conduct interviews.
- 6) Conducting reference and background checks on all interviewees, as required, including more extensive reference checks on the finalists.
- 7) Providing timely advice and direct assistance to the Search Committee on the overall conduct of the search, including the interview process.
- 8) Assisting the Search Committee in coordinating candidate interviews and making necessary arrangements for candidate travel and accommodations.
- 9) Performing other related services in the conduct of the search.
- 10) In addition to delivering effective, transparent, and expert-level advice and assistance to the Search Committee, the ideal search partner will think creatively about candidate recruitment. A suitable candidate pool will provide opportunities for the Search Committee to assess a range of candidates who could lead the transformative agenda for CMS to improve student experiences, accelerate outcomes, close opportunity gaps, and increase instructional quality and rigor across the district.

III. PROPOSAL FORMAT

Your proposal consists of every element of your response to this RFP.

Your technical proposal must include the following six things:

- (3.1) provide an introduction;
- (3.2) propose your approach for this project;
- (3.3) share your background and qualifications;
- (3.4) describe your team;
- (3.5) provide three references; and
- (3.6) outline pricing structure.

3.1 INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On the cover or first page of your proposal, please provide contact information, including name, title, address, email, and phone number.

Please provide a brief introduction describing why you would be a good partner on this project and how you will highlight Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools and Mecklenburg County to attract strong candidates.

3.2 APPROACH TO SCOPE OF WORK

This section is where you tell us how your solution meets and/or exceeds our needs. Then, please describe how you would deliver the solutions you outlined above in **Section II. Scope of Work**.

This section is a critical component of your proposal and should include a detailed description of your work plan and project organization. In addition to a comprehensive timeline and description of services provided, this section should include an initial outline of how your firm will identify and recruit diverse, knowledgeable, and qualified candidates who are ready to tackle the ambitious goals set forth by the Board in partnership with parents, educators, students, and members of the broader community.

Please be concise. Feel free to use any medium (e.g., graphics, links to your work, etc.) that helps make your case.

3.3 SERVICE PROVIDER BACKGROUND AND COMPANY QUALIFICATIONS

Describe your firm's history, structure, strategy, and work. Focus on your ability to be a good partner on this project. Please list any relevant awards your team has received. CMS reserves the right to request a copy of your firm's audited financial statements, including a detailed balance sheet and profit and loss statement for three years, or similar financial reports, to evaluate the financial strength of your company.

Specifically, this should include:

- 1) A summary of your firm's experience in conducting executive searches including, but not limited to, executive searches for superintendents, educational leaders, or comparable leadership positions in municipal, county, or state government. It is preferred that applicant firms or consultants have recent experience in conducting a successful search (selection of a candidate and acceptance of a position, as facilitated by your firm) for a superintendent of an urban K-12 school district with at least 50,000 students.
- 2) A detailed list of assignments in K-12 education, including the names of client institutions, titles of positions for which searches were conducted, and a brief description of the processes executed during each search, and length of time serving each assignment.
- 3) A list of the steps and actions your firm has taken to make diversity, equity, and inclusion a part of their operation. The Board is looking for a partner that considers inclusive leadership in its decision-making processes and recruitment tactics. This should include evidence of commitment to and successful experience in recruiting outstanding leaders in superintendent positions, or comparable roles, from culturally and racially diverse backgrounds.

4) Conflicts of Interest/Off-Limits Policy

- a. What are your firm's off-limits policies? Please be specific in describing how your policies affect your ability to ethically source qualified candidates for this search.
- b. Has your firm ever had any type of financial relationship with a candidate who was included in any search involving your firm? If so, when and how was the relationship disclosed to your client?

5) List any current legal claims, whether officially filed or not, pending against your firm in the last 5 years.

6) How do you manage candidate confidentiality on a search such as this?

3.4 STAFFING AND KEY STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

Describe your team that would work on this project. Include a list with each team member, a summary of relevant credentials and experience, and an indication of proposed time commitment for each staff member. Make the case for why each team member will be great partners on this project.

Please provide bios, resumes, or whatever you think best highlights the strength of your team that will be working on this project. Define how your team will be structured; if your team includes multiple firms, please let us know how long you have worked together. Please identify and provide contact information for the lead staff person for this project.

3.5 REFERENCES AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Please provide three (3) client references, including contact information and details of your history with each reference. Preferably, client references should be similar in size, scope, and complexity to CMS. Note incorrect contact information will be considered as a negative reference.

3.6 PRICING PROPOSAL

Please describe and itemize all costs associated with your proposed deliverables for this search. Feel free to attach supplemental documentation describing those costs. Comprehensively describe the intended pricing structure of services (percentage-based, retained search, contingency search, flat fee, etc.) and give thorough reasoning as to why this pricing strategy fits with the services provided.

Understanding the level of effort and cost for each deliverable will help us better understand the structure of the proposed work.

Please note:

- All prices are inclusive of travel. No additional charges, including travel lodging, food, miscellaneous expenses and any other expenses will be allowed.
- Any travel, accommodation, or other costs related to having applicants meet in person will be reimbursed to the search firm. These costs do not need to be included as part of the pricing proposal.
- The total cost that is quoted in your response to this RFP will be considered a best and final offer.
- You will bear the onus of any errors made in pricing the services (e.g., omitting a component of the services).
- Any cost incurred in preparing or submitting information in response to this RFP is your firm's sole responsibility; the Board will not reimburse for RFP preparation, travel, or lodging expenses incurred.

IV. RFP CONTACT

With the release of this RFP, please address all communications and questions to the Board’s General Counsel, André F. Mayes, by electronic mail: superintendentrfp2023@cms.k12.nc.us. In order to maintain the highest ethical standards, except as instructed in this document, please do not contact individual Board members or CMS staff during the RFP response and selection period, January 13, 2023 – February 2, 2023. After the proposal deadline, you may not communicate with the RFP contact or any other CMS official or employee, except to respond to a request from the RFP contact.

RFP Contact Information

André F. Mayes
General Counsel
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center
600 East Fourth Street, 5th Floor
Charlotte, NC 28202
980-343-6228

V. SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

1. Firms interested in responding to this RFP, should respond in electronic format. Please submit your final proposal to André F. Mayes, superintendentrfp2023@cms.k12.nc.us.
2. Firms must supply the necessary information to this RFP no later than **Thursday, February 2, 2023** by close of business. Any proposals submitted after close of business on **February 2, 2023** will not be considered.
3. Only information received electronically in response to this RFP will be evaluated. Any oral communication is considered unofficial and non-binding.

Responder has read and understands the conditions (if any) set forth in this RFP and agrees to them without exception. Please include a signed copy of this entire document with your RFP response.

Name: _____

Company: _____

Date: _____

DISCLOSURE

Please be aware responses to this RFP may be subject to disclosure under the North Carolina Public Records Act. If your firm is selected as the Board’s search partner, financial terms of the agreement will be public information. For clarification, please contact the Board’s General Counsel at 980-343-6228.