

**REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS FROM NEW OPERATORS**  
*Interested in operating a charter school in the Achievement School District  
opening in the 2013-14 school year*

**ISSUED FEBRUARY 1, 2012**

**LOIs DUE MARCH 1, 2012**  
**PROPOSALS DUE APRIL 2, 2012**



**Bill Haslam, Governor**  
**Kevin Huffman, Commissioner of Education**



**Chris Barbic, Superintendent**

*Please direct all questions to Margo Roen at [margo.roen@tn.gov](mailto:margo.roen@tn.gov)*



The Request For Qualifications documents for the Tennessee Achievement School District were developed in collaboration with the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA), and meet NACSA's standards for quality charter school authorizing.

A quality application packet:

- Is comprehensive in scope
- Provides clear guidance on content and format
- Differentiates between new and experienced operators

A quality application process:

- Broadly solicits charter applications
- Publicizes the authorizer's priorities
- Encourages replication of high quality models

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Dear Charter or Transformation Partner Applicant,

In January 2010, the Tennessee legislature enacted the *Tennessee First to the Top Act* – the most sweeping education law passed in Tennessee in over two decades. Among the most notable components of this new, bi-partisan legislation was the creation of the Achievement School District (ASD), a wholly new division of the state’s Department of Education. The ASD is a key component of Tennessee’s strategy to dramatically increase student achievement in schools across the state.

The development and release of this Request for Qualifications marks an important step in the evolution of the ASD. Applicants who choose to move forward in this process will be only the second generation of ASD charters and Transformation Partners, and as pioneers, will be provided the opportunity to lead the way and create powerful “proof points” for what is possible for all students in Tennessee.

On behalf of the ASD students across the state, we sincerely thank you for your interest in applying to operate a high-performing school as part of our portfolio. Whether you are applying to operate a single charter, add to an existing network of schools, create a new high-performing charter management organization or working as a Transformation Partner, opening and running great school(s) requires a tremendous amount of commitment and hard work. The ASD is committed to quality in every aspect of our operation, and we firmly believe that quality authorizing leads to quality schools. We want to be clear that we at the ASD are committed to authorizing charters only to the leadership teams and organizations we believe demonstrate the capacity necessary to operate high-performing schools.

To that end, we have worked closely with a national third-party, the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA), to develop a rigorous, thorough, and transparent application and review process. NACSA’s expertise and experience in authorizing high-performing charter operators across the country will help ensure we create the appropriate practices and policy for charters to excel.

As you complete the process, please feel free to contact the Achievement School District with any questions you have regarding the application or review. You can direct questions to Margo Roen, Charter School Portfolio Director, at [margo.roen@tn.gov](mailto:margo.roen@tn.gov). Our team is committed to responding to your questions within 24 hours and ensuring the application and review process is fair and transparent.

Again, thank you for your commitment to improving the quality of education for ASD students across Tennessee.

Sincerely,

Chris Barbic  
Superintendent

Margo Roen  
Charter School Portfolio Director

## ASD OVERVIEW

### It's time in Tennessee

We have an unprecedented opportunity to transform Tennessee's lowest performing schools into the best schools in the state. In doing so, we position ourselves as a leader in education reform and provide infinitely more choices for our students and families as they navigate an increasingly competitive world.

The Achievement School District (ASD) is a groundbreaking approach to public education that provides innovative educational options for Tennessee's students and families. The ASD will transform the lowest performing schools in the state. We are going to flip the paradigm: the bottom 5% of schools will perform in the top quartile in the state within five years.

### The Bottom 5%

Schools in the bottom 5% are identified in the state's [ESEA waiver](#) as "Priority Schools." The priority list\* consists of 85 schools spread over 3 districts:

	K - 8	High School	Total
Memphis	54	15	69
Davidson	9	0	9
Hamilton	5	2	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>85</b>

\*NOTE: The priority schools list (ASD-eligible schools) will be adjusted every three years. The ASD-eligible list will be re-run this summer (2012) and then again every three years moving forward.

Given that 69 of the 85 schools are located in Memphis, the foundation for the Achievement Schools will be built there, building additional capacity through charter and Transformation Partner schools. The primary strategy in Nashville, which currently has nine ASD eligible schools, and Chattanooga, which has seven, will be to authorize charter school operators and Transformation Partners.

### ASD Students

All ASD schools must serve ASD-zoned students. ASD-zoned students are students in the attendance zone for a Priority School. To put it another way, any student zoned to attend a school identified as part of the bottom 5% is eligible to enroll in an ASD school.

## ASD Partnership

### *Policy*

The Achievement School District will create an environment in which extraordinary school turnaround operators can thrive. The ASD will work closely with the State Department of Education to ensure that state policy supports the radical interventions necessary for successful, sustainable school turnaround.

### *Facilities*

The ASD will serve as the facility broker for new school operators, ensuring that (1) turnaround operators have timely access to facilities, (2) turnaround operators are able to operate in a facility at a reasonable cost, and (3) turnaround operators have access to facilities that are maintained in good condition.

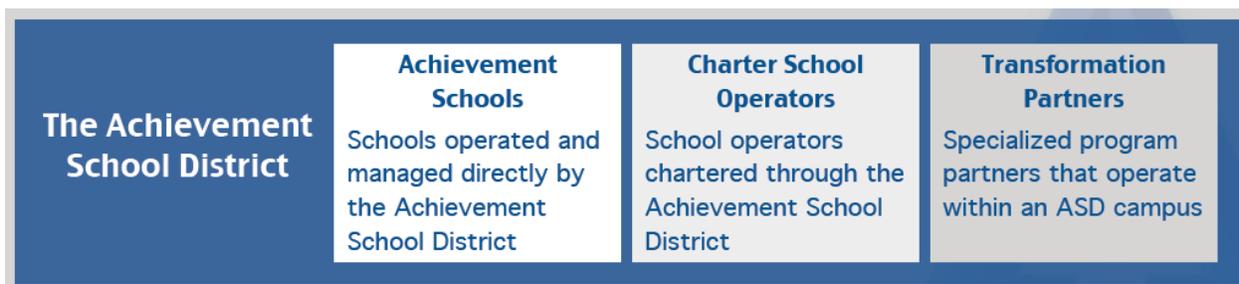
### *Community Partnerships*

The ASD will also serve as an agent for meaningful community partnerships. Given that school operators will be recruited from around the country, the ASD will serve as the relationship manager to (1) ensure a transparent process for local partners to engage ASD-eligible schools and (2) ensure new school operators have a clear process through which to explore high quality partnerships.

## ASD Strategy

We are creating the opportunity to [build a system of school choice within a community](#). The feeder pattern strategy enables opportunities for innovation to better serve students and families in a neighborhood because they are aligned from kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Multiple outstanding elementary or middle schools give families the prerogative to assess the styles and approaches of each school and choose the one that meets their students' needs best.

The ASD can either authorize charter schools or manage schools directly (called Achievement Schools). For example, in a feeder where 8 of the 10 schools are in the bottom 5%, the opportunity for vertical alignment may call for more ASD Achievement Schools, whereas a feeder pattern with only one bottom 5% school may make more sense for the ASD to authorize a charter school.



# 2012 Request for Qualifications for New School Operators

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## INTRODUCTION

In the spring of 2011, the Tennessee legislature enacted, and Governor Bill Haslam signed into law a bold initiative to provide public school children and families stronger educational opportunities. Through the Achievement School District (ASD), Tennessee is now turning around the lowest achieving schools in the state.

The ASD is a key component of Tennessee's strategy to increase student achievement in urban and rural schools. The ASD uses a portfolio strategy to manage schools and improve student achievement. In accordance with its status as a charter school authorizer, the Tennessee Achievement School District (ASD) is pleased to invite proposals from non-profit organizations seeking to open quality charter schools in Fall 2013 or later.

