



DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES
DIVISION OF 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 Division of 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 Division of Procurement Services intranet site (Forms page) for additional instructions.

PART I: OVERVIEW			
Department Office/Division/Program:		Maine Charter School Commission	
Department Contract Administrator or Grant Coordinator:		Amy L. Allen Operations Director	
(If applicable) Department Reference #:		FY24-25	
Amount: (Contract/Amendment/Grant)	\$34,210.00	Advantage CT / RQS #:	RQS, #20240709*0034
CONTRACT	Proposed Start Date:	7/1/2024	Proposed End Date: 6/30/2025
AMENDMENT	Original Start Date:		Effective Date:
	Previous End Date:		New End Date:
GRANT	Project Start Date:		Grant Start Date:
	Project End Date:		Grant End Date:
Vendor/Provider/Grantee Name, City, State:		The Institute for Excellence in Education (VC0000221483) d/b/a National Charter Schools Institute ("Epicenter") Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858	
Brief Description of Goods/Services/Grant:		Epicenter is a web-based software system for schools, boards, authorizers, service providers and associations that will assist in managing compliance, automating workflow, and evaluating performance.	

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.	<p>The Maine Charter School Commission was created by Public Law 2011, Chapter 414, to authorize and oversee public charter schools in Maine. As part of the oversight process, the Charter School Commission requires the schools to submit a wide variety of documents at various times throughout the year. Currently, Maine has nine (9) public charter schools. Epicenter keeps track of and manages the documentation that the Charter School Commission requires, provides insight into student demographics and enrollment trends, measures academic performance, and monitors financial performance of each of the schools they authorize. In 2022-23, the Commission began working with Epicenter to develop Scorecards (Financial, Academic, and Organizational) that mirror the Performance Framework and will use them for the first time to report SY2023-24 outcomes. Performance Framework outcomes will automatically populate and reports can be run that will be included in annual monitoring reports. In 2023-24, the Commission worked closely with Epicenter to develop required Governing Board training modules. These modules are housed on the Epicenter platform and accessed by charter school board members regularly. Commission staff have been working closely with the Epicenter team to bring the Charter School Renewal Application online. Two schools are currently in renewal and will be using this online platform to submit applications in August 2024. Subsequently, the Charter School Commission has issued an RFP for a new public charter school and applicants will submit new charter school applications via the online platform as well. Applicants will begin using the platform beginning on July 16th with applications due in February 2025.</p>
2. Provide a brief justification for the selected vendor to supplement the response in Part II. Reference the RFP number, if applicable.	<p>Epicenter is highly recommended by NACSA (National Association of Charter School Authorizers). It is a unique product, designed specifically for charter school authorizing and governance, which cannot be duplicated by Department/Commission resources. This will be the eighth year that the Charter School Commission will use Epicenter and we intend to renew annually.</p>

PART III: SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

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

The Maine Charter School Commission worked with representatives at the National Charter School Institute to discuss the current needs of the Commission and the nine (9) public charter schools that the Commission currently oversees. The Commission’s Finance Committee budgeted for this expense and Epicenter is able to provide these services within the Commission’s budget.

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

The Commission does not plan to competitively procure this service in the future.

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

Does this request utilize ARPA/MJRP funds?

Yes, MJRP funds (023) – If Yes, please attach the approved Business Case(s).

Yes, ARPA funds (025) – If Yes, please be aware of the requirements from awarding federal agencies.

No – If No, proceed to Part V.


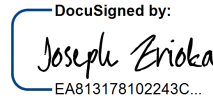
PART V: CONFLICTS OF INTEREST (COI); CONTRACT WITH THE STATE

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:	Amy L. Allen, Operations Director	Date:	7/9/24
Signature of DAFS Procurement Official:			
Typed Name:	Joseph Zrioka, IT Procurement Director	Date:	8/15/2024