



Einstein Charter Schools
Request for Proposal – Student Transportation

4801 Maid Marion Drive
New Orleans, LA 70128

RFP Announcement: March 13, 2020, at 4:00 PM

Question Submittal Deadline: March 20, 2020, at 2:00 PM

Proposal Submittal Deadline: April 2, 2020, at 2:00 PM

Award Notification Deadline: April 9, 2020, at 2:00 PM

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General Information

Background: Einstein Charter Schools (hereafter “Einstein”) will operate four charter schools during the 2020-2021 School Year, with 16 daily routes for approximately 180 operating days.

Purpose: Einstein is aggressively seeking proposals from qualified Proposers interested in providing Student Transportation Services as described in this RFP. The Proposer shall provide full-service student transportation. Full-Service is defined as including all vehicles, consumables, maintenance, insurance, staffing, supervision, and management necessary to operate school buses as well as running a staffed Dispatch operation. The Proposer will include route creation and routing support. The primary obligation of the Proposer is to operate its affairs so that Einstein will be assured of continuous, reliable service and such that Einstein is not burdened with day-to-day operations.

Einstein expects Proposers to have the staffing, resources, and expertise necessary to complete the service required as well as a plan to deliver high-quality, dependable transportation service. Proposers are to have a management structure that will ensure high-quality customer service, as well as a plan to maintain responsiveness and effective communication with Einstein leadership and Einstein parents. Proposers are expected to offer the requested service at a competitive price, and all of the necessary factors that contribute to the price must be included in the proposed price. Proposer is to have a demonstrated track record of success in the industry and in New Orleans, is to provide positive references, and is to have sound business practices that show fiscal responsibility.

The Proposer is responsible for all day-to-day Student Transportation operations. The intent of this contract is for Einstein to hold the Proposer accountable for the reliable and efficient operation of a Transportation system that services our students both efficiently and effectively. It is not the intent of this contract to specify required practices or procedures but to hold the Proposer to a very high level of performance. The Proposer is given the flexibility to develop and perform their own programs, provided required performance standards relating to the reliability and safety of the service are met and the work is completed within the bounds outlined in this RFP.

While the Proposer’s cost is of great importance, proposing the lowest price will not assure award of the service. Einstein demands comprehensive, reliable, efficient, professional service and high-quality customer service. Failure to address Einstein requirements or concerns about any matter will disqualify the Proposer from consideration.

Contract Period: This RFP addresses the Contract Period July 1, 2020, through June 30, 2021. The contract will be renewable by mutual agreement with one-year extensions through June 30, 2022. The contract will expire naturally at the end of this contract term, but Einstein reserves the right to terminate the Contract with thirty (30) days advance written notice in the event of inferior quality of service, product, and/or reductions or termination of funding.

Questions: All questions regarding this RFP must be emailed directly to LaKenya Collins, Chief Financial Officer, at Lakenya_Collins@@Einsteincharterschools.org by 2:00 PM on March 24, 2020.

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Submission: The Proposer will submit their bids electronically via email to LaKenya Collins (LaKenya_Collins@Einsteincharterschools.org) by **April 2, 2020 2:00 PM**. Bids received after this deadline will NOT be considered. Proposers are not required to provide hard copies of any bid documents.

Evaluation: A variety of weighted criteria, given below in order of priority, will be considered in evaluating proposals. This evaluation will be made based on information provided within the Proposal, by the Proposer during RFP specific presentations or negotiations, news articles, press releases, client references, industry references, vendors and related sources, and any other sources.

