



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 #:		2024-084	
Amount: (Contract/Amendment/Grant)	\$ 29,210.00	Advantage CT / RQS #:	RQS, 20231004*0557
CONTRACT	Proposed Start Date:	7/1/2023	Proposed End Date: 6/30/2024
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.

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. The “management” of the paperwork flow – from receiving documents, to saving documents, sending reminders of needed documents, etc. – had been a manual process until the Commission began using Epicenter in 2017. Now, Epicenter keeps track of and managed the documentation that the Charter School Commission requires. In addition, the Commission can now quickly gain insight into student demographics and enrollment trends, measure academic performance, and monitor financial performance of each of the schools they authorize. In 2022-23, the Commission worked with Epicenter to add the Financial Scorecard, Academic Scorecard, and Organizational Scorecard. This is still in the development stage due to changes to the Performance Framework, but once fully developed for the 2023-24 school year, this new feature will mirror the framework that is part of each school’s charter contract. Reporting on the framework has been a manual process when writing the statutorily required Annual Monitoring Reports. With a push of a button, the framework will now be replaced and included in the reports. Also new last year, was the “housing” of Governing Board-required Board Training modules. All members of charter public school Governing Boards can now access training through Epicenter’s “Professional Learning” module. These modules will be enhanced for the 2023-24 school year.

Note – This will be the seventh year that the Charter School Commission will use Epicenter and we intend to renew annually.

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

Epicenter comes highly recommended by NACSA (National Association of Charter School Authorizers). It is a unique product, designed specifically for charter school authorizing and governance, that cannot be duplicated by Department/Commission resources.

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 Schools Institute to discuss the needs of the Commission and the nine (9) public charter schools that the Commission currently authorizes and oversees. The Commission’s Finance Committee budgeted for this expense and Epicenter is able to provide this service within the Commission’s budget.

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



None known at this time.

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

Does this request utilize ARPA/MJRP funds?

 Yes – If Yes, please attach the approved Business Case(s). No – If No, proceed to Part V.**PART V: 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:	10/4/2023
Signature of DAFS Procurement Official:	<small>DocuSigned by:</small>  <small>EA813178102243C...</small>		
Typed Name:	Joseph Zrioka Director of IT Procurement	Date:	10/16/2023