




Cleveland Community School Partnership  
Request for Proposals: New Partner Schools  
2017-18



Dear Prospective Community School Partner:

Thank you for your interest in partnering with the Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD). Our district strives to ensure every child in Cleveland attends a high-quality school and that every neighborhood has a multitude of great schools from which families can choose. Since Ohio's community school law passed in 1997, over 400 community schools have opened across Ohio. CMSD is committed to supporting the best of those schools that serve the children of Cleveland.

This Request for Proposals sets forth the information CMSD requires from community schools wishing to partner and to access levied funds as outlined in the Cleveland's Plan for Transforming Public Schools. (For information about the Cleveland Plan, see <http://www.clevelandmetroschools.org/Page/532>.) We hope the application process conveys to prospective school partners the high expectations that CMSD sets for all public schools in the city of Cleveland.

CMSD expects its partner community schools to be innovative and committed to academic excellence. Community schools partnering with the CMSD offer teachers, parents, and administrators the chance to actively engage in teaching and learning in ways that support a diverse student body. These schools continually enhance their academic design, instructional delivery, and staffing structure to ensure students reach high levels of academic success. Partner community schools, like all community schools, are accountable for performance on required state assessments and subject to Ohio state accountability requirements and consequences.

Community schools are secular, tuition-free public schools that operate as independent nonprofit organizations, each under a contract from a sponsor that includes goals for the school's academic, financial, and legal and regulatory compliance and success. Ohio's community school legislation offers students, families, and educators more choices in public education, while providing schools with more autonomy and flexibility in exchange for stricter accountability and higher educational standards. Partnership with CMSD honors these rights. Partner community schools retain their independent status and are not governed by the CMSD Board of Education.

CMSD is committed to ensuring that all partnership opportunities granted by the CMSD Board of Education are effectively designed and supported by institutions and individuals with the capacity and the drive to meet the challenge of preparing students—*all* students—to succeed academically.

### **Request for Proposals to partner with the Cleveland Metropolitan School District**

This Request for Proposals delineates the specific steps and requirements that a community school must follow to submit an application to partner with CMSD and to access levied funds.

All necessary forms, requirements, and deadlines related to the application process are included in the Request for Proposals. Applicants must present a coherent and viable rationale that both complies with the law and is likely to improve student learning and achievement for the children in Cleveland.

CMSD looks forward to reviewing your proposal to partner, as we work together to provide high-quality public education options in Cleveland.

## Submitting Your Application to the Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD)

In preparing your application, please keep in mind that your answer to each specific question or request is significant in determining whether or not the school will be approved by the CMSD Board of Education as a partner school. Thoughtful and thorough responses therefore are critical.

### Eligibility

A community school is eligible to apply for partnership if its location falls within CMSD boundaries and if it has been in operation for at least two complete school years. Community schools sponsored by CMSD are automatically partner schools and do not need to submit an application. Community schools that have entered into a current partnership agreement with CMSD do not need to submit an application in response to this Request for Proposal.

Levied funding is distributed among participating partner schools based on their enrollment of Cleveland resident students. The funding level varies depending on the number of participating schools and their enrollments.

### General Guidance

- The applicant must ensure that its application is organized, and that all sections are labeled. Any omissions could result in the proposal responses not being reviewed.
- **All responses are to be submitted together by email by 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, December 19, 2017.**
- Certain requests refer to other documents, resources, or sample responses that are available at: [www.clevelandmetroschools.org](http://www.clevelandmetroschools.org).
- Questions should be directed to Stephanie Klupinski at [Stephanie.Klupinski@clevelandmetroschools.org](mailto:Stephanie.Klupinski@clevelandmetroschools.org) or (216) 838-0179.

### Public Disclosure

- Upon request, CMSD will release to the public a list of community school partnership applicants. Included in this release is the name of the applicant and its public contact information, along with the contact person, the school's level of anticipated enrollment, grades served, its management company or community management organization (if any), and its partner organization(s) (if any). While the entire application is available under the Freedom of Information Law (Ohio Revised Code 149.43), all personal and proprietary information will be redacted prior to release.

## Submitting the Application:

Please email the application to Stephanie Klupinski at [Stephanie.Klupinski@clevelandmetroschools.org](mailto:Stephanie.Klupinski@clevelandmetroschools.org).