- **Price (5 Points):** The lowest bid(s) will receive 5 points; the highest bid(s) will receive 1 point; all other bids will receive 3 points. Total cost is calculated based on extension of unit prices proposed to estimated service levels.
- **Proposal Quality (5 Points):** Proposal provides the best value to Einstein based on quality, availability, delivery, specifications, terms and conditions.
- **Professional References (3 Points):** Proposals with multiple positive references will receive 3 points; Proposals with references indicating reservations concerning Proposer quality will receive 0 points. Consideration is given to the Proposer's ability to perform successfully under the terms and conditions and their past performance record.
- **Resumes of Executives and Key Participants (3 Points):** Relevant professional experience, but no expertise in student transportation will receive 1 point; between 5 and 10 years of specified expertise in transportation will receive 2 points; more than 10 years of expertise in student transportation will receive 3 points.
- **Headquartered in Orleans Parish (1 Point):** Principal of Business and Registered Office is in Orleans Parish as listed with the Louisiana Secretary of State.

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Proposal Authorities, Restrictions & Clauses

Authorities and Options

- Einstein reserves the right to reject any and all proposals for any reason.
- Einstein reserves the right to correct or waive irregularities in submitted proposals should it be deemed in the best interest of Einstein to do so.
- Einstein reserves the right to negotiate any and all proposals for any reason.
- Einstein reserves the right to disqualify any proposals that do not meet the submittal requirements.
- Einstein reserves the right to award to more than one Proposer or to no Proposer.
- Einstein reserves the right to contract with parents, guardians, and others for the transportation of students.
- Final prices will be negotiated between the Proposer and Einstein. Einstein reserves the right to cancel the contract award if Proposer cannot commit to a contract.

Prohibitions

- Einstein shall assess, negotiate and decide on this Proposal without influence from the Proposer's employees, the Proposer's representatives or agents, the Proposer's vendors, or any other parties with a business, financial or family relationship to the Proposer.
- The Proposer is prohibited from exploiting a conflict of interest, gratuities, kickbacks, or any other type of incentive or influence upon Einstein, its Board(s) and its agents; violators will be prosecuted to the extent of the pertinent laws.
- Proposers must submit a firm bid. A Proposer shall not stipulate in its proposal any conditions not contained in the contract documents. Any qualifying statements or conditions may be declared irregular and as not being responsive to the advertisement for bids.

Proposer Responsibilities

- It is the Proposer's duty to inspect all submitted documents to assure completeness and legibility.
- It is the Proposer's duty to understand the proposal; any misunderstanding is the responsibility of the Proposer; Einstein has no obligation to correct, reject or question any portion of the proposal.
- Proposer must abide by all proposal requirements; the proposal may be rejected by Einstein regardless of the type or significance of noncompliance.

Termination of the Contract

- The contract will expire naturally at the end of the contract term.
- Einstein reserves the right to terminate the contract with thirty (30) days advance written notice because of inferior quality of materials, product, workmanship, service and/or reductions and/or termination of funding.
- Einstein reserves the right to terminate the contract immediately in the event that there are unresolved safety or liability concerns.

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Proposal Requirements

Proposers must answer all questions in this section and must include all requested documentation in order for the Proposer's bid to be considered. A complete list of required elements is available on Page 13 (Table 5).

For each of the items below the Proposer must provide the requested **Information and Data**. The Proposer can provide this information in any form provided that all items are addressed and that Einstein is assured that the Proposer has a history of high performance and strong systems in place to ensure continuity of performance at that level.

1. **Company Information**, to include headquarter location, website, year founded, years operating in New Orleans, SLDBE or woman/minority-owned status, and bid authorization contact information.
2. **Accident History** for a minimum of the last 2 years
3. **Resumes** of key executives and key contributors who will work with this contract if it is awarded
4. A minimum of three (3) **References**, at least 2 of which must be current or former clients
5. Contact information for at least 3 **Current Accounts** of similar size

For each of the following **assurances** the Proposer must provide sufficient documentation to prove their ability to meet these expectations and deliverables.

1. Staffing: The Proposer agrees not to discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, sex, religion, color, age, disability, national origin or sexual orientation. The Proposer will ensure that all employees involved in their services pass a drug screening and background check prior to employment and will submit those tests to Einstein upon request. The Proposer will, at the request of Einstein, immediately remove from service to Einstein any employee who, in the opinion of Einstein, is incompetent or who has been conducting him- or herself improperly. The Proposer shall maintain adequate staffing at all times. All of the Proposer's employees shall be neatly dressed and shall be presentable, helpful, friendly and cooperative at all times. Drivers and all other persons coming in contact with the children must be of stable personality and of the highest moral character. Einstein places and the Proposer accepts full responsibility of assuring such qualities in personnel.

