



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

For Management and Operational Services

MacDowell Preparatory Academy

Authorized by Detroit Public Schools Community District

Timeline	
RFP Release	January 7, 2026
Q&A Period Closes	January 16, 2026
Proposal Deadline	February 2, 2026
Evaluation Committee Review	February 4-5, 2026
Finance Committee Recommendation	February 10, 2026
Board Selection	February Board Meeting
Implementation/Transition	March – June 30, 2026
Contract Begins	July 1, 2026

For questions or to request additional information regarding this RFP, please contact:

MacDowell Preparatory Academy Board of Directors

Name: Artesia Washington

Title: Board Treasurer

Phone: (313)494-8141

Email: artesia.washington@macdowellprep.com

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Executive Summary

MacDowell Preparatory Academy, a Public School Academy authorized by Detroit Public Schools Community District (DPSCD), is issuing this Request for Proposal (RFP) to solicit competitive proposals from qualified Educational Management Organizations (EMOs) or individual management service providers to provide comprehensive management and operational services for the charter school.

This RFP seeks qualified firms capable of providing full operational management, including but not limited to: administrative services, human resources management, financial management, compliance oversight, and strategic operational support. The selected provider will partner with the Academy Board of Directors ("the Board") to support the Board in its constitutional duty to exercise its statutory, contractual and fiduciary obligations while providing high-quality instruction, sound operations, and full compliance with Michigan and federal laws and regulations applicable to public school academies.

I. SCHOOL OVERVIEW

A. Institution Information

School Name: MacDowell Preparatory Academy

Authorizer: Detroit Public Schools Community District (DPSCD)

School Type: Public School Academy (Charter School) - State of Michigan

Location: Detroit, Michigan

Authorization Status: Michigan Public Act 451 (MCL 380.501 et seq.)

B. Mission Statement

MacDowell Preparatory Academy mission is to instill the skill and will in its scholars to succeed in life and college.

C. School Profile

- **Grade Levels Served: K - 8**
- **Current Student Enrollment: 358**
- **Projected Student Enrollment: 375**
- **Contact Information: Ms. Chalcee Norwood, Dean of Operations**
CNorwood@macdowellprep.com

II. SCOPE OF SERVICES

The management company shall provide comprehensive operational and management services to support the school's mission. Services shall include but are not limited to:

A. Administrative Services

- Day-to-day school operations and management
- Scheduling, facility management, and maintenance coordination
- Student enrollment and records management
- School calendar planning and scheduling
- Attendance and student discipline policies and procedures Development of Board policies and procedures
- Development of Board policies and procedures
- Strategic planning support and board assistance
- Compliance with all DPSCD contract requirements and state regulations Development of Board policies and procedures

B. Human Resources Management

- Recruitment, screening, and hiring of qualified teachers and staff
- Professional development planning and execution
- Staff performance evaluation systems and implementation
- Employee records management and compliance
- Benefits administration and payroll coordination
- Labor relations and union compliance (as applicable)
- Staff retention and evaluation programs

C. Financial Management

- Budget development and financial forecasting
- Accounts payable and receivable management
- Payroll processing and payroll reporting
- Grant management and accounting
- Financial reporting and compliance
- State and federal funding reconciliation
- Audit preparation and support
- Internal controls and financial policies

D. Regulatory and Compliance Services

- Compliance with Michigan Department of Education requirements
- Compliance with DPSCD authorization contract terms
- State and federal reporting requirements
- Special education compliance and IEP management
- Title I and other federal program compliance
- Procurement and contract compliance
- Health and safety compliance

E. Curriculum and Instructional Support

- Curriculum review and alignment support
- Assessment and data management
- Instructional improvement initiatives
- Professional development coordination
- Teacher evaluation support

F. Facilities and Operations

- Facility maintenance scheduling and supervision
- Custodial and maintenance services management
- Food service coordination
- Transportation
- Safety and emergency preparedness planning

G. Stakeholder Engagement

- Parent and community communication
- Board meeting support and agenda preparation

- Staff engagement and morale initiatives
- Community partnerships and collaborations

III. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

A. Proposal Structure and Format

Respondents shall submit proposals containing the following sections in this order:

1. **Executive Summary** (2 pages maximum)
2. **Company Background and Experience** (5 pages maximum)
3. **Management Team and Staffing** (4 pages maximum)
4. **Service Delivery Plan** (6 pages maximum)
5. **Financial Proposal** (3 pages maximum)
6. **References** (1 page)
7. **Compliance Certifications** (varies)
8. **Appendices** (as needed)

Total page limit: 25 pages (excluding appendices and required certifications)

B. Required Content

1. Executive Summary

Provide a clear, concise overview of your organization and your ability to serve MacDowell Preparatory Academy. Include:

- Your organization's mission and core values
- Years of experience in educational management
- Number of schools currently managed
- Key differentiators and competitive advantages
- Commitment to the school's mission and Detroit community