Applicants may propose one of three approaches to starting a charter school:

### School Types

- **New Start** is for applicants intending to find or develop a facility separate from that in which a persistently low performing school – as identified by the state – is located, OR intending to operate in a persistently low performing school side-by-side with the existing school and without any students assigned to the proposed school. No students will be assigned to a New Start school. Enrollment is by affirmative choice of eligible families.
- **Phase-In** is for applicants intending to take over an existing persistently low performing school in a phased approach. For example, a high school Phase-In might start with a 9th grade that replaces the existing school's 9th grade while the rest of the existing school (grades 10-12) continues to operate. In the second year, the Phase-In school would serve grades 9-10 while the existing school served grades 11-12. This proposed phasing continues until the Phase-In school serves all grades previously served by the identified school. Students in the Phase-In grades will be assigned to your school as their default neighborhood option. They will need to affirmatively opt out of your school if they wish to attend a different school. Students not assigned to your school but otherwise eligible to attend an ASD school may enroll contingent on availability of seats.
- **Takeover** is for applicants proposing to assume immediate responsibility for all students in all grades of a persistently low performing school. The previous school will no longer exist. Students in all grades will be assigned to the Takeover school as their default neighborhood option. They will need to affirmatively opt out of the Takeover school if they want a different option. Students not assigned to the Takeover school but otherwise eligible to attend an ASD school may enroll contingent on availability of seats.

**Note:** In Nashville, elementary traditionally serves grades K-4, middle school serves grades 5-8, and high school serves grades 9-12. In Memphis there are a variety of configurations for K-8 with most high schools serving grades 9-12.

### Automatic Waivers of State Statutes and Rules

By submitting this application, the applicant requests a waiver of all education statutes and rules of the State Board or Department of Education, except those listed in T.C.A. § 49-13-105 or included by reference (such as statutes and rules related to licensing of charter school teachers) in Title 49, Chapter 13 (the Tennessee Public Charter Schools Act).

## TIMELINE

Process Stage	Date (2012)
<b>RFQ Release</b>	<b>February 1</b>
The ASD releases the Request for Qualifications that includes instructions for groups applying to operate an ASD school beginning in the 2013-14 school year.	
<b>Online Submission Portal Launched</b>	<b>No later than February 10</b>
ASD will distribute template documents for the applicants' use in preparing applications. Applications will only be accepted via upload to the Review Room online application submission platform: <a href="http://tn-asd-app.review-room.net">http://tn-asd-app.review-room.net</a> .	
<b>Web-based Orientation Sessions for Prospective Applicants</b>	<b>Session 1: Review Room and LOI: February 15, 11am and 1pm Session 2: Application and Evaluation Overview: Date and Time TBA</b>
The ASD will conduct Webinar orientation sessions for prospective applicants. The sessions will provide interested groups with information about the RFQ content and process, including a demonstration of the Review Room online application upload process.	
<b>Letters of Intent Due</b>	<b>March 1</b>
<b><i>The MANDATORY Letter of Intent must be submitted via upload to Review Room by 5pm Central Time. Late Submissions will not be accepted. Applicants who fail to submit an LOI will NOT be permitted to submit a full application.</i></b>	
<b>Proposals Due</b>	<b>April 2</b>
<b><i>Proposals must be submitted in complete and final form by 5pm CDT. Late or incomplete proposals will not be accepted.</i></b>	
<b>Application Evaluation and Due Diligence Reviews</b>	<b>April 2-30</b>
ASD and TN DOE staff and teams of external evaluators will evaluate proposals and conduct independent due diligence on applicant groups.	
<b>Applicant Capacity Interviews</b>	<b>May 1-3 (specific dates/times/locations TBA)</b>
Evaluation teams will interview applicant teams to explore questions and concerns raised by the applications and to assess founding group capacity to implement the proposed program effectively.	
<b>Superintendent's Decisions</b>	<b>June 1</b>
The Superintendent will make qualification decisions based on evaluation team recommendations and any additional information considered by the ASD. Applicants deemed qualified will be eligible to operate an ASD charter school contingent on designation of a specific enrollment zone and facility based on ASD jurisdiction determinations and facilities matching.	

## APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

The Proposal Narrative section of this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) seeks information about all major aspects of:

- the educational program design;
- the operations plan;
- the financial plan; and
- the applicant's capacity to implement each aspect of the plan effectively.

### Specifications

- Applicants MUST submit applications electronically through the Review Room platform and must use the following templates:
  - Letter of Intent Template (MS Word Document)
  - Proposal Coversheet and Enrollment Projection Template (MS Word Document)
  - Proposal Narrative Template (MS Word Document)
  - Staffing Chart Template (MS Word Document)
  - Charter School Board Member Information Sheet Template (MS Word Document)
  - Statement of Assurances Template (MS Word Document)
  - Financial Plan Workbook (MS Excel Document)
- All elements of the proposal must be typed with 1-inch page margins and 12-point font, single-spaced, in the designated spaces in the templates.
- Each major section (School Overview, Program Design, etc.) must begin on a separate page, as indicated in the template document. Do not exceed 60 pages for the proposal narrative. (Attachments are not included in the narrative page limit.)
- If a particular question does not apply to your team or proposal, simply respond "Not Applicable," AND state the reason this question is not applicable to your team or proposal.
- All required attachments should be clearly labeled and uploaded in the file format specified and with the file names provided.
- The following is a list of attachments to accompany the application:
  1. Leadership Team and Governing Board Resumes and Biographies
  2. Course Scope and Sequence
  3. Curriculum Development Timeline
  4. Academic and Exit Standards
  5. School Calendar and Schedule
  6. Enrollment Policy
  7. Student Discipline Policy
  8. Evidence of Support from Community Partners
  9. Principal Candidate Resume and Biography
  10. School Administrator Resumes and Biographies
  11. Articles of Incorporation, Non-Profit and Tax Exempt Status, Board Bylaws and Policies
  12. Statement of Assurances
  13. Organization Charts
  14. Board Member Information Sheets

15. Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest
  16. ESP Documentation
  17. Staffing Chart
  18. Personnel Policy
  19. Principal and Faculty Evaluation Tools
  20. Draft Facility Agreement
  21. Description of Proposed Facility
  22. Start-Up Plan
  23. Insurance Coverage
  24. Financial Plan Workbook
  25. Budget Narrative
- When submitting resumes and biographies, label each document with the individual's affiliation with the proposed school (board member, principal, teacher, etc.).
  - Complete all sheets in the Financial Plan Workbook.
  - Review all elements of your application for completeness before submitting.
  - Late submissions will not be accepted.

### Submission Instructions

1. Prepare your application, **using the templates and online submission process established by the ASD. The online process, with templates and instructions, will be available no later than February 10, 2012.** In the interim, you may begin developing application content in standard MS Word format. Any such content can subsequently be pasted into the template documents and uploaded via the standard process. You will upload each element of the application (cover sheet, narrative, financial workbook, attachments) separately.
2. Upload each of your documents to the online application system, Review Room: <http://tn-asd-app.review-room.net>. **Be sure to upload the documents in the file format specified.** An overview of how to use Review Room will be included in the ASD's orientation sessions for potential applicants.
3. To be eligible to submit a full proposal for the 2013-2014 school year cycle, potential applicants **must first submit the LOI, School(s) Proposal Overview, and Applicant Eligibility by 5:00pm CST on March 1, 2012.**
4. You may SUBMIT your application after you have uploaded all required documents and filled out the application submission checklist. Review Room will not allow you to SUBMIT your application until you have met these requirements.
5. Once the system has accepted your SUBMIT command, your application will be both submitted and locked. You will not be able to make additional revisions.
6. **Review Room will automatically shut down access to all applications at 5pm CDT on April 2.** Ensure you allow adequate time to upload all documents before the deadline. Applications not SUBMITTED, including applications that are partially uploaded, will not be accepted.

## PROPOSAL COVER SHEET & ENROLLMENT PROJECTION

**Primary Contact.** Identify the **primary point of contact** for your team. This individual will serve as the contact for all communications, scheduling, and notices regarding your application. The Primary Contact should be the owner of the team’s Review Room account to ensure that your team receives all general communications promptly.

