



DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES  
**OFFICE OF STATE PROCUREMENT SERVICES**  
 STATE OF MAINE

**PROCUREMENT JUSTIFICATION FORM (PJF)**

This form must accompany all contract requests and sole source requisitions (RQS) over \$5,000 submitted to the Office of State Procurement Services.

*INSTRUCTIONS: Please provide the requested information in the white spaces below. All responses (except signatures) must be typed; no hand-written forms will be accepted. See the guidance document posted with this form on the Procurement Services intranet site (Forms page) for additional instructions.*

PART I: OVERVIEW			
Commission Office/Division/Program:		Maine Charter School Commission	
Commission Contract Administrator or Grant Coordinator:		Susan Whipkey, Business Manager	
(If applicable) Commission Reference #:		N/A	
Amount: (Contract/Amendment/Grant)	\$ 18,500.00	Advantage CT / RQS #:	20250310*2069
<b>CONTRACT</b>	Proposed Start Date:	3/3/2025	Proposed End Date: 6/3/2025
<b>AMENDMENT</b>	Original Start Date:		Effective Date:
	Previous End Date:		New End Date:
<b>GRANT</b>	Project Start Date:		Grant Start Date:
	Project End Date:		Grant End Date:
Vendor/Provider/Grantee Name, City, State:		PLT Strategies Group, Inc. (VC0000275092) La Mesa, California	
Brief Description of Goods/Services/Grant:		Consulting services for MCSC legislative testimony creation and support materials creation for the public charter schools Hall of Flags event.	

PART II: JUSTIFICATION FOR VENDOR SELECTION			
Check the box below for the justification(s) that applies to this request. (Check all that apply.)			
<input type="checkbox"/>	A. Competitive Process	<input type="checkbox"/>	G. Grant
<input type="checkbox"/>	B. Amendment	<input type="checkbox"/>	H. State Statute/Agency Directed
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	C. Single Source/Unique Vendor	<input type="checkbox"/>	I. Federal Agency Directed
<input type="checkbox"/>	D. Proprietary/Copyright/Patents	<input type="checkbox"/>	J. Willing and Qualified
<input type="checkbox"/>	E. Emergency	<input type="checkbox"/>	K. Client Choice
<input type="checkbox"/>	F. University Cooperative Project	<input type="checkbox"/>	L. Other Authorization

Please respond to ALL of the questions in the following sections.

**PART III: SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION**

1. Provide a more detailed description and explain the need for the goods, services or grant to supplement the response in Part I.

PLT Strategies Group, Inc. (PLT) was founded in 2019 and brings a team of mission-oriented leadership and advocacy experts together to support national, state and local non-profit organizations working to advance policy priorities in support of children and families, build community and create opportunities for new voices to emerge. PLT Strategies Group, Inc. will provide the Maine Charter School Commission (MCSC) and Maine’s charter public school community with two discrete bodies of work: (1) Thought partnership and testimony support during Maine’s 2025 legislative session; and, (2) Collateral creation for Maine’s charter public schools Hall of Flags event on May 29, 2025. These deliverables will better equip Maine’s charter public schools to educate legislators on charter public schools, and support Maine’s charter public schools and their policy priorities during the current legislative session. Part of the Commission’s 3-year Strategic Plan is to “engage and activate stakeholders”. This engagement is to build knowledge of Maine charter schools with a larger audience by pinpointing key messages and target audiences.

2. Provide a brief justification for the selected vendor to supplement the response in Part II. Reference the RFP number, if applicable.

PLT Strategies stands out as a nationally recognized leader in crafting highly effective communication strategies for charter school organizations. While numerous communication firms exist, few specialize in the unique needs of charter schools and their messaging. PLT Strategies has conducted extensive market research both nationally and locally, identifying the most effective messaging techniques to educate the public about charter schools—an essential priority for the Maine Charter School Commission. Given their specialized expertise and proven track record in this field, we are confident that a partnership with PLT Strategies will significantly advance our efforts to effectively communicate the value and impact of charter schools in Maine.

3. Explain how the negotiated costs or rates are fair and reasonable; or how the funding was allocated to grantee.

During the Commission’s discussions leading up to the approval of its approved FY25 budget, funds were set aside to engage in this work.

4. Describe the plan for future competition for the goods or services.

This is intended to be a short-term project. Based on the results, the Commission may decide – as part of its FY26 budget – to engage in similar work. That will be determined at a later time.

**PART IV: AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA) / MAINE JOBS & RECOVERY PLAN (MJRP)**

Does this request utilize ARPA/MJRP funds?
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, MJRP funds (023) – If Yes, please attach the approved Business Case(s).
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, ARPA funds (025) – If Yes, please be aware of the requirements from awarding federal agencies.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No – If No, proceed to Part V.



**PART V: CONFLICTS OF INTEREST (COI); CONTRACT WITH THE STATE**

Maine law contains Conflict of Interest statutes directed to State Departments, State Officers, and Employees Generally under MRS [Title 5, §18](#) and [§18-A](#), in harmony with MRS [Title 17, §3104](#).

The requesting department signatory understands and acknowledges Maine’s Conflict of Interest statutes.

**PART VI: APPROVALS**

The signatures below indicate approval of this procurement request.

Signature of requesting Department’s Commissioner (or designee):			
Typed Name:	Lana Ewing, Executive Director	Date:	3/17/2025
Signature of DAFS Procurement Official:			
Typed Name:	Thomas Paquette	Date:	3/19/2025

### Certificate Of Completion

Envelope Id: 026913B0-1403-40B7-9A83-860516754BDB  
 Subject: Complete with Docusign: PJF\_PLT Strategies.pdf  
 Source Envelope:  
 Document Pages: 3  
 Certificate Pages: 1  
 AutoNav: Enabled  
 Envelopeld Stamping: Enabled  
 Time Zone: (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)

Status: Completed  
 Envelope Originator:  
 Susan Whipkey  
 Susan.Whipkey@maine.gov  
 IP Address: 172.101.6.188


### Record Tracking

Status: Original 3/17/2025 4:17:12 PM	Holder: Susan Whipkey Susan.Whipkey@maine.gov	Location: DocuSign
Security Appliance Status: Connected	Pool: StateLocal	
Storage Appliance Status: Connected	Pool: Maine Department of Education	Location: Docusign

### Signer Events

Lana Ewing  
 Lana.Ewing@maine.gov  
 Executive Director, MCSC  
 Security Level: Email, Account Authentication (None)

### Signature

DocuSigned by:  
  
 02C1A51C566144C...  
 Signature Adoption: Pre-selected Style  
 Using IP Address: 98.0.45.149

### Timestamp

Sent: 3/17/2025 4:18:18 PM  
 Viewed: 3/17/2025 4:58:17 PM  
 Signed: 3/17/2025 4:58:26 PM

**Electronic Record and Signature Disclosure:**  
 Not Offered via Docusign

In Person Signer Events	Signature	Timestamp
Editor Delivery Events	Status	Timestamp
Agent Delivery Events	Status	Timestamp
Intermediary Delivery Events	Status	Timestamp
Certified Delivery Events	Status	Timestamp
Carbon Copy Events	Status	Timestamp
Witness Events	Signature	Timestamp
Notary Events	Signature	Timestamp
Envelope Summary Events	Status	Timestamps
Envelope Sent	Hashed/Encrypted	3/17/2025 4:18:18 PM
Certified Delivered	Security Checked	3/17/2025 4:58:17 PM
Signing Complete	Security Checked	3/17/2025 4:58:26 PM
Completed	Security Checked	3/17/2025 4:58:26 PM
Payment Events	Status	Timestamps