



Operator Application for School Transformation: 2015 School Conversion Process

The Application for School Transformation (AST) is designed to facilitate meaningful, structured engagement between ASD-authorized public school operators and Priority school communities. We believe that community members should be well informed about—and have voice in—school transformation decisions that may impact them directly or indirectly. We also believe that ASD operators are well equipped to provide students with a high quality education and should have multiple opportunities to engage the community before, during and after conversion decisions have been made.

The AST was developed based on frequently asked questions from community members during previous transformation cycles. In order to best address each component of the AST, operators should conduct thorough stakeholder engagement, including but not limited to:

- Meeting with neighborhood representatives on the Neighborhood Advisory Council
- Identifying and meeting with key stakeholders in the community
- Reviewing the Priority school's current website/Facebook and other social media platforms
- Researching neighborhood/school demographics and need
- Reviewing the SCS School Improvement Plan (SIP) for the respective school
- Meeting with current community partners

Operators must submit written responses (1 to 2 pages for each section) to this Application for School Transformation by October 23rd to be considered for a SY16-17 match. Following submission of the AST, the operator will engage in a series of meetings with an ASD-selected Neighborhood Advisory Council (NAC) associated with the Priority school. This NAC will use an ASD-provided rubric to assess interested operators. NAC members will submit completed rubrics as input to an ASD decision regarding school conversions in November.



Page Break

Frequently Asked Questions

- **Does submitting an AST bind me to transformation of a school?**
 - Yes, submitting an AST is a binding commitment that an operator will serve a Priority school in SY16-17 if matched by the ASD. If an operator submits more than one AST it is committing to serve any of the schools it applies for – no additional operator preferences will be used in the ASD's final conversion decisions. The ASD reserves the right to penalize operators who exit the process after submission of the AST.
- **Will the ASD publicize the ASTs submitted?**
 - Yes, after an AST is submitted the ASD will post Applications to an online parent portal and solicit feedback via a Parent Survey. This survey information will be accessible to both the NAC and the Operator.
- **How will the AST be assessed?**
 - The ASD will select and form Neighborhood Advisory Councils for each feeder pattern with eligible Priority schools. These NACs will include parents and community members with ties to the Priority school community of interest.
 - The submitted ASTs will be assessed by the NAC. The NAC will give an initial review of the AST the week after it is submitted and scores will be shared with applicant operators. An Operator will then have a baseline for its thoroughness in addressing the concerns in each of the 8 categories listed in the AST.
 - Following this initial review, operators will participate in three in-person meetings with the NAC. In these meetings the Operator will have the opportunity to present and expand on the information included in its application, and the NAC will have the opportunity to ask probing questions. The Operator will have the opportunity to amend and supplement the AST before the NACs final assessment on 11/30.
- **When will I know if and what schools I have been selected to transform?**



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- The ASD will review the NAC assessments in the first week in December. We will announce our decision December 10th.

APPLICATION FOR SCHOOL TRANSFORMATION

I. Operator Research

- a. Describe your interest in (and experience with) serving this specific neighborhood/community/feeder pattern.
- b. Describe ties to and/or knowledge of [insert name of school].
- c. Describe your track record of transforming schools outside of and/or within the city of Memphis and any experience working with similar student populations.

II. Academic Intervention and Support

- a) Given the school's current academic performance profile, describe your plan to ensure that students experience significant academic gains year over year. Please be as specific as possible, including detailing how you will support students with special needs.

III. Extracurricular Activities

- b) Describe the extracurricular activities and/or opportunities for enrichment that will be available to your students and/or how you will select extracurricular activities and opportunities for enrichment.
- c) Describe your plan to ensure that students have age-appropriate social-emotional supports. Please also describe what community-based support resources you will leverage (if any).

IV. Parent Engagement

- a) Describe how you will involve and engage parents. Consider the following areas:
 - i. Governance (PTSA),
 - ii. Sharing student progress information,
 - iii. Parent school and classroom visit policies,
 - iv. School performance information,



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- v. Parent grievance protocol,
 - vi. Parent – Board communications, and
 - vii. General communication practices.
- b) If not already included in your responses above, describe the specific strategies that will be implemented to establish buy-in and to learn parent priorities and concerns during and after the transition process.

V. Community Engagement

- c) Describe how the broader school community will be involved in the transition of the school. Please detail any specific partnerships and/or structures that will aid in the transition of the school to the ASD in support of school transformation.
- d) Discuss how the community/neighborhood will be integrated into the school **after** the transition has occurred, including:
- i. Anticipated community partnerships, and
 - ii. Community resources that will be available to students and families.
- e) Describe how you will measure the success of your parent/community engagement efforts. How will you know you've succeeded?

VI. Staffing

- a. Describe your approach to hiring. Include a discussion of:
- i. Hiring process for teachers and administrators currently at the school,
 - ii. Hiring process for non-classroom staff currently at the school (e.g., counselors, librarians, office managers), and
 - iii. Approach to staff diversity and cultural competence.

VII. Safety and Culture

- b. Describe key aspects of your school operations (e.g., hours of operation, afterschool care, transportation, uniforms, etc.).

VIII. Demonstration of Community Outreach

- a. Evidence of a significant number of meetings with parents, students, community members and leaders (sign-in sheets, advertisements, etc.)
- b. Evidence of meetings with community organizations, neighborhood associations, and other groups that will support the school (letters of support, MOUs)



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- c. Evidence of collateral and materials (including print and web) aimed at providing parents and students with information about the operator's plans for the school

Please provide the following attachments in addition to your responses:

Attachment 1: Charter Authorization Executive Summary

Attachment 2: Provide evidence of outreach to community members, parents and partner organizations, including letters of support (if applicable), intents to enroll, MOUs or other agreements, petitions, communications (print, digital, video and other mediums) or any other evidence of answers to the categories mentioned in the application.