

**Proposal by the  
Cleveland Transformation Alliance  
to the Cleveland Metropolitan School District  
for criteria to select community schools  
as formal partners**

**Executive Summary**

At the request of the Cleveland Metropolitan School District, the Transformation Alliance convened a working group to create a set of criteria that CMSD could use to select partnering community schools. The working group, comprising representatives of the school district, community schools, and the Transformation Alliance, met six times, from September 17, 2018, to November 15, 2018.

Working group participants:

Jessica Baldwin	Mark Baumgartner	Kevin Burtzlauff
Mark Comanducci	Nicholas D’Amico	Christine Fowler-Mack
Robert Heard	Tom Hutton	Brooke King
Stephanie Klupinski	Shana Marbury	Rick McIntosh
Mary Moore	Jacqui Miller	Ann Mullin
David Quolke	Erin Randel	Alan Rosskamm
Victor Ruiz	Deborah Rutledge	Piet van Lier
Helen Williams	Peggy Young	

The process was facilitated by Kris Putnam-Walkerly of the Putnam Group in close collaboration with the Transformation Alliance. The working group used as a starting point the document “Cleveland Community School Partnership, Request for Proposals: New Partner Schools 2017-18,” found on the CMSD website.

This proposal to CMSD was approved by the Board of Directors of the Transformation Alliance at its December 3, 2018, meeting, and provided to the CMSD Board of Education for consideration at its December 4 work session. The intent of this process has been to take an inclusive approach to partnership while holding partnering schools to high standards of practice.



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:

- The school is located within CMSD boundaries;
- The school has been in operation for at least three complete school years;
- At least 80 percent of the students enrolled in the school are CMSD residents;
- The school meets the following academic requirements:
  - Its average Performance Index score over the most recent three-year period places it in the top third of all district and community schools located within CMSD boundaries (K-8 schools);
  - Its four-year graduation rate over the most recent three-year period equals or exceeds the national average (high schools).
- Community schools that are currently in a 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 CMSD-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 *(date to be determined)*
- 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 *(contact to be determined)*

## 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 (*contact to be determined*).

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 (*to be determined*) at the Cleveland Metropolitan School District first to determine whether the missing information is necessary.

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## Community School Partnership Application Timeline

***To be determined:*** CMSD releases 2017-18 Request for Proposals for New Partner Schools

***To be determined:*** New partnership applications due by 5:00 p.m.

***To be determined:*** CMSD review of applications

***To be determined:*** Initial recommendations to CMSD Board of Education

***To be determined:*** CMSD Board approves applications

***To be determined:*** New approved schools and CMSD enter into partnership agreements through (*date to be determined.*)

***To be determined:*** Next distribution of levied funds to all partner schools

***To be determined:*** All partner schools and CMSD enter into new agreements for school year 2019-20

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## **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.

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## **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 – Academic Information

Part 1: The school’s academic performance will be assessed according to state report card data for the three most recent school years, including Performance Index and Value-Added scores, and graduation rates (for high schools). It is not necessary for the applicant to submit this information. To see the school’s ratings, please visit the Ohio Department of Education’s website.

Please note: In the event the academic performance information for the school available from the state 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: Please provide, in a format similar to the one shown below, at least four school-specific goals aligned to the mission and vision of the school.

Goals must include:

- **Indicators** that represent general dimensions of academic quality or achievement, such as “Postsecondary Readiness and Success.”
- **Measures** that serve as general instruments or means to assess performance in each area defined by an indicator. Measures require the application of specific metrics or calculation methods (see below).
- **Metrics** that specify a quantification, calculation method, or formula for a given measure. For example, the typical high school completion metric is a graduation rate, such as “the percentage of ninth-graders graduating in four years.”
- **Targets** that provide specific, quantifiable objectives and set expectations or define what will constitute success on particular measures over multiple years. For example, a graduation-rate target might be “90% of ninth-graders graduating within four years.” Likewise, state-mandated performance levels are common targets. Having well-conceived and well-defined performance targets is important to achieve and evaluate school success.

SAMPLE GOALS CHART			
Indicator	Measure	Metric	Target
Student Academic Performance (Status)	Proficiency Levels on State Assessments by Grade and By Subject	Percentage of students at proficient	Year 1 – Baseline Year 2 – 20% improvement over baseline Year 3 – 15% improvement over Year 2 Year 4 – Half the difference from Year 3 Scores and 100% proficient Year 5 – Half the difference between Year 4 scores and 100% proficient
Indicator #2	Measure #2	Metric #2	Target #2
Indicator #3	Measure #3	Metric #3	Target #3
Indicator #4	Measure #4	Metric #4	Target #4

### Criteria for Section 3 – Academic Information

Reviewers will look for:

- Evidence of a strong academic program with demonstrated effectiveness and a growth trajectory over the three most recent school years.
- Clearly articulated, school-specific goals as described in part 2.

## Section 4 – Demographic Information

Part 1: Identify the number and percentage of students at the school who are Cleveland residents for each of the three most recent school years.

Part 2: Identify student demographics for the entire school for each of the three most recent school years, including percentages by race, gender, socio-economic status, participation in special education, limited English proficiency, and homelessness.

Compare this demographic information to that of comparison schools identified by CMSD that serve similar grade levels, for each of the three most recent school years. If the comparison reveals any disparities in the demographics of the schools, provide the school's brief explanation of how it accounts for such disparities, along with what if any measures it employs or plans to employ to reduce them.

