



Request for Proposals

AccelerateMS Contract for Comprehensive Disengaged Youth Support with Career Exploration

INTRODUCTION: The Office of Workforce Development, known commonly as Accelerate Mississippi (AccelerateMS), requests proposals from qualified educational vendors to provide an educational solution to support disengaged youth in targeted Mississippi public middle schools. The responding organization or entity must demonstrate their organizational, functional, and technical capabilities to provide a solution that meets AccelerateMS's needs and aligns with AccelerateMS organizational priorities.

BACKGROUND: Some Mississippi public school students experience significant challenges with absenteeism, matriculation to completion, and quality career exploration. The need for an innovative educational approach that not only re-engages these students but also sets them on a path toward long-term success is critical. This Request for Proposals (RFP) seeks to identify a provider who can deliver a comprehensive educational solution that integrates career exploration with traditional academic instruction to enhance student enthusiasm, performance, and future opportunities in middle schools.

OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF WORK: AccelerateMS is seeking an education solution provider to support up to three public school districts in Mississippi. The ideal vendor shall have experience in successfully implementing the proposed solutions in challenging school districts.

The program objectives shall include:

- Re-engagement of Students: Develop strategies and implement programs that re-engage disengaged and failing students in their education including providing professional development to existing teachers and staff.
- Career Exploration Integration: Incorporate career exploration into the curriculum to help students discover their interests and potential career paths aligned with local and regional career opportunities, specifically those identified as priorities by AccelerateMS.
- Academic Improvement: Improve academic performance through personalized learning plans, mentorship, and support services, including teacher professional development.
- Pathway to Success: Set students on a quantifiable pathway toward academic success, high school graduation, and post-secondary education or workforce entry.
- Enhanced Educational and Workforce Outcomes: Align educational outcomes with the skills and knowledge required for success in the workforce.

AccelerateMS requests the following functions to be provided within the scope of the work.

The selected provider will be responsible for the following tasks:

Assessment and Planning

- Conduct a comprehensive needs assessment of up to three targeted schools to understand the specific challenges faced by disengaged and failing students.



- Collaborate with school administrators, teachers, and counselors to develop a tailored educational program that meets the unique needs of each school.

Program Development

- Design a curriculum that integrates career exploration with core academic subjects, offering students real-world connections to their education.

- Develop personalized learning plans for each student, incorporating academic goals, career interests, and support services.

- Provide professional development for teachers and staff to effectively implement and sustain the program.

Implementation

- Roll out the program in up to three schools, including the deployment of necessary materials, resources, and technology beginning in January 2025.

- Ensure ongoing support and monitoring, with regular check-ins and adjustments to meet evolving student needs.

- Establish partnerships with local businesses and organizations to facilitate career exploration opportunities such as internships, job shadowing, and guest speakers.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Develop and implement a robust monitoring and evaluation plan to assess the program's impact on student engagement, academic performance, and career readiness.

- Provide regular reports to the schools, AccelerateMS, and the Mississippi Department of Education, highlighting successes, challenges, and recommendations for improvement.

Sustainability and Scalability

- Propose a sustainability plan to ensure the program's long-term success, including strategies for securing funding and resources.

- Explore opportunities for scaling the program to additional schools within the district or state.

Deliverables

- Comprehensive needs assessment report.

- Tailored educational program plan for each school.

- Curriculum and resources for career exploration integrated with academic subjects.

- Professional development workshops and materials.

- Monitoring and evaluation reports, including data on student engagement, academic performance, and career readiness.



- Final report with recommendations for sustainability and scalability.

Timeline

The project timeline should include key milestones from the needs assessment phase through to the final evaluation and reporting. Per funding guidance, current deadline for costs to be incurred is December 2025, absent extension or change from the federal funding entity and its guidelines.

Budget

Proposals should include a detailed budget that outlines costs associated with each phase of the project, including personnel, materials, professional development, and ongoing support.

Proposal Submission Requirements

Interested providers should submit the following:

- A detailed proposal outlining their approach to the scope of work, including methodologies and timelines.
- A description of the organization's experience with similar projects, particularly in the education sector.
- Profiles of key personnel who will be involved in the project.
- References from previous clients or partners.
- A detailed budget proposal.

TECHNICAL PROPOSAL:

AMOUNT: The grant is subject to the availability of funds and the total project amount is for up to three schools and may not exceed \$3,000,000, subject to agreement and approval in writing by the Executive Director of AccelerateMS and the Office of the Attorney General.

TIMELINE: Contract execution must take place prior to September 30, 2024. The period of performance, pending extension by the federal funding entity and its guidelines, ends on December 31, 2025.

RESPONSE: Please provide a detailed response related to the items described above (at minimum), proposed work to be completed, and proposed budget for the scope of work. **Responses must be emailed to info@acceleratems.org no later than 5:00 PM CT on September 23, 2024.**