



REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

**PROFESSIONAL ARCHITECTURAL, ENGINEERING,
PLANNING, & CONSTRUCTION ADMINISTRATION
SERVICES**

CUMBERLAND COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Fayetteville, North Carolina

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)

**Professional Architectural, Engineering, Planning, and Construction
Administration Services**

Project: E.E. Smith High School Replacement Project

Solicitation Component	Detail / Key Milestone
Issuing Agency	Cumberland County Board of Education
Project Location	Fayetteville, North Carolina
Issue Date	July 16th, 2026
Proposal Submission Deadline	August 13th, 2026 at 2:00 PM EST
Delivery Destination	Cumberland County Schools Operations Department 810 Gillespie Street, Fayetteville, NC 28306

Our Commitment: Every Student

Collaborative ★ Competitive ★ Successful

P.O. Box 2357 | FAYETTEVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA 28302 | 910-678-2300

Fully Accredited School System

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY & PURPOSE

The Cumberland County Board of Education (“the Board”) is formally soliciting Statements of Qualifications from premier, highly qualified Architectural and Engineering (A/E) firms to deliver comprehensive professional planning, design, bidding, and construction administration services for the **E.E. Smith High School Replacement Project**.

Project Overview

- **Scope:** Demolition of the existing E.E. Smith High School campus and the subsequent turnkey construction of an advanced replacement high school facility on the current 27-acre site.
- **Logistics:** Students will be temporarily decanted and relocated to an off-site swing campus for the duration of the construction lifecycle.
- **Lead Mandate:** The selected A/E firm will serve as the prime design professional of record. The scope spans educational programming, master planning, comprehensive architectural and engineering design, cost control verification, public stakeholder alignment, permitting coordination, and end-to-end construction administration.

The Board requires an established partner with an exceptional track record in large-scale public K-12 campus replacements. The ideal firm must demonstrate exceptional execution in complex urban demolition, design-phase cost validation, extensive civic engagement, and rigorous budget alignment. Selection will be strictly conducted in accordance with the North Carolina General Statutes governing **Qualifications-Based Selection (QBS)** processes for professional design services.

II. MANDATORY MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS (PASS/FAIL)

CRITICAL PROCUREMENT NOTICE: Failure to explicitly satisfy any individual criterion detailed below shall result in immediate, non-negotiable disqualification prior to the qualitative evaluation phase. Firms lacking verifiable, direct experience in public high school replacement projects involving contiguous demolition and reconstruction will be deemed non-responsive.

Firms must meet all of the following baseline requirements to advance:

A. Firm Profile & Verifiable Track Record

- **K-12 Longevity:** A minimum of fifteen (15) years of continuous corporate experience providing specialized K-12 Architectural and Engineering design services.
- **High School Volume:** Verifiable completion of at least two (2) public high school projects within the past ten (10) years.
- **Capital Scale Thresholds:**
 - Completion of at least three (3) public educational projects each exceeding \$80,000,000 in final construction value.
 - Completion of at least one (1) public educational project exceeding \$100,000,000 in final construction value.
 - Completion of at least one (1) public educational project exceeding 200,000 gross square feet.
- **Replacement Context:** Verifiable completion of at least one (1) public high school replacement project within the last ten (10) years that specifically included the structural demolition of an active facility and the ground-up reconstruction of the replacement campus.

B. Jurisdictional & Capabilities Compliance

- **Lifecycle Breadth:** Verifiable experience guiding public school clients from initial educational programming through final regulatory closeout and commissioning.
- **Educational Programming:** Experience acting as the primary author for educational programming and educational specifications development for a minimum of three (3) North Carolina K-12 public school projects.
- **Stakeholder Navigation:** Demonstrated experience designing and executing public communication frameworks for highly visible, politically sensitive capital projects.
- **Agency Experience:** Proven mastery navigating the review, approval, and permitting protocols of the North Carolina State Construction Office (SCO) and projects financed via the Local Government Commission (LGC).

