



HERTFORD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

HCPS, serving as a cornerstone of our community, will prepare graduates who are ready to meet the global challenges of education, career, and life.

701 North Martin Street • P.O. Box 158 • Winton, North Carolina 27986 • Phone (252)358-1761 • FAX (252) 358-4745

PUBLIC NOTICE

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS Design-Build Services — Stair Removal and Replacement at Hertford County High School Hertford County Public Schools

Hertford County Public Schools (HCPS) invites Statements of Qualifications from qualified Design-Build firms for the demolition and removal of two existing exterior stairs at Hertford County High School, located at 1500 1st Street West, Ahoskie, NC 27910.

The project includes the design and construction of new two-story steel and concrete stairs with railings and guardrails, in compliance with requirements set by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI). The original plan for the stairs and the school's layout is included with the RFQ as Exhibit A. The estimated project budget is up to \$150,000, with an anticipated start date of October 2026 and completion by August 2027, ensuring the new stairs are installed and usable before the 2027–28 school year begins.

In accordance with North Carolina General Statute 143-64.31, the District will use a qualifications-based selection process that does not consider fee during the initial phase of firm selection.

Key Dates

- **Question Deadline:** 2:00 p.m. EST, August 21, 2026
- **Proposal Deadline:** 3:00 p.m. EST, August 28, 2026

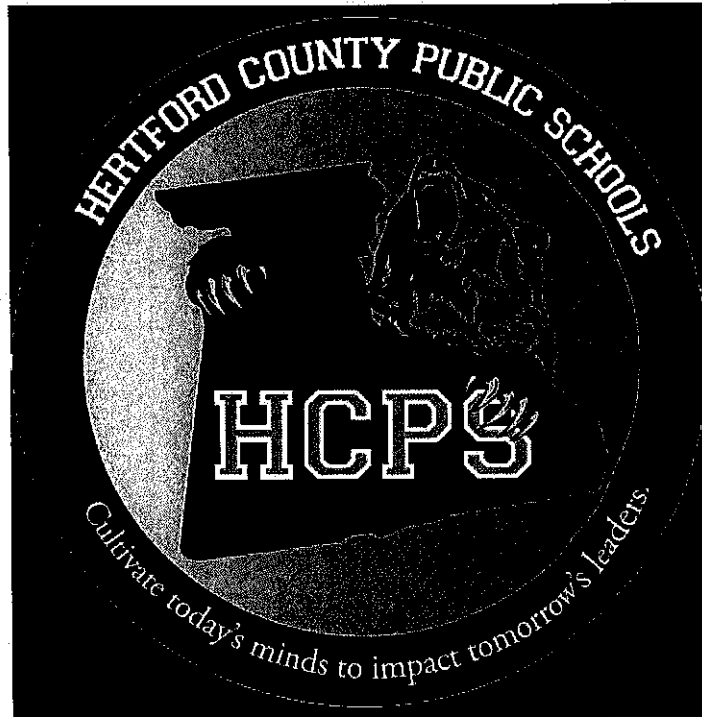
Submission Requirements: Interested firms must submit ten (10) hard copies and one (1) digital copy (thumb drive) of their Statement of Qualifications to:

Mr. Wesley Dudley, Director of Operations, Hertford County Public Schools, 701 N. Martin Street, Winton, NC 27986 (252) 358-1761 wdudley@hertford.k12.nc.us

Submissions must be clearly labeled: **"STAIR REPLACEMENT AT HERTFORD COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL DESIGN-BUILD PROPOSAL."** Proposals must be received by the deadline; late submissions and email submissions will not be accepted.

All questions regarding this procurement must be submitted in writing to the contact listed above by the question deadline; questions not submitted in writing will not be considered or answered. Answers to written questions will be posted publicly for all firms to review. No pre-proposal conferences, meetings, or site visits will be held. Firms are directed not to contact other District staff or elected officials regarding this procurement; improper contact may result in disqualification.

Full details regarding the scope of work, selection criteria, and submission requirements are available in the complete Request for Qualifications document, which can be obtained upon request from the contact listed above.



REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

DESIGN-BUILD STAIR REMOVAL AND REPLACEMENT AT HERTFORD COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL HERTFORD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

QUESTION DEADLINE: 2:00 p.m. EST, August 21, 2026

PROPOSAL DEADLINE: 3:00 p.m. EST, August 28, 2026

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

Design-Build Services

HERTFORD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS, NORTH CAROLINA

The District requests Statements of Qualifications for Design-Build Services for the replacement of two exterior stairs at Hertford County High School. This request for qualifications (RFQ) solicitation does not commit the District to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of this proposal, or to procure or contract for these services. Pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 143-64.31, the District utilizes a "qualifications-based" selection process without consideration of fee during the initial phase in hiring Design Build (DB) firms. The District's primary purpose in using the DB process is to utilize fast-tracked design and construction services to deliver quality construction in an economical and efficient manner. The District believes the DB delivery method will provide a greater return on investment while also delivering a high quality, turn-key facility that will enhance the educational opportunities of the students utilizing the facility.

For information purposes, this RFQ includes the following information on the following items:

- 1) Project site: Hertford County High School, 1500 1st Street West, Ahoskie, NC 27910.
- 2) Project scope: Hertford County Public Schools (HCPS) is soliciting proposals for the demolition and removal of two existing exterior stairs at Hertford County High School and the design and construction of new two-story steel and concrete stairs with railings and guardrails. The original plan for the stairs and the school's layout are included with this RFQ as Exhibit A. The work will comply with requirements set forth by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. NCDPI provides technical assistance and authorization of state funding for school construction.
- 3) The project's anticipated budget is \$150,000.00.
- 4) Project schedule: Estimated project start date of October 2026 and an estimated project completion date of August 2027 (installation completed and useable before the 2027-28 school year begins).
- 5) Qualifications selection criteria and criteria weighting: An Evaluation Committee will evaluate the proposals using the following criteria.
 - a. Expertise, qualifications, and current/past experience of the Firm, particularly with all aspects of public schools, including educational specifications, preconstruction services, project management, construction, design-build, and reporting/communications capabilities.
 - b. Ability of Firm to provide responsive services.
 - c. Ability to offer complete in-house services, value-added services, and team continuity throughout life of contract.
 - d. Local preference for Resident (NC) firms - Resident firms may receive preference in procurement of Design Build, Architectural, and subsequent subcontractor selections. A Resident firm is a firm that has paid unemployment taxes or income

taxes in North Carolina and whose principal place of business is located in this State.

- 6) Notice of the District's rules, ordinances, or goals. All Board of Education Policies and Procedures shall apply to this contract, not inconsistent with the requirements of S.L. 2026-41, excluding any provisions of Board Policy 6402 *Participation by Historically Underutilized Businesses*, Board Policy 9125 *Participation by Minority Businesses*, or any other Board policies containing language regarding HUB/MBE requirements in conflict with that Session law.
- 7) Each Firm shall submit *with its proposal* an explanation of its project team selection consisting of *either*: a. List of licensed contractors, licensed subcontractors and licensed design professionals the design-builder proposes to use on the project, OR b. A list of the licensed contractors and design professionals whom the design-builder proposes to use for the project's design and construction and an outline of the strategy the design-builder plans to use for open subcontractor selection based upon the provisions of Article 8 of Chapter 143 of the General Statutes.

DELIVER PROPOSALS TO:

Mr. Wesley Dudley, Director of Operations
Hertford County Public Schools
701 N. Martin Street
Winton, NC 27986
(252) 358-1761
wdudley@hertford.k12.nc.us

Please use the above contact and do not contact other staff or elected officials in regards to this procurement process. Improper contact may result in disqualification of your proposal. No pre-proposal conferences, meetings, or site visits shall be conducted. Any questions that are necessary to complete proposals should be sent *in writing* by the noted deadline to the name listed above. Questions that are not written will not be considered or answered. Answers to written questions will be publicly posted so that all bidders can review and consider such responses.