Please ensure the following about the submission:

1. The document submitted is in PDF form.
2. Each page contains a footer that includes the school name, and pages are consecutively numbered at the bottom of the page.
3. The electronic copy of the application consists of all files containing the narrative organized just as the sections are described.
4. Any attachments are included in the appropriate section (*e.g.*, the sponsor attachments should be included with the sponsor section).
5. The application ultimately contains the following:
  - **The Partnership Application Transmittal Cover Page.** This form, found at the end of this application must be the cover or first page. The Transmittal Cover Page should be completed and signed by the individual who will serve as CSMD’s point of contact (the “Applicant Contact”).
  - **Complete responses to each section.** Please respond to each request for information identified in this Request for Proposals. Each application section should start on a new page to separate it from the prior sections.
  - **Responses to each attachment request.** Attachments should follow the response to each section request and should be labeled as identified above. Page numbers are not required on the attachments, but this is preferred.

## Amending Applications Submittal

**Do not** send unsolicited amendments following submission of your partnership application. If you find that you have inadvertently overlooked something or have additional information to submit, please contact Stephanie Klupinski at the Cleveland Metropolitan School District first to determine whether the missing information is necessary. She can be reached at [Stephanie.Klupinski@clevelandmetroschools.org](mailto:Stephanie.Klupinski@clevelandmetroschools.org) or at 216-838-0179.



## **Community School Partnership Application Timeline 2017-18**

**Friday, December 1, 2017:** CMSD releases 2017-18 Request for Proposals for New Partner Schools

**Tuesday, December 19, 2017:** New partnership applications due by 5:00 p.m.

**December 21-31, 2017:** CMSD review of applications

**January 9, 2018:** Initial recommendations to CMSD Board of Education

**January 23, 2018:** CMSD Board approves applications

**February 2018:** New approved schools and CMSD enter into partnership agreements through June 30, 2018

**Early 2018:** Next distribution of levied funds to all partner schools

**May/June 2018:** All partner schools and CMSD enter into new agreements for school year 2018-19

## **Section I – Applicant Information**

Provide background information about the applicant community school. Each application should include information for at least one member of the school’s governing board and one employee of the school or affiliated management organization. Please include the following:

- The full legal name of the school;
- The name of at least one member of the school’s governing board member and one employee;
- The address, telephone number(s) (home, cell and/or office), facsimile number (if applicable) and e-mail address for each of these individual contacts;
- An assurance that the individual contacts are at least 18 years of age;
- A designation of which of the individual contacts should be considered the contact person for the application (the “Lead Contact”); and
- Background information for each individual contact, including what role he or she serves with the school. Please also include a resume for each individual contact.

### **Criteria for Section 1 – Applicant Information**

Reviewers will look for:

- Information that is presented as requested and accurately.
- Information for at least two applicants: a board member and an employee of the school or affiliated management organization.

## **Section 2 – Mission/Vision & School Design**

Provide the applicant community school’s strategic mission and/or vision statement, as well as a brief description of the core elements of the school’s design. Describe how the mission/vision statement and the school’s design support the goals of and align to the Cleveland Plan. In doing so, please explain briefly what the school is doing, for whom, and with what degree of success.

Please limit this section to 500 words or fewer.

### **Criteria for Section 2 – Mission/Vision & School Design**

Reviewers will look for:

- A clear and compelling mission and/or vision statement and description of the core elements of the school’s design.
- A clear explanation about how the mission and/or vision statement and school’s design support the goals of the Cleveland Plan.
- A clear, brief description of whom the school is serving, for what purpose, and with what degree of success.

## **Section 3 – Demographic Information**

Part 1: Identify the number and percentage of students at the school who are Cleveland residents. Identify student demographics for the entire school, including percentages by race, gender, socio-economic status, participation in special education, limited English proficiency, and homelessness.

Part 2: Compare this demographic information to that of the nearest three CMSD schools that serve similar grade levels. If the comparison reveals disparities in the demographics of the schools, provide the school's brief explanation of how it accounts for the disparity.

### **Criteria for Section 3 – Demographic Information**

Reviewers will look for:

- Completeness of submitted information.
- If applicable, an explanation of any demographic disparity among schools that is plausible and reflects the school's awareness and understanding of the situation.



## **Section 4 – Academic Information**

Part 1: The school’s academic performance will be assessed according to the rating from the Cleveland Transformation Alliance, which looks at the Performance Index and Value-Add ratings for the school from its most recent state report card. It is not necessary for the applicant to submit this information. To see the school’s rating, please visit [www.clevelandta.org](http://www.clevelandta.org).