*Note:* As with all aspects of your application, names and contact information of the Primary Contact will become public information.

**Name of proposed school:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary contact person:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mailing address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Street/ PO Box

\_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip

**Phone:** (day) \_\_\_\_\_ (evening) \_\_\_\_\_

**Email address:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Fax:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary contact for facilities planning:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_ **E-mail:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of team or entity applying:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Names, roles, and current employment of all persons on applicant team (you may add lines as needed):**

Full Name	Current Job Title and Employer	Position with Proposed School

**\*Does this applicant team have charter school applications under consideration by any other authorizer(s) in the United States?**       Yes       No

If yes, complete the table below, adding lines as needed.

State	Authorizer	Proposed School Name	Application Due Date	Decision Date

Provide the intended opening year for the proposed school, and identify the school type (New Start, Phase-in or Takeover).

Opening Year	New Start, Phase-in, or Takeover?	*Geographic Community	Opening Grades	Grade Levels at Full Enrollment

\*Identification of Geographic Community may be as specific as a neighborhood or as general as the school district targeted for school location.

**Model or Focus of Proposed School** (e.g., Arts, College Prep, Dual-Language, etc.):

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**\*Does the school expect to contract or partner with a Charter Management Organization (CMO) or other non-profit education service provider (ESP) for school management/operation?**

Yes       No

If yes, identify the ESP or other partner organization: \_\_\_\_\_

**\* Tennessee law currently permits an operator to contract with non-profit service providers. It does not permit operators to contract with for profit service providers. *If the applicant intends to partner with a non-profit service provider or partner that has previous experience in operating a school, the applicant MUST use the RFQ for Experienced Operators rather than this RFQ version.***

**Proposed Principal/Head of School Information:**

Name of proposed Principal Candidate: \_\_\_\_\_

Current employment: \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**School Enrollment Projection**

Academic Year	Planned Number of Students	Maximum Number of Students	Grade Levels Served
Year 1 (specify)			
Year 2			
Year 3			
Year 4			
Year 5			
At Capacity (specify year)			

## SCHOOL NARRATIVE

Respond to the following questions, limiting your narrative response to all sections to 60 pages total, excluding attachments.

### School Overview

The School Overview should provide a concise summary of the following:

- the proposed plan for the school;
- the geographic and population considerations of the school environment;
- the challenges particular to those considerations; and
- the applicant team's capacity to successfully open and operate a high quality school given the above considerations.

- 1. Mission and Vision.** State the mission and vision of the proposed school. The mission is a statement of the fundamental purpose of the school, describing why it exists. The vision statement outlines how the school will operate and what it will achieve in the long term. The mission and vision statement provide the foundation for the entire proposal.

The mission and vision statements, taken together, should:

- Identify the students and community to be served;
- Illustrate what success will look like; and
- Align with the purposes of the Public Charter Schools Act and the Achievement School District.

- 2. Educational Need and Anticipated Student Population.** Describe the anticipated student population, including geographic preferences (if applicable); students' anticipated educational needs; and non-academic challenges the school is likely to encounter. Describe the rationale for selecting the location and student body. Identify any enrollment priorities on which the program is based consistent with applicable restrictions on enrollment eligibility and selection.
- 3. Education Plan/School Design.** Provide an overview of the education program of the proposed school, including major instructional methods and assessment strategies and non-negotiables of the school model. Describe the evidence that demonstrates the school model will be successful in improving academic achievement for the targeted student population. Summarize what the proposed school would do more effectively than the schools that are now serving the targeted population and how the school would achieve its goals.
- 4. Community Engagement.** Describe the relationships, if any, that you have already established to generate community engagement in and support for the proposed school. If you have assessed demand and/or solicited support for the school, briefly describe these activities and summarize their results.
- 5. Leadership and Governance.** List the members of the school's proposed leadership team and governing board, including their roles with the school and their current professional affiliation (add lines to this table as needed.)

Full Name	Current Job Title and Employer	Position with Proposed School

Provide, as **Attachment 1**, full resumes (including contact information) and professional biographies for the individuals listed above.

**6. Enrollment Summary.**

Complete the following table, removing any rows for grades the school will not serve.

Grade Level	Number of Students					
	Year 1 20__	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	At Capacity 20__
Pre-K						
K						
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						

Describe the rationale for the number of students and grade levels served in year one and the basis for the growth plan illustrated above.

## Section 1. Educational Program Design & Capacity

### Education Program

#### Program Overview

Summarize the education program, including primary instructional methods and assessment strategies, and any non-negotiable elements of the school model. Briefly describe the evidence that promises success for this program with the anticipated student population.

#### Curriculum and Instructional Design

Propose a framework for instructional design that both reflects the needs of the anticipated population and ensures all students will meet or exceed the expectations of the Tennessee Curriculum Standards aligned with the Common Core State Standards (available at:

<http://tennessee.gov/education/curriculum.shtml>).

1. Describe the basic learning environment (e.g., classroom-based, independent study), including class size and structure.
2. Provide an overview of the planned curriculum, including, as **Attachment 2**, a sample course scope and sequence for one subject for each division (elementary, middle, high school) the school would serve. In addition, identify course outcomes and demonstrate alignment with the Tennessee Curriculum Standards and Common Core State Standards.
3. If the curriculum is fully developed, summarize curricular choices such as text book selection, by subject, and the rationale for each. Describe the evidence that these curricula will be appropriate and effective for the targeted students.
4. If the curriculum is not already developed, provide, as **Attachment 3**, a plan for how the curriculum will be developed between approval of the application and the opening of the school, including who will be responsible and when key stages will be completed.
5. Describe the primary instructional strategies that the school will expect teachers to use and why they are well-suited for the anticipated student population. Describe the methods and systems teachers will have for providing differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all students.

#### Pupil Performance Standards

Responses to the following items regarding the proposed school's pupil performance standards must be consistent with the Tennessee Curriculum Standards and Common Core State Standards.

1. Describe the pupil performance standards for the school as a whole.
2. Provide, in **Attachment 4**, a complete set of the school's proposed learning standards for one grade for each division the school will serve. Address the skills and knowledge each student will be expected to attain by the end of that grade. If the school will serve only one division, the exit standards provided in response to question 5 in this section will suffice. (Approved schools will be required to submit a full set of learning standards for all grades in the school before opening.)

3. If you plan to adopt or develop additional academic standards beyond the Tennessee Curriculum Standards, explain the types of standards (content areas, grade levels). Describe the adoption or development process that has taken place or will take place. Select one grade level and subject area as an example, and explain how these additional standards exceed the Tennessee Curriculum Standards.
4. Explain the policies and standards for promoting students from one grade to the next. Discuss how and when promotion and graduation criteria will be communicated to parents and students.
5. Provide, in **Attachment 4**, the school's exit standards for graduating students. These should clearly set forth what students in the last grade served will know and be able to do.

### **High School Graduation Requirements (*High Schools Only*)**

High schools approved by the ASD will be expected to meet the Tennessee Graduation Requirements (explained at: <http://www.tn.gov/education/gradreq.shtml>).

1. Describe how the school will meet these requirements. Explain how students will earn credit hours, how grade-point averages will be calculated, what information will be on transcripts, and what elective courses will be offered. If graduation requirements for the school will exceed those required by the State of Tennessee, explain the additional requirements.
2. Explain how the graduation requirements will ensure student readiness for college or other postsecondary opportunities (trade school, military service, or entering the workforce).
3. Explain what systems and structures the school will implement for students at risk of dropping out and/or not meeting the proposed graduation requirements.

### **School Calendar and Schedule**

1. Discuss the annual academic schedule for the school. Explain how the calendar reflects the needs of the educational program. In **Attachment 5**, provide the school's proposed calendar for the first year of operation, including total number of days/hours of instruction.
2. Describe the structure of the school day and week. Include the number of instructional hours/minutes in a day for core subjects such as language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Note the length of the school day, including start and dismissal times. Explain why the school's daily and weekly schedule will be optimal for student learning. Provide the minimum number of hours/minutes per day and week that the school will devote to academic instruction in each grade. Your response should include, in **Attachment 5**, a sample daily and weekly schedule for each division of the school.