In addition, please provide the following information for any of these applicable disparities:

- **English Language Learners:** If the percentage of students who are English Language Learners at the school does not meet or exceed the average percentage of English Language Learners at the comparison schools, please provide policies and other evidence demonstrating the school's commitment to serving English Language Learners. This includes evidence of:
  1. Proactive outreach by the school to recruit, and enroll English Language Learners; and
  2. The ability of the school to provide services to meet the needs of ELL students.
- **Special Education:** If the percentage of students at the school who participate in special education services (as reported by the state of Ohio) does not meet or exceed the current national average, please answer the following questions and provide evidence as needed:
  1. What percentage of children with disabilities at the school have low-incidence disabilities?
  2. What is the attrition rate for children with disabilities at the school, and why are these children leaving?
  3. How does the school ensure a continuum of services is offered for children with disabilities?
  4. Describe how the school's recruitment, application, and enrollment processes are expressly welcoming to children with disabilities and blind as to whether or not prospective students have disabilities?
  5. Please provide any additional policies and evidence of practices that show the school's commitment to serving children with disabilities.

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

Reviewers will look for:

- Completeness of submitted information, particularly the identification of any demographic disparities.
- Either:
  1. The absence of significant demographic disparities; or
  2. Satisfactory and well-supported explanations of any such disparities, of the school's current practices for welcoming and serving all students, and of any additional current or planned measures to address the disparities.

## **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.
- If applicable, the budget for the school’s operator or management company for the current fiscal year in its audited standard reporting format. The operator’s revenue and expense related to dollars the operator receives from the school and services it provides to the school must be included.

Part 2: For both the school and the school’s operator or management company, submit monthly financial reports for each of the months in the current fiscal year for which the reports have been completed.

Part 3: Please provide a narrative of no more than 500 words that describes, at a high level, how the school plans to use the levy dollars it receives and how the additional funds will help the school achieve its goals. 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 CMSD-resident students, 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 approximately \$700 per pupil, but again, this can vary widely. All approved partner schools will be required to document how the levy dollars are spent.

Community partners and the operators agree that these budgetary and financial documents will be made available to CMSD upon request during the duration of the partnership.

### **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.
- Includes the school’s most recent five-year forecast that has been submitted to ODE.
- Demonstrates a commitment to acting fiscally responsible to students, the public, and school staff, students.
- Inspires confidence that the school will administer levied funds responsibly and to use them effectively to improve student outcomes

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

## **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, a not-for-profit corporation with 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status under the Internal Revenue Code, or a management company or organization that is responsible for some or all of the school's operation, 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, limited liability corporation, 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 – Commitment to the Cleveland Plan**

Commitment to the Cleveland Plan is about equity of opportunity for all students. This means that all schools help meet the Cleveland Plan’s goal of ensuring every child in Cleveland attends a quality school and that every neighborhood has a multitude of great schools from which families can choose.

Part 1: In submitting this application for partnership, our school and its leadership commit to:

- Helping create a portfolio of quality schools that meet the needs of all students in the district, and are willing to collaborate with CMSD on portfolio planning.
- Active engagement in the partnership with CMSD. (e.g. mutual sharing of best practices, joint participation in professional development, and participation in the Cleveland Education Compact or similar initiatives.)
- Full participation in the Transformation Alliance’s *School Quality Guide*.
- Academic excellence, including for all students, including those who may need remediation, specialized services, and/or differentiated supports.

Part 2: Please write a narrative of no more than 1,200 words that addresses:

- How your school puts into practice its commitment to ensure the school is open to all students and families, regardless of ability, socioeconomic status, or other factors. Please provide a link to the school’s application and enrollment policies, and evidence that:
  - Fees for materials and supplies may be solicited, but are not required;
  - Parent volunteer commitments may be encouraged, but are not required.
- Discipline policies in place at your school. Please also reflect upon how your school’s expulsion and suspension practices may affect different demographic groups.
- How you engage the community where the school is located in an authentic way, what this engagement and outreach look like, and how you evaluate its effectiveness;
- How the school governing authority understands and is committed to the Cleveland Plan, and how well the governing authority knows the community or neighborhood in which your school is located.
- Describe your vision for how your school’s partnership will advance the Cleveland Plan.

Part 3: Please submit three samples of recent marketing materials used by the school and the URL to the school’s website, and write a brief narrative about how the school promotes and markets itself to Cleveland families, including evidence that the school’s marketing is positive in nature, and does not speak negatively about or undermine other schools.

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

Reviewers will look for evidence that:

- The school and its leaders are committed to the Cleveland Plan, in policy and practice.
- The school’s policies, practices, marketing materials, website, and actions in the community reflect a commitment to the Cleveland Plan and its goals of providing a quality education for all Cleveland children.

## **Section 9 – Data Sharing Expectations**

### Part 1: 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 brief statement indicating the school's commitment to align with the Cleveland Plan “roll up” allowance.

### Part 2: Student perception survey

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 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.

Please include a statement confirming that your school agrees to use a student survey that measures school climate, culture and student perceptions, similar to the district's Conditions for Learning Survey. If the school will use a survey other than Conditions for Learning, please also include the name of the survey.

### **Criteria Section 9 –**

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.
- Confirms a willingness to share additional data related to the goals and strategies of the Cleveland Plan, as needed, and to collaborate on the collection of such data.
- Confirms school's agreement to use a student survey, and names a survey if the survey to be used is one other than Conditions for Learning.

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## **Section 10 – 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 10 – 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.

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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