

**State of New Jersey**

**Department of Education**

100 Riverview Plaza, Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0500

Request for Proposal #25-005

**National Search Firm for**

**Camden City School District Superintendent**

Issued on: Monday, May 5, 2025

Submission Date: Friday, May 9, 2025, at 4:00PM EST

Dates are subject to change. All times contained in the RFP refer to Eastern Standard Time.

All changes will be reflected in Bid Amendments to the Request for Proposal posted on the NJDOE website.

**SECTION 1. PURPOSE AND INTENT**

The Department of Education, acting on behalf of the Camden City School District (CCSD), is seeking proposals from qualified executive search firms to lead and manage a comprehensive national search for a new Superintendent of Schools. This leadership transition represents a critical juncture for the district, which serves one of New Jersey’s most economically and socially complex urban communities. The selected firm must possess demonstrated experience in recruiting transformative educational leaders who understand the specific challenges and opportunities of urban public-school systems.

The goal of this engagement is to identify and recommend highly qualified superintendent candidates who have a strong track record of improving student outcomes, fostering equity, leading institutional change, and engaging diverse stakeholders in a shared educational vision. The search must include a strong focus on community and stakeholder engagement to ensure that the final selection reflects the voices and values of Camden’s students, families, educators, and residents.

All work under this Request for Proposal (RFP) must be completed within a maximum of eight months from contract execution. The final selection and candidate presentation will be made to the State of New Jersey Board of Education, which maintains appointment authority over the Superintendent for the Camden City School District.

**SECTION 2. BACKGROUND**

Camden City School District is a public school system located in Camden, New Jersey. The district serves a diverse student population and faces challenges typical of urban school systems, including addressing academic achievement gaps, supporting student well-being, and fostering community trust. Camden is a state-operated district under the supervision of the New Jersey Department of Education, and it operates under a unique governance model where the local school board serves in an advisory capacity, while the State retains authority over major operational and leadership decisions. The Superintendent plays a central role in driving change, sustaining reform momentum, and fostering transparency and accountability throughout the district. Additional information on the district’s strategic plans, performance indicators, community initiatives, and board structure can be found on the district website: <https://camdencityschools.org>.

**SECTION 3. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS**

All proposals must be submitted electronically in a single PDF document to vendorbids@doe.nj.gov by **Friday, May 9, 2025, 4:00PM EST**, with the subject line: “RFP: 25-005 Camden Superintendent Search”. Proposals submitted after the deadline will not be accepted. Hard copy submissions are not permitted.

**SECTION 3.1 NJSTART**

Bidders interested in doing business with the State must register in NJSTART, New Jersey’s eProcurement system. Registration is easy and takes only a few minutes. Visit [www.njstart.gov](https://www.njstart.gov) and click on “Register” to start the process. Respondents to this RFP are strongly encouraged to visit the NJSTART Vendor Support Page, which contains Quick Reference Guides (QRGs), supporting videos, a glossary of NJSTART terms, and helpdesk contact information.

The NJSTART Vendor Support Page is located at: <http://www.nj.gov/treasury/purchase/njstart/vendor.shtml>.

**SECTION 3.2 VENDOR COMPLIANCE FORMS**

The selected vendor must complete all required forms as outlined in the “Information Sheet and Checklist for Waivers and Delegated Purchasing Authority (DPA) Transactions” provided by the New Jersey Department of the Treasury, Division of Purchase and Property, available at the link below. Submission of these forms is a condition of contract award and must be completed.

Checklist Link: <https://www.nj.gov/treasury/purchase/forms/Waiver%20and%20DPA%20Contract%20Checklist.pdf>

**SECTION 4. SCOPE OF WORK**

The successful vendor will be responsible for designing, managing, and executing all phases of a national executive search for the next Superintendent of the Camden City School District. The scope of work shall include the following core responsibilities:

**1. Project Planning and Timeline Development:**

In collaboration with the Department and key stakeholders, the vendor shall develop a comprehensive project plan and search timeline. The plan must identify key milestones, engagement activities, outreach channels, and decision points. The final timeline must accommodate the eight-month completion requirement.

**2. Leadership Profile Development:**

Through targeted stakeholder engagement—including interviews, focus groups, and surveys—the vendor shall collect community input to develop a comprehensive leadership profile. This profile shall reflect the values, expectations, and leadership characteristics sought by the Camden community and will be used to guide candidate recruitment and evaluation.