### **School Culture**

1. Describe the culture or ethos of the proposed school. Explain how it will promote a positive academic environment and reinforce student intellectual and social development.

2. Explain how you will create and implement this culture for students, teachers, administrators, and parents starting from the first day of school. Describe the plan for enculturating students who enter the school mid-year.
3. Explain how the school culture will take account of and serve students with special needs, including students receiving special education services, English Language Learners, and any students at risk of academic failure.
4. Describe a typical school day from the perspective of a student in a grade that will be served in your first year of operation.
5. Describe a typical day for a teacher in a grade that will be served in your first year of operation.

### **Supplemental Programming**

1. If summer school will be offered, describe the program(s). Explain the schedule and length of the program including the number of hours and weeks. Discuss the anticipated participants including number of students and the methods used to identify them. What are the anticipated resource and staffing needs for these programs?
2. Describe the extra- or co-curricular activities or programming the school will offer; how often they will occur; and how they will be funded.
3. Describe the programs or strategies to address student mental, emotional, and social development and health.
4. If applicable, describe any other student-focused activities and programs that are integral to the educational and student-development plans.

### **Special Populations and At-Risk Students**

Schools are responsible for hiring licensed and endorsed special educators pursuant to law. School personnel shall participate in developing Individualized Education Programs (IEPs); identify and refer students for assessment of special education needs; maintain records; and cooperate in the delivery of special education instruction and services, as appropriate.

1. Describe the overall plan to serve students with special needs, including but not limited to those with Individualized Education Programs or Section 504 plans; English Language Learners; students identified as intellectually gifted; and students at risk of academic failure or dropping out. Identify the special populations and at-risk groups that the school expects to serve, whether through data related to a specifically targeted school or neighborhood or more generalized analysis of the population to be served. Discuss how the course scope and sequence, daily schedule, staffing plans, and support strategies and resources will meet or be adjusted for the diverse needs of students.

2. Explain more specifically how you will identify and meet the learning needs of students with mild, moderate, and severe disabilities in the least restrictive environment possible. Specify the programs, strategies, and supports you will provide, including the following:
  - a. Methods for identifying students with special education needs (and avoiding misidentification);
  - b. Specific instructional programs, practices, and strategies the school will employ to provide a continuum of services; ensure students' access to the general education curriculum; and ensure academic success for students with special education needs;
  - c. Plans for monitoring and evaluating the progress and success of special education students with mild, moderate, and severe needs to ensure the attainment of each student's goals as set forth in the Individualized Education Program (IEP);
  - d. Plans for promoting graduation for students with special education needs (high school only); and
  - e. Plans to have qualified staffing adequate for the anticipated special needs population.
  
3. Explain how the school will meet the needs of English Language Learner (ELL) students, including the following:
  - a. Methods for identifying ELL students (and avoiding misidentification);
  - b. Specific instructional programs, practices, and strategies the school will employ to ensure academic success and equitable access to the core academic program for these students;
  - c. Plans for monitoring and evaluating the progress and success of ELL students, including exiting students from ELL services;
  - d. Means for providing qualified staffing for ELL students.
  
4. Explain how the school will identify and meet the learning needs of students who are performing below grade level and monitor their progress. Specify the programs, strategies, and supports you will provide for these students.
  
5. Explain how the school will identify and meet the needs of intellectually gifted students, including the following:
  - a. Specific research-based instructional programs, practices, strategies, and opportunities the school will employ or provide to enhance their abilities;
  - b. Plans for monitoring and evaluating the progress and success of intellectually gifted students; and
  - c. Means for providing qualified staffing for intellectually gifted students.

### **Student Recruitment and Enrollment**

1. For New Start model schools: Explain the plan for student recruitment and marketing that will provide equal access to interested ASD students and families. Specifically describe the plan for outreach to families in poverty; academically low-achieving students; students with disabilities; and other youth at risk of academic failure.

For Phase-In or Takeover model schools: Explain the plan for student and parent investment in the school turnaround especially how the school plans to ensure parents and students do not opt out of the new school. Describe how this plan will successfully transition and retain

students who currently attend or are zoned to attend the school being replaced. Provide a detailed description of the plan to gain parent and community support.

2. Provide, as **Attachment 6**, the school's Enrollment Policy, which should include the following:
  - a. Tentative dates for application period as well as enrollment deadlines and procedures, including explanation of how the school will receive and process Intent to Enroll forms;
  - b. A timeline and plan for student recruitment/engagement and enrollment;
  - c. Policies and procedures for student waiting lists, withdrawals, re-enrollment, and transfers; and
  - d. Explanation of the purpose of any pre-admission activities for students or parents.

### **Student Discipline**

Describe the planned approach to student discipline. Discuss how students and parents will be informed of the school's Discipline Policy. If already developed, provide as **Attachment 7** the Discipline Policy, which should include the following:

1. Practices the school will use to promote good discipline, including both penalties for infractions and incentives for positive behavior;
2. A preliminary list and definitions of the offenses for which students in the school must (where non-discretionary) and may (where discretionary) be suspended or expelled, respectively;
3. An explanation of how the school will take into account the rights of students with disabilities in disciplinary actions and proceedings; and
4. Procedures for due process when a student is suspended or expelled as a result of a code of conduct violation, including a description of the appeal process that the school will employ for students facing expulsion.

### **Parent and Community Involvement**

1. Describe the role to date of any parents and community members involved in developing the proposed school.
2. Describe how you will engage parents and community members from the time that the school is approved through opening.
3. Describe how you will engage parents in the life of the school (in addition to any proposed governance roles described in Section 2 below). Explain the plan for building family-school partnerships that strengthen support for learning and encourage parental involvement. Describe any commitments or volunteer activities the school will seek from, offer to, or require of parents.
4. Discuss the community resources that will be available to students and parents. Describe any partnerships the school will have with community organizations, businesses, or other educational institutions. Specify the nature, purposes, terms, and scope of services of any such partnerships including any fee-based or in-kind commitments from community organizations or individuals that will enrich student learning opportunities. Include, as **Attachment 8**, existing evidence of support from intended community partners such as letters of intent/commitment, memoranda of understanding, and/or contracts.

### Phase-In/Takeover Planning

*To be completed only by applicants proposing a school Phase-In or Takeover. If you are not proposing a Phase-In or Takeover, mark "Not Applicable."*

ASD welcomes applicants who wish to provide new opportunities to underserved students by transforming chronically underperforming schools through either a Phase-In or Takeover approach. Applicants must have a clear plan for dramatically improving persistently underperforming school cultures, working effectively with an existing school community, significantly raising student achievement, and meeting the needs of at-risk populations. Phase-In and Takeover operators are expected to establish strong partnerships with the school community.

1. Describe your organization's prior experience in taking over or turning around an underperforming school.
2. Describe specific ways that you will engage and transform the existing school culture as you prepare to open and during the first year of operation.

### Educational Program Capacity

1. Identify the key members of the school's leadership team. Identify *only* individuals who will play a substantial and ongoing role in school development, governance and/or management, and will thus share responsibility for the school's educational success. These may include current or proposed governing board members, school leadership/management, and any essential partners who will play an important ongoing role in the school's development and operation.

Describe the team's individual and collective qualifications for implementing the school design successfully, including capacity in areas such as:

- School leadership, administration, and governance;
- Curriculum, instruction, and assessment;
- Performance management; and
- Parent and community engagement.

Describe the group's ties to and/or knowledge of the target community.