2. Company Background and Experience

Provide detailed information about your organization:

- **Organization Overview:** Legal structure, years in operation, headquarters location
- **Mission and Values:** How your organization's mission aligns with MacDowell Prep's mission
- **Portfolio of Schools:** List of schools currently or previously managed, including:
 - School name and location

- Grades served and student enrollment
- Years under management
- Performance outcomes and achievement data
- Any schools exited and reasons
- **Relevant Experience:** Specific experience managing Michigan charter schools and compliance with DPSCD requirements
- **Organizational Capacity:** Ability to manage schools in the Detroit area
- **Track Record:** Academic performance, financial stability, and regulatory compliance of schools managed

3. Management Team and Staffing

Describe the staffing structure and key personnel who will serve the school:

- **Organizational Chart:** Clear reporting structure showing how MacDowell Prep will be managed
- **Key Personnel:** Provide the following for proposed Executive Director/Head of School and other key managers:
 - Name, title, and primary responsibilities
 - Educational background and credentials
 - Relevant experience (minimum 5 years in education management preferred)
 - Previous positions and accomplishments
 - Michigan educator certification (if applicable)
- **Support Services:** Describe how the company will provide specialized support in:
 - Finance and accounting
 - Human resources
 - Compliance and special education
 - Curriculum and instruction
 - Facilities and operations
- **Staffing Plan:** How the company will assist with teacher recruitment, retention, and professional development

4. Service Delivery Plan

Describe in detail how your organization will provide each required service:

- **Administrative Operations:** Daily management systems, communication protocols, decision-making authority
- **Financial Services:** Budget development process, financial controls, reporting frequency and format
- **Human Resources:** Recruitment timeline, professional development plan, performance management system

- **Compliance and Regulatory:** Approach to monitoring DPSCD contract compliance, state requirements, federal regulations
- **Educational Support:** Role in curriculum decisions, school improvement initiatives, instructional leadership
- **Communication:** Board reporting, staff communication, parent/community engagement
- **Performance Accountability:** How the company monitors school performance and holds itself accountable
- **Transition Plan:** If selected, your plan for a smooth transition and startup

5. Financial Proposal

Provide detailed cost information:

- **Management Fee Structure:**
 - Annual base fee and/or percentage of per-pupil state funding
 - Itemized list of services included in base fee
 - Any additional services and associated costs
 - Fee schedule and payment terms
 - How fees scale with enrollment
- **Additional Costs:** Detailed listing of any additional expenses (e.g., technology, training, travel)
- **Financial Sustainability:** How the school will maintain financial health under this fee structure
- **3-Year Projections:** Fee projections based on anticipated enrollment growth
- **Staffing Costs:** Proposed compensation for school-based leadership (if applicable)

6. References

Provide at least three (3) professional references, preferably from other charter schools currently or recently managed:

For each reference:

- School/organization name and location
- Contact person name, title, phone number, and email address
- Years of relationship
- Brief description of services provided

References should include current school board members or administrators from schools currently managed by your organization.

7. Compliance Certifications

Include the following required certifications and documents:

- **Conflict of Interest Statement:** Disclose any conflicts of interest related to DPSCD, Detroit area schools, or related entities
- **Insurance Documentation:** Proof of:
 - General liability insurance (\$1 million minimum)
 - Professional liability/errors and omissions insurance (\$1 million minimum)
 - Directors and officers insurance (if applicable)
 - Workers' compensation insurance (if company employs staff)
- **Licensure and Qualifications:** Proof of appropriate business licenses and certifications
- **Background Check Authorization:** Authorization for background check and credential verification
- **Financial Audit Documentation:** Most recent financial audit or financial statements (if for-profit entity)
- **Compliance Certification:** Certification that the company complies with all Michigan state law and DPSCD requirements
- **Non-Discrimination Statement:** Statement affirming commitment to equal opportunity and non-discrimination
- **Debarment Certification:** Federal form certifying the firm has not been debarred from federal contracts

8. Appendices

Include any supplementary materials:

- Resumes of proposed key personnel (not counted against page limit)
- Sample school budget and financial reports
- Sample Board meeting agendas and materials
- Organizational charts
- Letters of commitment from key personnel
- Additional references or case studies
- Published materials about your organization

IV. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

A. Submission Format

- **Number of Copies:** One (1) original and three (3) hard copies
- **Digital Copy:** One (1) electronic version on USB drive in PDF format
- **Page Size:** 8.5" x 11" white paper

- **Font:** 11-point minimum, standard font (Times New Roman, Arial, or similar)
- **Margins:** 1-inch margins all sides
- **Binding:** Secure binding (spiral, brads, or report covers)

B. Submission Deadline

Deadline for Receipt: February 2, 2026

Late Submissions: Proposals received after the deadline will not be accepted.