1. Number of Copies and Due Date

Ten (10) copies, as well as a thumb drive with a digital copy, are due by 3:00 p.m., August 28, 2026, at the District's address listed above (701 N. Martin Street, Winton, NC 27986). Statements of Qualifications/Proposals received after that time will not be considered, and the Firm submitting the RFQ has the sole obligation to ensure timely receipt by the District. The District is not responsible for late submissions. Copies via email will not be accepted. Mark the outside of the package with a label titled "**STAIR REPLACEMENT AT HERTFORD COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL DESIGN-BUILD PROPOSAL.**"

2. Schedule/Process

Following evaluation of the qualifications of the design-builders, the two or three most highly qualified design builders shall be ranked. If after the solicitation for design-builders not as many

as three responses have been received from qualified design-builders, the District shall again solicit for design-builders. If as a result of such second solicitation not as many as three responses are received, the District may then begin negotiations with the highest-ranked design-builder under G.S. 143-64.31 even though fewer than three responses were received. If the District deems appropriate, it may invite some or all responders to interviews in September. The District anticipates it will notify the selected bidder of their acceptance on or about late September 2026, with a contract to be negotiated and accepted by the District at its regularly scheduled September Board meeting. All timelines are subject to the District's discretion.

3. Selection Criteria & Format of Proposal

Each Firm should address the following in their statements:

- A. Expertise in providing Design-Build services for public school projects
 - i. Brief firm introduction; Provide a description of the team and firm that will enter into the contract, including origin, background, current size, available resources, locations, and general organization for design and construction; Include an authorized contact person for the proposal process. Provide copies of your North Carolina General Contractor License, Licenses of design professionals proposed, bonding capacity, and a summary of the firm's financial stability. Each Firm shall certify that each licensed a design professional who is a member of the design-build team, including subconsultants, was selected based upon demonstrated competence and qualifications in the manner provided by G.S. 143-64.31.
- B. Past performance on similar work
 - i. List five to ten most relevant school projects completed by your firm as the contractor or Design-Builder.
 - ii. Examples of firm(s) providing design and planning services, constructability reviews, and value management.
 - iii. Examples of coordination with multiple agencies.
 - iv. List of references (a minimum of 3 references, with a preference for at least two K-12 school systems as references).
- C. Adequate staff and team for assignment to this Project
 - i. Organizational chart, including both Design and Construction Teams
 - ii. Resumes of all key team members proposed to be assigned. If any subconsultants are proposed, please indicate the person, firm, and provide information in Section "a. Expertise" for each firm. Note: The design-builder shall obtain written approval from the District prior to changing key personnel after the contract has been awarded.
- D. Approach to providing a unified Project
 - i. Experience in collaborative relationships.
 - ii. Cost estimating approach / Examples of GMP compared to final cost.
 - iii. Hourly rates for professionals.
- E. Location of office and familiarity with the area
 - i. Knowledge of local codes and ordinances; Previous experience in the region; Location of firm(s).

- F. State any conflicts of interest your firm or any key team member may have with this Project.
- G. Financial Information, including:
 - i. Financial Statement for past 2 years.
 - ii. Proof of ability to obtain performance and payment bonds.
- H. **To avoid any doubt, no proposed costs or work product or designs specific to the site should be included in any response.** The District reserves the right to reject any Firm for any reason deemed appropriate to the District.

Other Conditions:

- A) The District reserves the right to cancel or reject any or all proposals and to negotiate and award a contract deemed to be in the District's best interest.
- B) The District shall not be liable for any expenses incurred by any firm responding to this RFQ. Firms submitting a proposal in response to this RFQ agree that the materials and submittals are prepared at the firm's own expense with the express understanding that the firm cannot make any claims whatsoever for reimbursement from the District for the costs and expense associated with preparing and submitting a proposal. Each firm shall hold the County/District harmless and free from any and all liability, costs, claims, or expenses incurred by, or on behalf of, any person or firm responding to this RFQ.
- C) The District is not required to enter into a contract with any Firm if entering into such a contract is deemed by the District to not be in the best interest of the District.
- D) The Firm certifies that to the best of its knowledge no employee of the District nor any member thereof, nor any public agency or official affected by the proposal, has a pecuniary interest in the business of the Firm, and that no person associated with the Firm has any interest that would conflict in any manner with the performance of the proposal.
- E) This public body does not discriminate against faith-based organizations or against a bidder or Firm because of race, religion, color, sex, national origin, age, disability, or any other basis prohibited by state law relating to discrimination in employment.
- F) After selection, and prior to contract signing, the firm will be required to provide proof of licensing and insurance, and other requirements per District policy and State law.
- G) The selected firm for the project will be required to execute a payment bond and performance bond. The project will not require a bid bond.