2. Supervisor: The Proposer will work in conjunction with Einstein to hire or appoint an experienced Supervisor residing in the Greater New Orleans area to be responsible for all work required under the contract. The Supervisor will manage all technical activities of the Proposer (scheduling, drivers, busses, etc.) as well as business activities (compliance, inspection, billing, etc.) and must be trained and experienced in the supervision of bus drivers. The supervisor will be jointly-managed by and report to both the Proposer AND Einstein. The proposer must include the resume of at least one potential Supervisor or current Supervisor operating in a similar role under another contract.

3. Bus Drivers: The Proposer is responsible for the hiring, assigning, training, and managing of all bus drivers. Both regular and substitute drivers shall be assigned as consistently as possible to the same bus run for the purpose of route familiarization and pupil control. It is the express desire of Einstein that the rate of driver turnover be minimal. Einstein delegates to the Proposer's drivers the necessary authority to maintain orderly behavior on buses, and drivers must have the training and experience necessary to control student conduct. Proposer must provide their driver screening, training, assignment and

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management plans, as well as plans describing how Proposer manages absences, both planned and unplanned.

3. Buses: The Proposer shall ensure that all buses have first aid kits, fire extinguishers, operational and lighted stop arms, back-up alarms, functional exit doors, a functional front arm extension, working two-way radios or direct connect style hands-free phones, working Air Conditioning, and an up-to-date inspection sticker. The School District Name (Einstein Charter School) and vendor name must be posted on midline of all buses (both sides). The Route Number must be posted on the side of the bus and on the front of the bus, visible to potential passengers.

4. Fleet Maintenance: The Proposer is responsible for maintenance and repairs on all vehicles utilized under the contract at its own cost. The Proposer is to provide sufficient spare vehicles as backup units during breakdowns and whenever vehicles may be out of service for maintenance or repairs. The Proposer shall also perform daily pre-trip inspections and promptly correct any deficiencies discovered on any vehicles or equipment to be utilized under the contract. Under no condition may an unsafe bus be used to transport students. The Proposer will keep on file the completed inspection sheets and submit copies of the sheets to Einstein Leadership when requested. The Proposer shall provide daily interior cleaning of all vehicles. Exterior cleaning will be done at least twice a month from August through June. Vehicle windows must be clean and clear, and vehicle numbering must be visible at all times. All vandalism or damage to the Proposer's equipment will be the responsibility of the Proposer unless such damages result from the negligence of Einstein; however, Einstein will assist the Proposer in attempting to collect from the responsible party for damage to the Proposer's property.

5. Safety: The Proposer is responsible for implementing and administering a comprehensive safety program. The program must include continuing on-the-road training and classroom training for all drivers as well as yearly emergency exit drills (documented) and yearly classroom presentations for all students. The safety of the transported children is our primary priority. Proposer must include their comprehensive safety training and management plan.

6. Transition Plan: The Proposer must have all staff, equipment, and procedures in place BEFORE regular transportation service begins on 8/10/2020. Proposers already providing transportation service in the greater New Orleans area must assure their ability to increase their operational capacity. Proposers not currently providing services in the New Orleans area must outline their plans to set up operations in New Orleans and must address land, vehicles, staffing, and insurance.

7. Legal and Responsibility: The Proposer must fulfill all obligations in compliance with all applicable local, state, and federal laws and regulations, including the Occupational Health and Safety Act. The Proposer will be responsible for all damage to the School's property, equipment, and buildings caused by its employees or its equipment. The Proposer will also be responsible for any injuries to persons caused by its staff or equipment. The Proposer must notify Einstein concerning any litigation involving the Proposer or its parent or subsidiary companies.