C. Submission Address

Submit proposals to:

MacDowell Preparatory Academy Board of Education
4201 West Outer Drive, Detroit, MI 48221

Attention: Ms. Chalcee Norwood, Dean of Operations

Email (for electronic copy only): CNorwood@macdowellprep.com

D. Questions and Clarifications

Q&A Period: January 7, 2026 – January 16, 2026

Submit questions regarding this RFP in writing to CNorwood@macdowellprep.com [EMAIL/CONTACT] by January 16, 2026.

Responses will be provided in writing to all proposers. No individual technical assistance will be provided.

V. EVALUATION AND SELECTION

A. Evaluation Process

MacDowell Preparatory Academy's Board of Education will review all proposals received by the deadline. The Board will select a proposal evaluation committee consisting of Board members and school stakeholders. The evaluation committee will assess proposals based on criteria listed below and may request presentations and interviews with finalists.

B. Evaluation Criteria and Weighting

Proposals will be evaluated on the following criteria:

Criterion	Weight	Points
Company background, experience, and track record	20%	20
Qualifications of proposed management team	15%	15

Quality and comprehensiveness of service delivery plan	25%	25
Financial proposal and value for money	15%	15
References and demonstrated performance	15%	15
Compliance and regulatory requirements	10%	10
Total	100%	100

C. Selection Criteria

The Board will evaluate proposals based on:

- **Educational Focus:** Commitment to academic excellence and student achievement
- **Operational Expertise:** Demonstrated ability to manage schools effectively and efficiently
- **Financial Responsibility:** Sound financial management and sustainable fee structure
- **Michigan Compliance:** Understanding of Michigan law and DPSCD contract requirements
- **Community Alignment:** Commitment to Detroit community and diverse student populations
- **References:** Positive feedback from current and former partner schools
- **Cost-Effectiveness:** Reasonable fees relative to services provided
- **Cultural Fit:** Shared values and commitment to the school's mission

D. Contract Negotiations

The Board will negotiate final contract terms with the selected proposer. The contract will be based on Michigan Public Act 451 and the current DPSCD authorization agreement.

E. Timeline

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VI. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

A. General Terms

- **No Obligation:** MacDowell Preparatory Academy reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and is not obligated to award a contract as a result of this RFP.
- **Proprietary Information:** Proposers should clearly mark any information considered proprietary or confidential. The Board will maintain confidentiality to the extent permitted by law.
- **Costs:** All costs associated with proposal preparation are the responsibility of the proposer.
- **No Discussions:** The Board does not intend to conduct discussions with respondents regarding their proposals, although the Board may request clarifications.

B. Non-Discrimination

All applicants are required to comply with applicable federal and state non-discrimination laws, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

C. Contract Terms

The selected management company will enter into a written contract with MacDowell Preparatory Academy specifying:

- **Term:** 3 years, commencing July 1, 2026
- **Renewal:** Options to renew subject to performance and mutual agreement
- **Termination:** Termination provisions in accordance with Michigan law and DPSCD requirements
- **Performance Measures:** Specific metrics for school success and company performance
- **Insurance Requirements:** Minimum insurance coverage requirements
- **Indemnification:** Indemnification provisions protecting the Board and school

D. Performance Accountability

The management company shall be responsible for:

- **Academic Performance:** Achieving or exceeding annual academic growth targets
- **Financial Performance:** Maintaining a positive fund balance and sound financial practices
- **Regulatory Compliance:** Maintaining full compliance with DPSCD contracts and state/federal requirements
- **Operational Excellence:** Maintaining safe, orderly school operations

- **Transparency:** Providing regular performance reports and board updates

E. DPSCD Authorization Compliance

The management company shall comply with all terms and conditions of the DPSCD Public School Academy Authorizing Contract, as may be amended from time to time. The school's authorization status with DPSCD takes precedence over management operations. The management company shall operate under the supervision and with the approval of the Academy Board of Directors. The Academy Board retains ultimate fiduciary responsibility for all Academy operations.

VII. CONTACT INFORMATION

For questions or to request additional information regarding this RFP, please contact:

MacDowell Preparatory Academy Board of Directors

Name: Artesia Washington

Title: Board Treasurer

Phone: (313)494-8141

Email: artesia.washington@macdowellprep.com

Mailing Address:

4201 West Outer Drive, Detroit, MI 48221

Office Hours: 8:00am – 3:30pm

Appendices

Appendix A: DPSCD Public School Academy Authorizing Contract (current version)

Appendix B: School Financial Information and Enrollment Data

Appendix C: Sample Board Minutes and School Policies

Appendix D: Federal Compliance and Reporting Requirements Checklist

Appendix E: Proposer's Certification Forms

Appendix F: Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form

Appendix G: Background Check Authorization Form

This RFP is issued on behalf of MacDowell Preparatory Academy Board of Directors. All submissions become the property of MacDowell Preparatory Academy and may be used by the Board for any purpose deemed appropriate.

Publication Date: January 7, 2026

Authorized By: MacDowell Preparatory Academy Board of Directors