Submitting Confidential Information

Each proposal becomes the property of the County/District and is considered a public record except for material that qualifies as "Trade Secret" information under North Carolina General Statute § 66-152 *et seq.* To properly designate material as a trade secret under these circumstances, each firm must take the following precautions: (a) any trade secrets submitted by the firm should be submitted in a separate, sealed envelope marked "Trade Secret - Confidential and Proprietary Information - Do Not Disclose Except for the Purpose of Evaluating this Proposal," and (b) the same trade secret/confidentiality designation should be stamped on each page of the trade secret materials contained in the envelope. Any firm that designates its entire proposal as a trade secret may be disqualified from consideration.

Design-Build Written Determination

REFERENCE TO LAW N.C.G.S. § 143-128.1A.(b): "A governmental entity shall establish in writing the criteria used for determining the circumstances under which the design-build method is appropriate for a project, and such criteria shall, at a minimum, address all of the following:(1) The extent to which the governmental entity can adequately and thoroughly define the project requirements prior to the issuance of the request for qualifications for a design-builder. (2) The time constraints for the delivery of the project. (3) The ability to ensure that a quality project can be delivered. (4) The capability of the governmental entity to manage and oversee the project, including the availability of experienced staff or outside consultants who are experienced with the design-build method of project delivery. (5) A good-faith effort to recruit and select small business entities. The governmental entity shall not limit or otherwise preclude any respondent from submitting a response so long as the respondent, itself or through its proposed team, is properly licensed and qualified to perform the work defined by the public notice issued under subsection (c) of this section. (6) The criteria utilized by the governmental entity, including a comparison of the advantages and disadvantages of using the design-build delivery method for a given project in lieu of the delivery methods identified in subdivisions (1), (2), and (4) of G.S. 143-128(a1)." S.L. 2026-41.

- (1) The District has adequately and thoroughly defined the project requirements.
- (2) The District has a need to move quickly to ensure that a quality product is delivered with the project's timeline and construction must begin as soon as possible of the District's award to replace the stairs since the stairs are aging, require an immediate replacement, and affect the ingress and egress of school buildings.
- (3) The District shall ensure a quality project will be completed by selection of highly qualified Design team as part of the Design-Build contract, who will actively participate in projects meetings.
- (4) The District will utilize experienced staff who are experienced with the design-build method of project delivery. The District's Superintendent of Schools or his designee, and the Director of Operations shall serve as the primary contract point of contact.
- (5) The District encourages applications from small businesses.
- (6) The following criteria was utilized to compare the advantages and disadvantages of the various contracting options available to the District:
 - a) Hertford County Public Schools, a small but highly successful District, does not have enough staff to procure and manage multiple, separate design and construction contracts for a major life-safety school project and thus requires the assistance of a professional construction firm for this major undertaking. The District shall manage and oversee the Design-Build contract in a seamless format, with one contract to provide coordination and management of the process.
 - b) The stairs are a life-safety component of the school, and the timeline of seeking an architect to design the project and then bid the design for the replacement of the stairs allows the stairs to continue to deteriorate.

- c) Hertford County Public Schools requires a creative prequalification and recruitment effort for 1st and 2nd tier subcontractors. The Design-Build process will assist with gaining the labor force required for a project of this magnitude.
- d) The advantages of utilizing Design-Build services outweigh all disadvantages of traditional delivery in terms of budget, creativity and flexibility for a design and construction process that can begin quicker than traditional Design-Bid-Build, schedule, and location/regional demands of the project stated above.