Please note: In the event the academic performance information for the school available from the Cleveland Transformation Alliance is incomplete, for example because the school has not served tested grade levels for two complete school years, CMSD will follow up with the school directly to obtain additional information.

Part 2: In 1,000 words total or fewer, please answer the following questions:

- 1) What are the school’s academic goals for the current school year?
- 2) Why have these goals been selected, and what specific strategies are being used to attain them?
- 3) How will partnership help the school attain these academic goals? (Please note that Section 8, below, asks for a more detailed rationale for partnership than this question. In the response to this question, please focus more specifically on how partnership will help the school meet its academic goals.)
- 4) How is the school likely to improve student learning?

### **Criteria for Section 4 – Academic Information**

Reviewers will look for:

- Evidence of a strong academic program with demonstrated effectiveness and a growth trajectory.
- Understanding of the school’s academic needs.
- Clearly articulated goals that relate to the academic needs and specific strategies that will likely help the school reach the goals.
- Clear and convincing explanation of how partnership will help the school attain its academic goals.
- Well-supported explanation of how the school is likely to improve student learning for the students it serves.

## **Section 5 – Financial Information**

Part 1: Submit the school’s budget for the current fiscal year in its audited standard reporting format and as approved by the school’s governing board.

Part 2: Submit the school’s monthly financial reports for each of the months in the current fiscal year for which the reports have been completed.

Please note: Participating partner schools are required to report annually the disposition of levied funds, including the types and amounts of expenditures.

### **Criteria for Section 5 – Financial Information**

Reviewers will look for a response that:

- Presents budget priorities that are consistent with and support the school’s mission and educational program.
- Presents realistic, evidence-based revenue and expenditure assumptions.
- Demonstrates a commitment to maintaining the financial viability of the school.
- Demonstrates a commitment to acting fiscally responsible to students, the public, and school staff, students.
- Inspires confidence that the school is likely to administer levied funds responsibly and to use them effectively to improve student outcomes.

## **Section 6 – Additional School Performance Information**

Part 1: Submit the two most recent annual reports on the school issued by the school's governing board.

Part 2: Submit the two most recent annual reports on the school issued by the school's sponsor.

Part 3: The school's legal compliance record will be reviewed from the two most recent Ohio Community School Compliance Reviews. It is not necessary for the applicant to submit this information.

### **Criteria for Section 6 – Additional School Performance Information**

Reviewers will look for:

- School reports by the governing authority that present a clear and accurate appraisal of the situation at the school and inspire confidence that the governing board understands its oversight role.
- The sponsor's appraisal of the school's performance, including areas of strength and areas for improvement.
- School performance and legal compliance records that inspire confidence that the school's participation in the partnership would advance the goals of the Cleveland Plan.

## **Section 7 – Affiliated Organization Information**

If the school exists in conjunction with a college, university, museum, educational institution, or not-for-profit corporation with 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status under the Internal Revenue Code, please provide the information listed below for each such entity:

- Name of the organization;
- Proof of the legal status of the organization (*e.g.*, not-for-profit corporation, university, etc.) and whether or not the organization has authority to do business in Ohio;
- If applicable, proof of tax-exempt status under Internal Revenue Code section 501(c)(3);
- Letter of intent or commitment from a bona fide representative of the partner organization, indicating affirmation of the partnership and the terms and extent of that partnership;
- Name of a contact person for the affiliated organization, along with the address, phone number, facsimile number (if applicable), and e-mail of such contact person for the partner organization;
- Description of the nature and purpose of the school's relationship with the organization; and
- Description of how the board oversees and/or manages the relationship with the organization to ensure the school posts strong evidence of success.

If the school is not filing in conjunction with any entity as described above, please simply indicate so in the response to this section.

### **Criteria for Section 7 – Affiliated Organization Information**

If applicable, reviewers will look for a response that:

- Indicates a thoughtful and detailed relationship wherein the school's governing board can and will hold the affiliated organization accountable for increased student achievement results and can take action to sever the affiliation if evidence suggests it is not beneficial to continue.

## **Section 8 – Partnership Plan and Rationale**

Present the school’s rationale for partnering, including a detailed statement of how the school envisions the partnership contributing to advancing the Cleveland Plan by transforming education and improving the quality of public schools in Cleveland for all students.