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8. Insurance: The Proposer must be able to provide proof of insurance coverage that will minimize Einstein’s risk exposure to the extent outlined below:

- Worker’s Compensation/Employer’s Liability insurance to cover bodily accidents in the amount of not less than \$1,000,000 per accident
- Comprehensive General Liability insurance in the form of comprehensive, contractual insurance, personal injury, broad-form property damage, premises operations and completed operations in an amount of not less than \$1,000,000 combined unit
- Automobile Liability and Physical Damage insurance for an amount of not less than \$1,000,000 for each bodily injury and property damage combined, single limits, and extensions of comprehensive coverage for all leased, owned and hired vehicles
- All employees must be bonded

For each of the **short answer questions** below the Proposer must provide a detailed response (approximately 1 page total for all questions) and can include additional documentation or forms if desired. Proposers must answer every question.

1. Communication Plan: The Proposer must run a Dispatching operation that stays in regular communication with Einstein Charter School and acts as the primary contact for Einstein families needing bus information. Dispatch must be adequately staffed every day and every hour that buses are running for Einstein, including nights and weekends. The Proposer is expected to provide a direct phone number by which Einstein leadership can reach Dispatch as well as a direct phone number for Einstein parents and students in order to ensure consistent, courteous, professional assistance to our families. In the event of a bus breakdown or an accident involving a bus, the Proposer will work proactively with Einstein to communicate the necessary information to affected families. How will your company run Dispatch?

2. Field Trips: The proposer is responsible for following a field trip policy and procedures that will clearly delineate the request procedure, required forms to be used, confirmation/reminder expectations and schedule of process. Proposer must also include their plan to properly assign buses and drivers who do not have other obligations during the field trip’s times. Drivers are expected to stay with the bus at all times when on Field Trip. Field trips bills are to be consolidated monthly. How will your company manage field trips? How will field trips be scheduled?

3. Feedback System: The Proposer will enact a rigorous feedback system so that Einstein and the Proposer both have regular opportunities to celebrate achievements, critique issues, and identify concerns to address. The feedback schedule must include weekly meetings during start-up, monthly meetings that focus on customer service, and quarterly anonymous surveys submitted to students, parents, and school leadership. What is your company’s feedback system, how will it be administered, and how will the data be reviewed?

4. Situation Analysis: A 6-year-old student arrives at her bus stop at the prescribed time, but no adult is there to receive her. What do you do to keep that child safe, get all the other students home in a timely fashion, and help make sure that unmet child gets home at a reasonable hour? Please detail your procedure here as well as how you would communicate throughout the process.

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Routing Services

It is desired, that the Proposer offer Routing Services to Einstein. All stops and routes are to meet the specifications below but shall otherwise be designed to be as convenient as possible for the parents and students utilizing these Transportation Services. Einstein intends to utilize hub sites to maximize efficiency.

1. Data Management: Proposer must work with Einstein to effectively and regularly communicate student demographic information, bus rosters, and routes across all pertinent systems, including Einstein’s Student Information System, the Proposer’s Routing System, and the Proposer’s Dispatch System. The Proposal must include software information, communication methods, import/export specs, etc.

2. Roster/Route Maintenance: Rosters are to be updated WEEKLY and students can be re-assigned to existing stops on that schedule. This is to ensure that drivers have access to the most up-to-date ridership information and contact information. Routes will be updated MONTHLY on the schedule below in order to best meet the needs of parents and students and to continuously improve operations.

3. Special Considerations for SPED Service: It is the expectation of Einstein that any updates to Special Needs Bus Service will be completed within 48 hours of the Proposer receiving the request. These routes are not bound to the monthly maintenance schedule.

4. Additional Routing Services: Einstein may run extra academic programming that will require the creation and maintenance of new routes during the school year. The Proposer must expect (and have capacity to support) a large number of roster and route changes during the first two weeks of school and again after the Christmas Holiday. Proposer may be asked to build new routes from existing stops based on a limited student roster for afterschool programming, Saturday school, Summer School, inter-sessions, regular athletic programs, etc.

