

July 8, 2026

RFI Number: 8007.1
Due Date: August 31, 2026
RFI Closure time: 2:00 p.m.

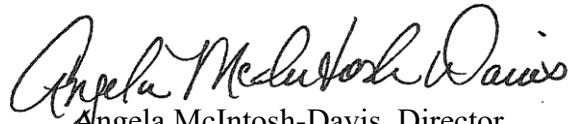
To: Prospective Respondents:

The purpose of this Request for Information (RFI) is for Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) Department of Professional Learning (DPL) to gather information from agencies or institutions with the experience and capability necessary to tailor an Educational Leadership Doctoral program specifically aligned to MCPS' goals, context, and leadership development priorities.

Please respond according to the instructions provided in the attached. Submissions must be received on or before 2:00 p.m., on August 31, 2026. Submissions received after this date and time will not be considered. Responses to the RFI shall not be construed as an obligation by MCPS to issue a solicitation or award a contract should they choose at a later date, not to move forward.

In the event of emergency closing of the MCPS Board of Education offices, this RFI will close at the same time on the next regular working day.

Sincerely,


Angela McIntosh-Davis, Director
Department of Procurement

AMD
Enclosure

**Division of Financial Management
Department of Procurement
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Rockville, Maryland**

**Request for Information (“RFI”) No. 8007.1
Educational Leadership Doctoral Program for
Montgomery County Public Schools**

1.0 INTENT

The purpose of this Request for Information (RFI) is for Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) Department of Professional Learning (DPL) to gather information from agencies or institutions with the experience and capability necessary to tailor an Educational Leadership Doctoral program specifically aligned to MCPS’ goals, context, and leadership development priorities.

The Department of Professional Learning (DPL) intends to review and assess the information gathered in order to issue a subsequent Request for Proposal (RFP) to select a provider who can feasibly deliver a program and related services for MCPS staff customized to the district’s current and future needs in preparing candidates for educational leadership within the district.

MCPS is committed to distributing resources as necessary to provide extra support and interventions so all students can achieve; identifying and eliminating any institutional barriers to students’ success; and ensuring that equitable practices are the norm in all classrooms and workplaces. As the district continues to advance these priorities while navigating higher levels of leadership turnover and increasing demands on school and system leaders, MCPS is seeking a program to better prepare leaders to be effective, grow in their practice, and find satisfaction in the critical leadership work necessary to shift outcomes for students. The program must include core elements to deepen candidates' understanding of leadership, systems change, and organizational support, which are essential for equipping leaders to make meaningful, sustainable improvements and meet retention goals for all staff including district leadership roles. MCPS views adult learning and engagement as key levers to student learning and expects leaders to use and analyze evidence to reflect upon and strengthen practices.

Supporting this focus on leadership and in alignment with its strategic priorities, MCPS is dedicated to achieving professional and operational excellence across its entire workforce. Through Higher Education Partnerships, the district strives to ensure every student has access to top-tier educators by offering continuous professional development and dedicated teacher pathway programs for supporting services staff.

MCPS works with local universities to provide tuition reimbursement and additional support at the undergraduate and graduate levels for individuals seeking teacher certification, continuing professional development, or pursuing career advancement opportunities. Partnership programs focus on expanding the candidate pool by including

applicants representing diverse backgrounds and addressing systemic areas of critical need. At the moment, the critical areas of the system are: computer science, early childhood education, bilingual/biliterate education, English language development, secondary math and science, Spanish, French, special education, and technology education. A leadership doctoral program would complement MCPS' professional development initiatives by equipping leaders with mentorship, targeted training, and strategic skills to improve student outcomes in these critical areas while also improving leadership retention and retention of high impact diverse talent.

2.0 PUBLIC INFORMATION ACT NOTICE

The proposal submitted in response to this RFI may contain technical data which the participant does not want used or disclosed for any purpose other than for information purposes related to this request. The use and disclosure of any such technical data, subject to the provisions of the Maryland Public Information Act ("MPIA"), may be so restricted:

Provided, that participant marks the cover sheet of the submission with the following legend, specifying the pages of the submission which are to be restricted in accordance with the conditions of the legend: "Technical data contained in pages_ of this submission shall not be used or disclosed, except for information purposes."

This restriction does not limit the right of MCPS to use or disclose technical data obtained from another source without restriction.

MCPS assumes no liability for disclosure or use of unmarked technical data or products and may use or disclose unmarked data for any purpose and may consider that the information was not submitted in confidence and therefore is releasable.

Participants are advised that, upon request for information from a third party, the point of contact of the Trust is required to make an independent determination whether the information must be disclosed.

3.0 REVISIONS TO THE RFI

If it becomes necessary to revise the RFI before the due date for responses, MCPS shall provide addenda to all prospective participants that were sent this RFI or which are otherwise known by the point of contact to have obtained this RFI. In addition, addenda to the RFI will be posted on the MCPS Open Solicitations Webpage and eMaryland Marketplace Advantage (eMMA). It remains the responsibility of all participants to check eMMA for any addenda issued prior to the submission of responses.