All approved partner schools will be required to document how the levy dollars are spent. Please describe in detail how the school plans to use the levy dollars it receives. Because the amount of levied dollars available to partner schools in a given year can vary widely depending on how many partner schools participate and their enrollments of Cleveland resident pupils, the applicant school may condition its response to this question on one or more potential funding amounts or ranges. Most recently the amount of funds provided to partner schools in one year has been around \$700 per pupil, but again, this can vary widely. For more information, please contact Stephanie Klupinski at [Stephanie.Klupinski@clevelandmetroschools.org](mailto:Stephanie.Klupinski@clevelandmetroschools.org) or at 216-838-0179.

Please limit the response to 1,000 words or fewer.

### **Criteria for Section 8 – Partnership Plan and Rationale**

Reviewers will look for a plan and rationale that:

- Clearly align with the school’s stated mission and/or vision and the goals and objectives within the Cleveland Plan.
- Promote educational excellence.
- Inspire confidence that the school will invest levied dollars responsibly and effectively.

## **Section 9 – Academic and Enrollment Data “Roll-Up”**

State law and the Cleveland Plan:

- Authorize CMSD to elect to have the student performance data of a community school located in the district combined with the district's data on the district's annual state report card, if the district either sponsors the community school or has entered into a partnership agreement with the school to endorse each other's programs.
- Authorize CMSD to elect to have the number of students enrolled in a community school located in the district noted separately on the district's report card, if the district either sponsors the community school or has entered into a partnership agreement with the school to endorse each other's programs.

Submit a statement indicating the school's understanding of, willingness to align with, the Cleveland Plan “roll up” allowance.

### **Criteria Section 9 – Academic and Enrollment Data “Roll-Up”**

Reviewers will look for a response that:

- Confirms the school's awareness of the “roll-up” of academic and enrollment data under the partnership.
- Shows an affirmative stance towards the “roll-up” of academic and enrollment data.

## **Section 10 – Administration of Student Surveys**

CMSD uses the Conditions for Learning Student Survey to measure school climate and culture. This survey helps schools engage with their primary stakeholder, the student learner. The survey monitors student opinions of school climate, perceived levels of student support, levels of challenge, and perceptions about the students' social and emotional learning skills. The data from the survey can be used to make decisions about how to adjust the school services provided to students. Research tells us that there is a strong correlation between these characteristics and academic achievement.

While partner schools are not necessarily all expected to administer the Conditions for Learning Survey in particular, they are asked to use some survey that gathers perceptions of the school from students.

In this section, please describe the survey that the school currently uses or plans to use to gather student feedback. Please affirm the school's commitment to using one or more such instruments and describe how it has used the information or how it plans to use the information obtained from such survey(s).

### **Criteria Section 10 – Administration of Student Surveys**

Reviewers will look for a response that:

- Confirms that the school will administer a student survey.
- Indicates an interest in the content of the survey.
- Indicates a willingness to consider acting upon the student feedback provided.

## **Section 11 – Commitment to Collaboration**

Collaboration is at the heart of the partnership agreement. Through collaboration, diverse organizations share best practice, leverage expertise and resources, act as critical friends, and provide for accountability.

In this section, the applicant is asked to commit to collaboration with CMSD and other partnering community schools. Describe how the partnership network could be of potential value to the school, and how the school could be of potential value to the network.

Please limit the response to 500 words or fewer.

### **Criteria Section 11 – Commitment to Collaboration**

Reviewers will look for a response that:

- Indicates a willingness to actively collaborate with CMSD and other partnering schools.
- Provides ideas about how to make the network valuable to all participants.
- Is linked to student academic needs and interests.



# Partnership Application Transmittal Cover Page

## Cleveland Metropolitan School District

1. Name of School:
2. Location(s) of School:
3. School website:
4. Contact Information for Individual Contact:

Name:  
Title:  
Address:  
City:  
State:  
Zip:  
Phone #  
Fax #  
Email Address:

Name:  
Title:  
Address:  
City:  
State:  
Zip:  
Phone #:  
Fax #:  
Email Address:

Lead Contact's Name and Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please note that only this contact information will be released in the event of a public/media request)

Signature of Individual Contact 1: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Individual Contact 2: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

To Be Completed by CMSD:

<b>Date Received:</b>	<b>By:</b>
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