2. Identify any organizations, agencies, or consultants that are partners in planning and establishing the school, along with a brief description of their current and planned role and any resources they have contributed or plan to contribute to the school's development.
3. Identify the principal/head of school candidate and explain why this individual is well-qualified to lead the proposed school in achieving its mission. Summarize the proposed leader's academic and organizational leadership record. Provide specific evidence that demonstrates capacity to design, launch, and manage a high-performing charter school. If the proposed leader has never run a school, describe any leadership training programs that (s)he has completed or is currently participating in. Also provide, as **Attachment 9**, the qualifications, resume, and professional biography for this individual. Discuss the evidence of the leader's ability to effectively serve the anticipated population.

If no candidate has been identified, provide as **Attachment 9** the job description or qualifications, and discuss the timeline, criteria, and recruiting and selection process for hiring the school leader.

4. Describe the responsibilities and qualifications of the school's leadership/management team beyond the principal/head of school. If known, identify the individuals who will fill these positions and provide, as **Attachment 10**, the qualifications, resumes, and professional biographies for these individuals. If these positions are not yet filled, explain the timeline, criteria, and process for recruitment and hiring.
5. Explain who will work on a full-time or nearly full-time basis following assignment of a location to lead development of the school and the plan to compensate these individuals.

## Section 2. Operations Plan & Capacity

### Governance

#### Legal Status and Governing Documents

Describe the proposed school's legal status, including non-profit status and federal tax-exempt status. Submit Articles of Incorporation, proof of non-profit status and tax exempt status (or copies of your filings for the preceding items), and any governing documents already adopted, such as board policies, in **Attachment 11**. Submit, as **Attachment 12**, the completed and signed Statement of Assurances.

#### Organization Charts

Submit, as **Attachment 13**, organization charts that show the school governance, management, and staffing structure in: a) Year 1; and b) at full expansion.

The organization charts should clearly delineate the roles and responsibilities of – and lines of authority and reporting among – the governing board, staff, any related bodies (such as advisory bodies or parent/teacher councils), and any external organizations that will play a role in managing the school. The organization charts should also document clear lines of authority and reporting within the school. If the school intends to contract with a charter management organization or other non-profit education management provider that does not currently operate ANY schools, clearly show the provider's role in the organizational structure of the school. ***If the school plans to contract with a CMO or ESP that currently operates one or more schools in any state, the applicant MUST use the RFQ for Experienced Operators.*** Explain how the relationship between the governing board and school administration will be managed.

#### Governing Board

1. Explain the governance philosophy that will guide the board, including the nature and extent of involvement by key stakeholder groups.
2. Describe the governance structure of the proposed school, including the primary roles of the governing board and how it will interact with the principal/head of school and any advisory bodies. Describe the size, current and desired composition, powers, and duties of the governing board. Identify key skills, areas of expertise, and constituencies that will be represented on the governing board. Explain how this governance structure and composition will help ensure that a) the school will be an educational and operational success; b) the board will evaluate the success of the school and school leader; and c) there will be active and effective representation of key stakeholders, including parents.
3. List all current and identified board members and their intended roles. Summarize members' interests in and qualifications for serving on the school's board. In **Attachment 14** provide a completed and signed Board Member Information Sheet for each proposed Board member. Include resumes and professional biographies where needed (if a board member's resume is attached elsewhere in this application, state so on the Information Sheet).

4. If the current applicant team does not include the initial governing board, explain how and when the transition to the formal governing board will take place.

If this application is being submitted by an existing non-profit organization respond to the following:

- a. Will the existing non-profit board govern the new school, or has the school formed a new non-profit corporation governed by a separate board?
  - b. If the non-profit's current board will govern the charter school, what steps have been taken to transform its board membership, mission, and bylaws to assume its new duties? Describe the plan and timeline for completing the transition and orienting the board to its new duties.
  - c. If a new board has been formed, describe what, if anything, its ongoing relationship to the existing non-profit's board will be.
5. Explain the procedure by which board members have been and will be selected. How often will the board meet? Discuss the plans for any committee structure.
  6. Describe the board's ethical standards and procedures for identifying and addressing conflicts of interest. Provide, as **Attachment 15**, the board's proposed Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest policy.

Identify any existing relationships that could pose actual or perceived conflicts if the application is approved; discuss specific steps that the board will take to avoid any actual conflicts and to mitigate perceived conflicts.

1. Describe plans for increasing the capacity of the governing board. How will the board expand and develop over time? How and on what timeline will new members be recruited and added, and how will vacancies be filled? What are the priorities for recruitment of additional board members? What kinds of orientation or training will new board members receive, and what kinds of ongoing development will existing board members receive? The plan for training and development should include a timetable, specific topics to be addressed, and requirements for participation. If there will be a network-level board, identify any board development requirements relative to the organization's proposed growth and governance needs.

### **Advisory Bodies**

Describe any advisory bodies or councils to be formed, including the roles and duties of that body. Describe the planned composition of the advisory body; the strategy for achieving that composition; the role of parents, students, and teachers (if applicable); and the reporting structure as it relates to the school's governing body and leadership.

### **Grievance Process**

Explain the process that the school will follow should a parent or student have an objection to a governing board policy or decision, administrative procedure, or practice at the school.

### School Management Contracts

*If the proposed school does not intend to contract with an education service provider, mark “Not Applicable” and skip to the next section.*

*If the proposed school intends to contract with a charter management organization (CMO) or other non-profit education service provider (ESP) that already operates schools, whether in Tennessee or elsewhere, the applicant should **STOP WORKING ON THIS APPLICATION** and, instead, complete the **RFQ FOR EXPERIENCED OPERATORS**.*

If the proposed school intends to contract with a new charter management organization or other non-profit education service provider (ESP) or partner **that has never previously operated a school**, provide the following information (and provide the requested documentation as **Attachment 16**):

1. An explanation of how and why the ESP was selected;
2. A term sheet setting forth the proposed duration of the contract; roles and responsibilities of the school governing board, the school staff, and the service provider; scope of services and resources to be provided by the ESP; performance evaluation measures and mechanisms; detailed explanation of compensation to be paid to the provider; financial controls and oversight; methods of contract oversight and enforcement; investment disclosure; and conditions for renewal and termination of the contract;
3. A draft of the proposed management contract;
4. Explanation of the relationship between the school governing board and the service provider, specifying how the governing board will monitor and evaluate the performance of the service provider; the internal controls that will guide the relationship; and how the governing board will ensure fulfillment of performance expectations;
5. Disclosure and explanation of any existing or potential conflicts of interest between the school governing board and proposed service provider or any affiliated business entities; and
6. Documentation of the service provider’s non-profit status and evidence that it is authorized to do business in Tennessee.

### Staffing

#### Staff Structure

1. Provide, as **Attachment 17**, a complete staffing chart for the school. The staffing chart and accompanying notes or roster should identify the following:
  - a. Year 1 positions, as well as positions to be added in future years;
  - b. Administrative, instructional, and non-instructional personnel;
  - c. The number of classroom teachers, paraprofessionals, and specialty teachers; and
  - d. Operational and support staff.
2. Explain how the relationship between the school’s senior administrative team and the rest of the staff will be managed. Note the teacher-student ratio, as well as the ratio of total adults to students for the school.

### **Staffing Plans, Hiring, Management, and Evaluation**

1. Explain the relationship that will exist between the proposed charter school and its employees, including whether the employees will be at-will and whether the school will use employment contracts. If the school will use contracts, explain the nature and purpose of the contracts. Provide, as **Attachment 18**, any personnel policies or an employee manual, if developed.
2. Outline the proposed school's salary ranges and employment benefits for all employees, as well as any incentives or reward structures that may be part of the compensation system. Explain the school's strategy for retaining high-performing teachers.
3. Describe your strategy, plans, and timeline for recruiting and hiring the teaching staff, including the school's plan for hiring "Highly Qualified" staff in accordance with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Explain other key selection criteria and any special considerations relevant to your school design.
4. Outline the school's procedures for hiring and dismissing school personnel, including conducting criminal background checks.
5. Explain how the school leader will be supported, developed, and evaluated each school year. Provide, in **Attachment 19**, any leadership evaluation tool(s) that you have developed already.
6. Explain how teachers will be supported, developed, and evaluated each school year. Provide, in **Attachment 19**, any teacher evaluation tool(s) that already exist for the school.
7. Explain how the school intends to handle unsatisfactory leadership or teacher performance, as well as leadership/teacher changes and turnover.