**3. Community Engagement and Local Outreach:**

Given the historical and cultural context of Camden, the vendor must implement a proactive engagement strategy that includes parents, educators, students, elected officials, faith leaders, advocacy organizations, and other local stakeholders. Outreach should be inclusive, multilingual where appropriate, and culturally responsive. The vendor is expected to hold both in-person and virtual engagement sessions, with documented summaries of feedback provided.

**4. Candidate Recruitment and Sourcing:**

The vendor shall conduct a wide-reaching national recruitment campaign targeting experienced leaders in K–12 education, particularly those with a proven ability to serve in high-needs, urban environments. Special effort must be made to identify and attract candidates from diverse racial, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds. All recruitment efforts must comply with applicable non-discrimination and equal opportunity laws.

**5. Candidate Screening and Evaluation:**

The vendor will be responsible for managing the screening and vetting process, including reviewing resumes, conducting preliminary interviews, evaluating credentials, and performing background and reference checks. Semi-finalist and finalist candidates shall be identified based on alignment with the leadership profile and strategic priorities of the district.

**6. Interview Coordination and Final Presentation:**

The firm shall coordinate the logistics of finalist interviews and presentations, including scheduling, materials preparation, travel arrangements (if applicable), and coordination with the State of New Jersey Board of Education. The firm must also assist in preparing stakeholder interview panels, community forums, and Board decision-making sessions.

**7. Project Reporting and Communication**:

The vendor shall provide biweekly written progress updates to the Department and maintain a clear and transparent communication plan throughout the engagement. A final report shall summarize all search activities, stakeholder input, and outcomes.

**SECTION 5. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS**

All proposals must include the following components:

* A cover letter signed by an authorized official of the firm.
* A narrative description of the firm’s background, expertise, and qualifications specific to K–12 executive searches, particularly in urban districts.
* A description of the proposed methodology for conducting the search, including outreach strategy, stakeholder engagement, screening and selection processes, and candidate presentation.
* Identification of key staff who will be assigned to the engagement, including resumes, roles, and availability throughout the project.
* A community engagement plan that describes the types of outreach activities proposed, mechanisms for gathering feedback, and plans for reporting on engagement outcomes.
* A proposed timeline and work plan with key milestones.
* A detailed cost proposal as described in Section 6 – Cost Proposal and Payment Terms.
* Three references from clients for whom the firm conducted similar searches in the past five years.

**SECTION 6. COST PROPOSAL AND PAYMENT TERMS**

The cost proposal must provide a complete and itemized breakdown of all costs associated with the project, including labor, travel, materials, advertising, facilitation, and administrative expenses. All pricing must be submitted on a fixed-fee basis tied to project deliverables, not time and materials or percentage-based compensation. Travel and lodging expenses must conform to the federal per diem reimbursement rates as published by the U.S. General Services Administration: <http://www.gsa.gov>. Payment for services will be made only upon the Department’s approval of specific deliverables. Under no circumstances will payment be made upon issuance of a purchase order or execution of a contract. The anticipated payment schedule is as follows:

* 10% upon approval of the final search plan and stakeholder engagement timeline;
* 20% upon completion of stakeholder outreach activities and submission of the engagement summary;
* 25% upon submission of a qualified pool of semifinalist candidates;
* 25% upon completion of finalist interviews and coordination of the final selection process;
* 20% upon submission of the final process summary report and closeout documentation.

All invoices must include documentation of deliverable completion and must be submitted to the state contract manager.

**SECTION 7. TECHNICAL EVALUATION CRITERIA**

After a determination is made that all the minimum requirements in Section 5 of the RFP are met, Proposals will be evaluated by an Evaluation Committee on the quality of the response and overall experience, including, but not limited to:

* Experience in leading and managing a comprehensive national search for a new Superintendent of Schools;
* The Bidder’s demonstration in the Quote that the Bidder understands and is able to complete the requirements of the Scope of Work as sought.

Non-responsive Proposal Applications will be rejected without evaluation.

**SECTION 8. CONTRACT MANAGEMENT**

This contract will be managed by the State Contract Manager (SCM) assigned by the New Jersey Department Education, or their designee. The SCM will be responsible for engaging

the Consultant and will serve as the primary point of contact following contract execution for any questions or concerns related to the contract.

All proposal documents, deliverables, and supporting materials developed by the Consultant must be prepared in accordance with standard operating procedures established by the SCM and are subject to the SCM’s review and approval. If revisions are requested, the Consultant must resubmit the revised materials for approval prior to any public release.