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Proposal Pricing

Proposers must use the following pages to indicate their proposed unit prices. Proposed rates are to include ALL operating costs, including but not limited to overhead, facilities, maintenance, staffing, training, equipment, insurance, software, fuel, and any other costs necessary to provide school bus transportation services.

Proposers can submit pricing by RUN, defined as a single trip for a bus from an initial stop to a school or from a school to a final stop: a regular (untiered) bus that carries children to one school in the AM and then back home from that school in the PM completes two (2) RUNs per day. Proposers can submit pricing by HOUR, indicating which lengths of service day (to include AM and PM runs) would or would not be provided. Proposers can submit a flat rate monthly price. Proposers can submit their pricing in either way, if desired, and Einstein will choose which pricing structure to contract.

Any service that will NOT be offered must be indicated by filling in the appropriate cell with **N/A**.

Proposers **MUST** completely fill out either Page 10 (Table 1) or Page 11 (Table 2). Proposers **MUST** completely fill out Page 12 (Table 3).

The Proposer **MUST** offer pricing for regular (approximately 50-passenger) school buses. Proposers may submit different prices for mini-bus, van, taxi, wheelchair-accessible bus, or other vehicle. Proposers must indicate estimated passenger counts for non-standard buses.

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Table 1 – Proposed Price Per BUS per RUN

| | Regular Bus | Wheelchair Bus | Mini Bus Or Van |
|---|------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| One Run / Day 1 AM run, or 1 PM run | | | |
| In-Town Field Trip (Orleans/Jefferson) Per Bus Per Round-Trip Run | | | |
| Out-Of-Town Field Trip (Other Parishes/States) Per Bus Per Round-Trip Run | | | |

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Table 2 – Proposed Price Per BUS per HOUR (Gate to Gate)

| | Regular Bus | Wheelchair Bus | Mini Bus Or Van |
|---|------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| 3-Hour Day | | | |
| 4-Hour Day Or additional cost per hour over 3 hours | | | |
| 5-Hour Day Or additional cost per hour over 4 hours | | | |
| 6-Hour Day Or additional cost per hour over 5 hours | | | |
| 7-Hour Day Or additional cost per hour over 6 hours | | | |
| In-Town Field Trip (Orleans/Jefferson) Per Bus Per Hour Indicate Minimum Hours | | | |
| Out-Of-Town Field Trip (Other Parishes/States) Per Bus Per Hour Indicate Minimum Hours | | | |

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Table 3 – Proposed Price / Other Information For Other Services

| | <u>Regular Bus</u> | <u>Wheelchair Bus</u> | <u>Mini Bus Or Van</u> |
|---|------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| Discipline/Behavior Trained Monitor Indicate if Per Run or Per Hour Indicate Minimum (if applicable) | | | |
| Special Needs Trained Monitor Indicate if Per Run or Per Hour Indicate Minimum (if applicable) | | | |

Table 4 – Proposed Annual Contract Amount

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Total Annual Contract Amount | |
|-------------------------------------|--|

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Table 5 – Summary of Proposal Elements

1. Information and Data
 - a. Company Information
 - b. On-Time Performance
 - c. Driver Turnover Rate
 - d. Accident History
 - e. Resumes
 - f. References
 - g. Current Accounts
 - h. Company Financial Information
2. Assurances
 - a. Staffing
 - b. Supervisor
 - c. Bus Drivers
 - d. Buses
 - e. Fleet Maintenance
 - f. Safety
 - g. Transition Plan
 - h. Legal Responsibility
 - i. Insurance
3. Short Answer
 - a. Communication Plan
 - b. Field Trips
 - c. Feedback System
 - d. Situation Analysis
4. Routing Services
 - a. Pricing
 - b. Router resumes
 - c. Data Management Plan
 - d. Roster/Route Maintenance
5. Pricing
 - a. Table 1 (Price Per Run) OR Table 2 (Price Per Hour), OR Both
 - b. Table 3 (Other Prices)
 - c. Proposed Annual Cost Rate. Based on 180 Service Days.
6. Any Additional Information