4.0 INCURRED EXPENSES

MCPS will not be responsible for any costs incurred by any participant in preparing and submitting a response to this RFI, in providing a demonstration, or in performing any other activities related to submitting a response to this RFI.

5.0 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Maryland Code General Provisions Article, 5-508 (b) (2) provides a safe harbor for the submission of “written or oral comments on a specification prepared by an agency or on a solicitation for a bid or proposal when comments are solicited from two or more persons as part of a request for information or a pre-bid or pre-proposal process” such that submitting a response to this RFI will not preclude a participant from participating in a subsequent solicitation.

6.0 BACKGROUND

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) is the 15th largest school system in the United States, and the largest in the state of Maryland serving a highly diverse student population of nearly 157,000 students and maintaining a workforce of approximately 26,000. MCPS is actively working to diversify staff across teaching, leadership, and supporting services roles. Currently the student demographics of MCPS in 2025-2026 are as follows:

Hispanic/Latino: 35.3%
White: 23.9%
Black or African American: 21.6%
Asian: 13.7%
Two or more races: 5.3%
American Indian or Alaskan Native: 0.2%
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander: 0.1%
Emergent Multi-Lingual Learners (EML): 19%
Students receiving free & reduced-price meals (FARMS): 45%
Students receiving special education services: 14%

While MCPS demonstrates strong overall results, data consistently reveals disparities in outcomes across racial, ethnic, and learner populations. These historic disparities widened during and following COVID-19 and remain an ongoing focus of the district’s work. Additionally, a 2022 Antiracist System Audit found that students, staff, and families have different school experiences based on their racial and ethnic backgrounds as “[t]he implementation of policies and application of best practices differs greatly from school to school, suggesting that the system is currently fragmented.”

7.0 SCOPE OF REQUEST

The scope should cover the customized design, development and delivery of a doctoral-level degree-granting program to prepare MCPS candidates for leadership roles in the district. The provider shall be capable of providing, but not limited to, the following options/features:

- Accreditation Affirmation (the higher education partner shall affirm it is accredited and that its accreditation is in good standing);
- Degree Offering (the higher education partner shall provide an overview of doctoral level program offerings that prepare students to serve as equity-centered educational leaders in alignment with system priorities)
- Academic Program Requirements (detail the courses available for students to meet the requirements, with an emphasis on core educational leadership domains such as systems change, policy and management, educational programming and budget management, organizational change, technology leadership, curriculum and instruction, and social justice and equity);
- State Licensure (demonstrate that the program prepares candidates for appropriate licensure if required);
- Curriculum Collaboration and Integration (plan for how to tailor curriculum and programs of study to meet the needs of MCPS, emphasizing systemic coherence and the ability to apply district-wide best practices with fidelity).

Desired Solution Features

The higher education partner will administer an Academic Program that provides Montgomery County Public Schools with a strong pedagogical foundation—rooted in scholarship—to support their growth and development as educational leaders in order to:

- Expand and strengthen the district’s pipeline of qualified educators who wish to develop their educational leadership knowledge, skills and abilities;
- Position leaders as "talent architects" who can identify, mentor, and retain high-impact, diverse staff to strengthen the district’s internal pipeline.
- Provide candidates with access to an institution and academic experience that aligns with their unique needs, desires, and expectations;
- Offer equity focused and relevant experiences to MCPS educators to use evidence and disaggregated data as a lever not only to identify institutional barriers to success but to eliminate them;
- Promote the retention of highly effective leaders by fostering meaningful pathways for continued professional growth and fostering the adaptive competencies required to navigate the district’s complexity to support sustained impact.
- The prospective agencies shall design and deliver educational services that advance and operationalize MCPS’ Leadership Development Framework. The framework is

a tool for intentionally outlining, designing, and delivering comprehensive pathways of learning, mentorship and experiences that prepare staff for future leadership.

Learning should be aligned to the Leadership Development Framework’s domains, and attributes, and must advance equitable outcomes for students, staff, and school communities.

Leadership Development Framework’s core attributes:

- Advances Educational Justice
 - Models Equity
 - Acts to Disrupt Harm
 - Confronts Bias
 - Promotes Equity

- Develops Self by engaging in
 - Personal Reflection
 - Continuous Learning
 - Communication

- Builds Capacity
 - Grows Future Ready Students
 - Develops Talent
 - Develops Teams

- Delivers Results
 - Organizational Strategy
 - Operations
 - Decision Making
 - Collaborating with Stakeholders

8.0 TIMELINE

This RFI will be active from **July 8, 2026 – August 31, 2026**. MCPS will review responses and begin utilizing information to inform the district of all of the options for consideration when issuing a Request for Proposal (RFP). As stated above, MCPS plans to issue an RFP following the conclusion of this RFI. MCPS reserves the right to reconsider an RFP following the review of information provided.

All materials shall be submitted to the Procurement drop box, procurement@mcpsmd.org during the active timeframe stated above. When submitting your materials, the subject line must indicate the following: **“RFI 8007.1 Educational Leadership Doctoral Program”**. Submissions will be accepted through **August 31, 2026, at 2:00pm**. Submissions received in the drop box after that timeframe will not be considered.

All dates are subject to change at the discretion of MCPS