### **Professional Development**

Describe the school's professional development expectations and opportunities, including the following:

1. Identify the person or position responsible for professional development.
2. Discuss the core components of professional development and how these components will support effective implementation of the educational program. Discuss the extent to which professional development will be conducted internally or externally and will be individualized or uniform.
3. Provide a schedule and explanation of professional development that will take place prior to school opening. Explain what will be covered during this induction period and how teachers will be prepared to deliver any unique or particularly challenging aspects of the curriculum and instructional methods.
4. Describe the expected number of days/hours for professional development throughout the school year, and explain how the school's calendar, daily schedule, and staffing structure accommodate this plan. Include time scheduled for common planning or collaboration and how such time will typically be used.

## Performance Management

ASD will evaluate the performance of every charter school and transformation partner annually and for renewal purposes according to a set of academic, financial, and organizational performance standards that will be incorporated into the charter agreement. The academic performance standards will consider status, growth, and comparative performance based on federal, state, and school-specific measures. The financial performance standards will be based on standard accounting and industry standards for sound financial operation. The organizational performance standards will be based primarily on compliance with legal obligations, including fulfillment of the governing board's fiduciary obligations related to sound governance.

Applicants may propose to supplement the ASD's performance standards with school-specific academic or organizational goals.

1. Describe any mission-specific **educational** goals and targets that the school will have. State goals clearly in terms of the measures or assessments you plan to use.
2. Describe any mission-specific **organizational** goals and targets that the school will have. State goals clearly in terms of the measures or assessments you plan to use.
3. In addition to the mandatory TCAP assessments, identify the primary interim assessments the school will use to assess student learning needs and progress throughout the year. Explain how these interim assessments align with the school's curriculum, performance goals, and state standards.
4. Explain how the school will measure and evaluate academic progress – of individual students, student cohorts, and the school as a whole – throughout the school year, at the end of each academic year, and for the term of the charter contract. Explain how the school will collect and analyze student academic achievement data, use the data to refine and improve instruction, and report the data to the school community. Identify the person(s), position(s), and/or entities that will be responsible and involved in the collection and analysis of assessment data.
5. Who will be responsible for managing the data, interpreting it for classroom teachers, and leading or coordinating professional development to improve student achievement?
6. Explain the training and support that school leadership and teachers will receive in analyzing, interpreting, and using performance data to improve student learning.
7. Describe the corrective actions the school will take if it falls short of student academic achievement expectations or goals at the school-wide, classroom, or individual student level. Explain what would trigger such corrective actions and who would be responsible for implementing them.

## Facilities

The ASD's chartering authority derives from its statutory authority to assume the operation of chronically underperforming schools. This RFQ is designed to identify qualified operators who can then be matched with appropriate facilities as schools come under ASD's authority. This section solicits information that will help the ASD to match operators with appropriate facilities.

An applicant may also seek to operate in independent facilities. Regardless of the site, however, an ASD charter school or transformation partner school must serve exclusively children who were previously attending a school that has come under the ASD's jurisdiction.

*If you are seeking an existing public school facility to be identified by ASD, complete **Part A**.*

*If you intend to identify and operate in an independent facility (not managed by ASD), complete **Part B**.*

### **Part A. ASD Facilities**

Complete this part if you expect to seek an existing public school facility to be identified by ASD.

1. Describe the basic facilities requirements for accommodating your school plan, including number of classrooms, square footage per classroom, common areas, overall square footage, and amenities.
2. List your anticipated specialty classroom needs, including the number of each type and the number of students to be accommodated at one time. Specialty needs may include but are not limited to the following:
  - a. Science labs
  - b. Art room (with or without kiln)
  - c. Computer labs
  - d. Library/media center
  - e. Performance/dance room
  - f. Auditorium
  - g. Other
3. List your anticipated administrative/support space needs, including anticipated number of each:
  - a. Main office
  - b. Satellite office
  - c. Work room/copy room
  - d. Supplies/storage
  - e. Teacher work rooms
  - f. Other
4. List which, if any, of the following are essential to fulfillment of the core athletic program:
  - a. Gymnasium
  - b. Locker rooms
  - c. Weight rooms
  - d. Field(s) (football, soccer, multipurpose)
  - e. Baseball/softball field
  - f. Other (please list)

5. Identify any other significant facilities needs not already specified, including:
  - a. Playground
  - b. Large common space for assemblies and other large group meetings
  - c. Other special considerations (identify and explain)
  
6. Does the applicant have specific desired location(s) from those on the ASD's Priority Schools List?
   
 Yes       No

If yes and the applicant has a specific facility under consideration, identify by current school name and/or neighborhood (you may add rows to the table as needed).

Desired Location(s):	
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7. Is the applicant willing to share a facility with another school?
   
 Yes       No
   
 If so, identify by school name and/or neighborhood (you may add rows to the table as needed).

Desired Location(s):	
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8. Discuss contingency plans in the event you do not receive a facility.

**Part B. Independent Facilities**

***Schools operating in independent facilities may only enroll students who currently attend or are zoned to attend an ASD school.***

If you intend to operate a new-start school in an independent facility (not managed by ASD), describe the process for identifying and securing a facility, including any brokers or consultants you are employing to navigate the real estate market, plans for renovations, timelines, financing, etc. If you currently hold a facility or have an MOU or other proof of intent to secure a specific facility, please provide proof of the commitment as **Attachment 20**. Briefly describe the facility including location, size, and amenities. You may provide, as **Attachment 21**, up to 10 pages of supporting documents providing details about the facility. Charter school facilities must comply with health and safety requirements (per T.C.A. § 49-13-105). In addition, charter school applicants must be prepared to follow applicable city planning review procedures.

**Start-Up & Ongoing Operations**

1. Provide, as **Attachment 22**, a detailed start-up plan for the school, specifying tasks, timelines, and responsible individuals. This plan should align with the Start-Up (Year 0) Budget in the Financial Plan Workbook (**be sure to complete all pages in the Financial Plan Workbook, and provide it as Attachment 24**).
  
2. If the school will provide transportation, describe the transportation arrangements for prospective students. In addition to daily transportation needs, describe how the school plans to meet transportation needs for field trips and athletic events.

3. Provide the school plan for safety and security for students, the facility, and property. Explain the types of security personnel, technology, equipment, and policies that the school will employ.
4. Provide, as **Attachment 23**, a list of the types of insurance coverage the school will secure, including a description of the levels of coverage. Types of insurance should include workers' compensation, liability, property, indemnity, directors and officers, automobile, and other.

### Operations Capacity

Describe the applicant team's individual and collective qualifications for implementing the Operations Plan successfully, including capacity in areas such as the following:

- Staffing;
- Professional development;
- Performance management;
- General operations; and
- Facilities management.

Applicants intending to use an independent (non-ASD) facility should describe the organization's capacity and experience in facilities acquisition and management, including managing build-out and/or renovations, as applicable.

## Section 3. Financial Plan & Capacity

### Financial Plan

**No page limit for budget narrative, include as Attachment 25.**

1. Describe the systems and processes by which the school will manage accounting, purchasing, payroll, and audits. Specify any administrative services expected to be contracted for the school, and describe the criteria and procedures for the selection of contractors.
2. Submit the Charter Application Budget Form in the Financial Plan Workbook (provide the completed Workbook as **Attachment 24**, and be sure to complete all sheets in the Workbook).
3. As **Attachment 25**, present a detailed description of assumptions and revenue estimates, including but not limited to the basis for revenue projections, staffing levels, and costs. The narrative should specifically address the degree to which the school budget will rely on variable income (e.g., grants, donations, fundraising).
  - a. Per-Pupil Revenue. Use the figures below in developing your budget assumptions.
  - b. Anticipated Funding Sources. Indicate the amount and sources of funds, property or other resources expected to be available through banks, lending institutions, corporations, foundations, grants, etc. Note which are secured and which are anticipated, and include evidence of commitment for any funds on which the school's core operation depends.
  - c. Discuss the school's contingency plan to meet financial needs if anticipated revenues are not received or are lower than estimated.
  - d. Year 1 cash flow contingency, in the event that revenue projections are not met in advance of opening.
4. Describe the annual audit of the financial and administrative operations of the school. Include evidence that the school will adhere to the accounting, auditing, and reporting procedures and requirements that apply to public schools operating in Tennessee.

**\*In developing your budget, please use the following figures to estimate your per pupil funding. These figures are based on figures from 2011-12 and should be used for planning purposes only.**

Hamilton County (Chattanooga)		Memphis		Nashville	
BEP funds (per pupil) – less capital outlay	Capital Outlay	BEP funds (per pupil) – less capital outlay	Capital Outlay	BEP funds (per pupil) – less capital outlay	Capital Outlay:
\$7,117/pupil	\$180 K-4	\$7797/pupil	\$270 K-4	\$8,672/pupil	\$140 K-4
State: \$2,767	\$200 5-8	State: \$3864	\$300 5-8	State: \$2,806	\$160 5-8
Local: \$4,350	\$230 9-12	Local: 3933	\$350 9-12	Local: \$5,866	\$180 9-12

### **Financial Management Capacity**

Describe the team's individual and collective qualifications for implementing the Financial Plan successfully, including capacity in areas such as the following:

- Financial management;
- Fundraising and development; and
- Accounting.

## **EXHIBITS**

Letter of Intent Form

Staffing Chart Form

Charter School Board Member Form

Statement of Assurances Form

## Letter of Intent Form



LETTER OF INTENT TO RESPOND TO THE ACHIEVEMENT SCHOOL DISTRICT  
REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS TO OPERATE A CHARTER SCHOOL  
OPENING IN THE 2013-2014 SCHOOL YEAR

DUE MARCH 1, 2012

To be eligible to submit a full proposal for the 2013-2014 school year cycle, potential **applicants must first submit the LOI, School(s) Proposal Overview, and Applicant Eligibility by 5:00pm CST on March 1, 2012.**

*The information presented in your LOI is non-binding (with the exception of Applicant Eligibility Statement); specific details provided below may be finalized in the proposal submission.* Please contact Margo Roen, ASD Charter School Portfolio Director, via phone (615.970.2176) or email ([margo.roen@tn.gov](mailto:margo.roen@tn.gov)) with any questions.

*Note:* As with all aspects of your application, the name and contact information of the Primary Contact will be public information.

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMITTING AN LOI PACKET

1. Prepare your Letter of Intent. Use the sample letter provided in this template as a guide. The LOI must be signed by an authorized representative of your organization.
2. Complete the School Proposal Overview Form provided in this template.
3. Complete the Applicant Eligibility Statement Form provided in this template. The Eligibility Statement must be signed by an authorized representative of your organization.
4. Combine the three executed documents into a single PDF file. Name your file according to the following convention: NAME OF OPERATOR.LOI.pdf
5. Upload your file to the Review Room online application submission platform: <http://tn-asd-app.review-room.net>.
6. Applicants who do not submit the MANDATORY LOI by 5pm on March 1, 2012, will be locked out of the online application submission portal and will NOT be eligible to submit a full proposal.

**LETTER OF INTENT – Sample Letter**

Achievement School District,

<Insert Date Here>

<Insert organization name here> is interested in being considered as a Charter/Transformation Partner operator authorized by the Achievement School District (ASD). <Insert organization name here> is committed to improving the educational outcomes for ASD-zoned students by launching high-quality schools in partnership with the ASD.

I understand that partnership with the ASD will require us to:

1. Enroll only students geographically zoned for ASD-eligible schools, and
2. Submit a complete RFQ application electronically through Review Room by 5:00pm CST on Monday, April 2, 2012.

We are committed to engaging in this turnaround work with the ASD and thank you for your consideration of our organization as a potential partner.

Sincerely,

Name  
Organization

### SCHOOL(S) PROPOSAL OVERVIEW

<b>Type of school</b> (check all that apply)				
<input type="checkbox"/> Charter School, opening: <input type="checkbox"/> Fall 2013 <input type="checkbox"/> Fall 2014 <input type="checkbox"/> Fall 2015				
<input type="checkbox"/> Transformation Partner: <input type="checkbox"/> Fall 2012 <input type="checkbox"/> Fall 2013				
<b>Primary Contact Information</b>				
Name				
Address				
Phone				
Email				
<b>Basic Information for School Opening Fall 2013</b>				
Applicant Organization Name				
Proposed School Leader Name (if identified)				
Proposed School Leader's Current Job/Position				
List any Principal/leadership programs the proposed leader is currently enrolled in or has completed (e.g., NLNS, BES, etc.)				
<b>Proposed School Names</b> <i>(add rows as needed)</i>	<b>Opening Year</b>	<b>Geographic Community and/or City</b>	<b>Grades Served Year 1</b>	<b>Grades served at capacity</b>
New Start, Phase-In, or Takeover Model				
<b>Proposed School Description</b>				
In 100 words or less, briefly describe the instructional focus of your proposed school				

APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY STATEMENT

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**Please read the following statements and confirm eligibility:**

Tennessee law prohibits the ASD from converting any “private, parochial, cyber-based or home-based school to charter status.” Tennessee Code Annotated § 49-13-106(c). T.C.A. § 49-13-104(7) prohibits a private elementary or secondary school, or a religious or church school from sponsoring a public charter school.

- The sponsoring agent for this Charter/Transformation Partner does not currently operate a private elementary or secondary or religious or church school.*

For-profit entities may neither sponsor nor operate a Tennessee charter school. Charter schools must be operated by entities that have exemption from federal taxation under § 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Please check the following, as applicable:

- The sponsoring agent for this Charter/Transformation Partner is a not-for-profit organization with 501(c) (3) status.*
- The sponsoring agent for this Charter/Transformation Partner is a not-for-profit organization and has applied for 501(c) (3) status.*
- I will provide evidence of non-profit incorporation and 501(c) (3) status at the time of contracting with the ASD.*

The complete Tennessee Public Charter Schools Act is contained in T. C.A. §§ 49-13-101 through 137, and in § 8-35-242. You can access Tennessee laws [here](#).

**I certify that I have the authority to submit this application and that all information contained herein is complete and accurate. I recognize that any misrepresentation could result in disqualification from the application process or revocation after award. The person named as the contact person for the application is so authorized to serve as the primary contact for this application on behalf of the organization.**

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**Signature of Application Primary Contact**

**Date**

---

**Signature of CEO of Sponsoring Agent (if different than above)**

**Date**

## Staffing Chart Form

Use the appropriate table below to outline your staffing plan for the school. Adjust or add functions and titles and add or delete rows as needed.

### Elementary School Staffing Model and Rollout

Year	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Principal						
Assistant Principal						
Add'l School Leadership Position 1 [specify]						
Add'l School Leadership Position 2 [specify]						
Add'l School Leadership Position 3 [specify]						
Classroom Teachers (Core Subjects)						
Classroom Teachers (Specials)						
Student Support Position 1 [specify: e.g., Social Worker]						
Student Support Position 2 [specify]						
Specialized School Staff 1 [specify]						
Specialized School Staff 2 [specify]						
Teacher Aides and Assistants						
School Operations Support Staff						
<b>Total FTEs</b>						

### High School Staffing Model and Rollout

Year	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Principal						
Assistant Principal(s)						
Dean(s)						
Add'l School Leadership Position 1 [specify]						
Add'l School Leadership Position 2 [specify]						
Add'l School Leadership Position 3 [specify]						
Classroom Teachers (Core Subjects)						
Classroom Teachers (Specials)						
Student Support Position 1 [specify: e.g., Social Worker]						
Student Support Position 2 [specify]						
Specialized School Staff 1 [specify]						
Specialized School Staff 2 [specify]						
Teacher Aides and Assistants						
School Operations Support Staff						
<b>Total FTEs</b>						

## Charter School Board Member Information Form

(To be completed individually by each proposed charter school board member. All forms must be signed by hand.)

Serving on a public charter school board is a position of public trust and fiduciary responsibility. As a board member of a public school, you are responsible for ensuring the quality of the school program, competent stewardship of public funds, and the school's fulfillment of its public obligations and all terms of its charter.

As part of the application for a new charter school, ASD requests that each prospective board member respond individually to this questionnaire. Where narrative responses are required, brief responses are sufficient.

The purpose of this questionnaire is twofold: 1) to give application reviewers a clearer introduction to the applicant team behind each school proposal in advance of the applicant interview, in order to be better prepared for the interview; and 2) to encourage board members to reflect individually as well as collectively on their common mission, purposes, and obligations at the earliest stage of school development.

### Background

1. Name of charter school on whose Board of Directors you intend to serve:
2. Full name:  
Home Address:  
Business Name and Address:  
  
Telephone No.:  
E-mail address:
3. Brief educational and employment history. (No narrative response is required if resume and professional biography are attached to the application)  
 Resume and professional biography are provided.
4. Indicate whether you currently or have previously served on a board of a school district, another charter school, a non-public school or any not-for-profit corporation.  
 Does not apply to me.  Yes
5. Why do you wish to serve on the board of the proposed charter school?
6. What is your understanding of the appropriate role of a public charter school board member?
7. Describe any previous experience you have that is relevant to serving on the charter school's board (e.g., other board service). If you have not had previous experience of this nature, explain why you have the capability to be an effective board member.
8. Describe the specific knowledge and experience that you would bring to the board.

**School Mission and Program**

1. What is your understanding of the school’s mission and guiding beliefs?
2. What is your understanding of the school’s proposed educational program?
3. What do you believe to be the characteristics of a successful school?
4. How will you know that the school is succeeding (or not) in its mission?

**Governance**

1. Describe the role that the board will play in the school’s operation.
2. How will you know if the school is successful at the end of the first year of operation?
3. How will you know at the end of four years of the schools is successful?
4. What specific steps do you think the charter school board will need to take to ensure that the school is successful?
5. How would you handle a situation in which you believe one or more members of the school’s board were acting unethically or not in the best interests of the school?

**Disclosures**

1. Indicate whether you or your spouse knows the other prospective board members for the proposed school. If so, please indicate the precise nature of your relationship.  
 I / we do not know any such trustees.  Yes
2. Indicate whether you or your spouse knows any person who is, or has been in the last two years, a school employee. If so, indicate the precise nature of your relationship.  
 I / we do not know any such employees.  Yes
3. Indicate whether you or your spouse knows anyone who is doing, or plans to do, business with the charter school (whether as an individual or as a director, officer, employee or agent of some entity). If so, indicate and describe the precise nature of your relationship and the nature of the business that such person or entity is transacting or will be transacting with the school.  
 I / we do not know any such persons.  Yes
4. Indicate if you, your spouse or other immediate family members anticipate conducting, or are conducting, any business with the school. If so, indicate the precise nature of the business that is being or will be conducted.  
 I / we do not anticipate conducting any such business.  Yes

5. If the school intends to contract with an education service provider or management organization, indicate whether you or your spouse knows any employees, officers, owners, directors or agents of that provider. If the answer is in the affirmative, please describe any such relationship.  
 Not applicable because the school does not intend to contact with an education service provider or school management organization.  
 I / we do not know any such persons.  Yes
  
6. If the school intends to contract with an education service provider, please indicate whether you, your spouse or other immediate family members have a direct or indirect ownership, employment, contractual or management interest in the provider. For any interest indicated, provide a detailed description.  
 N/A.  I / we have no such interest.  Yes
  
7. If the school plans to contract with an education service provider, indicate if you, your spouse or other immediate family member anticipate conducting, or are conducting, any business with the provider. If so, indicate the precise nature of the business that is being or will be conducted.  
 N/A.  I / we or my family do not anticipate conducting any such business.  Yes
  
8. Indicate whether you, your spouse or other immediate family members are a director, officer, employee, partner or member of, or are otherwise associated with, any organization that is partnering with the charter school. To the extent you have provided this information in response to prior items, you may so indicate.  
 Does not apply to me, my spouse or family.  Yes
  
9. Indicate any potential ethical or legal conflicts of interests that would, or are likely to, exist should you serve on the school's board.  None.  Yes

**Certification**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, certify to the best of my knowledge and ability that the information I am providing to the Tennessee Achievement School District as a prospective board member for \_\_\_\_\_ Charter School is true and correct in every respect.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Statement of Assurances

The charter school and the Achievement School District (ASD) agree to comply to all of the following provisions: *(Read and check)*

- 1. Recipients operate (or will operate if not yet open) a charter school in compliance with all federal and State laws, including the Tennessee Public Charter Schools Act.
- 2. Recipients acknowledge request for and receipt of the waivers documented in the RFQ, unless otherwise indicated in the contract between the charter school and ASD.
- 3. Recipients will comply with Open Meetings and Open Records laws (T.C.A. §§ 8-44-101 et seq.; 10-7-503, 504). Guidance is available from the [Office of Open Records Counsel](#).
- 4. Recipients will, for the life of the charter, participate in all data reporting and evaluation activities as requested by the U.S. Department of Education and the Tennessee Department of Education; this includes participation in any federal or state funded charter school evaluations or studies, final grant report documentation and financial statements.
- 5. Recipients will comply with federal laws, including, but not limited to, the *Age Discrimination Act* of 1975, Title VI of the *Civil Rights Act* of 1964, Title IX of the *Education Amendments of 1972*, section 504 of the *Rehabilitation Act* of 1973, and Part B of the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*.
- 6. Recipients will comply with all provisions of the Non regulatory Guidance—Public Charter Schools Program of the U.S. Department of Education, which includes the use of a lottery for enrollment if the charter school is oversubscribed.
- 7. Recipients shall ensure that a student’s records, and, if applicable, a student’s individualized education program as defined in section 602(11) of the *Individuals with Disabilities Act*, will follow the student, in accordance with applicable law (P.L. 107-110, section 5208).
- 8. Recipients will comply with all provisions of the *No Child Left Behind Act*, including but not limited to, provisions on school prayer, the Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act, the Armed Forces Recruiter Access to Students and Student Recruiting Information, the Unsafe School Choice Option, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and assessments [P.L. 107-110].
- 9. Recipients possess the legal authority to apply for this grant; a resolution or motion has been adopted by the charter school’s governing body that authorizes the submission of this application, including all understanding and assurances contained herein, directing and authorizing the “charter school contact person/administrator” to act in connection with the application and to provide such additional information as required.

- 10. Recipients will ensure that the awarded grant funds will be spent or encumbered in accordance with the schedule on page 5.
- 11. Recipients shall maintain accounting records and other evidence pertaining to costs incurred, with the provision that the records shall be kept available by the grantee during the grant period and thereafter for five full years from the date of final payment. The ASD must be permitted to audit, review, and inspect the grantee's activities, books, documents, papers and other records relating to the expenditures of grant proceeds. The recipient further agrees to comply with all federal and state audit requirements and ensures that arrangements have been made to finance those mandatory audits
- 12. Recipients are required to keep and maintain all equipment purchased with grant funds in accordance with federal law and regulation.
- 13. Recipients will insure equitable program participation, as required under section 427 of the *General Education Provision Act*.
- 14. Recipients will comply with the lower-tier certification covering lobbying and debarment/suspension in 34 CFR Parts 82 and 85.
- 15. Recipients understand that if any findings of misuse of funds are discovered the said funds must be returned to the ASD and the ASD may revoke the charter if it deems that the recipient is not fulfilling the academic goals and fiscal management outlined in the charter.

**Signature**

I, the undersigned, do hereby agree to the assurances contained above.

Signature of Charter School Sponsor Authorized Representative	Date