C. Licensure, Presence, and Corporate Integrity

- **Professional Standing:** Maintain active corporate and individual professional licenses required by the North Carolina Board of Architecture and the North Carolina Board of Examiners for Engineers and Surveyors.
- **In-State Infrastructure:** Maintain an established, fully staffed physical office within the State of North Carolina.

- **Corporate Integrity:** Zero contract defaults, zero terminations for cause, zero active debarments, and zero unresolved licensing sanctions within the preceding five (5) years.

D. Capital Definition Framework

Construction Value Definition: For all project references, "Construction Value" shall strictly mean the final hard construction contract amount. This metric explicitly excludes land acquisition costs, owner contingencies, furniture, fixtures, and equipment (FF&E) packages, technology/network hardware purchases, financing fees, and owner soft costs.

III. COMPARABLE PROJECT EXPERIENCE DETERMINATION

- **Ineligible Scopes:** Portfolios consisting primarily of elementary or middle schools, simple structural additions, minor interior renovations, greenfield development sites, or non-educational facilities may be ruled insufficiently comparable.
- **Evaluation Focus:** Heavy weighting will be applied to the precise alignment of project parameters rather than the total aggregate volume of projects a firm has built.
- **Preference Matrix:** Premium scoring tiering will be awarded to firms showing direct experience with occupied site transformations exceeding 200,000 square feet requiring phased civil demolition.

IV. NO CONTACT POLICY

From the date of issuance of this solicitation until the final execution of an auxiliary contract, all communication with elected officials or staff of the Cumberland County Board of Education regarding this procurement is strictly prohibited.

- All technical or procedural questions must be submitted exclusively to the designated point of contact identified in Section XII.
- **Any violation of this mandate will result in immediate, non-appealable disqualification of the submitting firm.**

V. CORE SCOPE OF SERVICES

A. Educational Programming & Planning

- Educational specifications formulation and curriculum alignment mapping.
- Enrollment forecasting analysis and structural capacity optimization.
- Facilitation of stakeholder visioning charrettes and advanced master planning.

B. Comprehensive Architectural Design

- Turnkey Schematic Design, Design Development, and production of Construction Documents.
- Contextual site planning, architectural building modeling, and interior environment design.
- Advanced 3D visualization generation and comprehensive code/occupancy analysis.

C. Integrated Engineering Services

- Civil, Structural, Mechanical, Electrical, Plumbing, and Fire Protection engineering.
- Information Technology infrastructure design and high-security system mapping.
- Integrated audio-visual architectural system plans.

D. Cost Management & Fiscal Controls

- Rigorous milestone cost estimating and market-driven budget validation.
- Targeted value engineering interventions and design-to-budget control enforcement.
- Comprehensive life-cycle cost analysis (LCCA) for mechanical and structural systems.

E. Community Engagement Services

- Formal presentations to the Board of Education and County Commissioners.
- Public informational sessions and focused alumni/community coalition alignment workshops.

F. Bidding & Procurement Support

- Strategic bid package breakdown and clear addenda generation.
- Comprehensive bid analysis and formal contractor validation reviews.

G. Construction Administration Services

- Expedited shop drawing and submittal tracking, alongside responsive RFI processing.
- Consistent field observation schedules, pay application validation, and change order mitigation.
- Punch list control, regulatory closeout compliance, and O&M manual delivery.

VI. SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

- **Page Ceiling:** Submissions are strictly limited to **thirty-five (35) single-sided pages**.
- **Explicit Exclusions from Count:** Cover Page, Table of Contents, Section Divider Pages, Staff Resumes, Professional Licenses, Corporate Certifications, Required Forms, the Past Performance Matrix, Community Engagement collateral, Personnel Commitment Certifications, and the standard SF-330 package.
- **Oversized Layouts:** Foldout sheets (11" x 17") are strictly reserved for project schedules, architectural site matrices, or complex organizational charts.
- **Typography:** Minimum 11-point font with standard 1-inch margins on standard 8.5" x 11" formatting.

VII. MANDATORY SUBMITTAL STRUCTURE

TAB 1 – Executive Summary (Max 3 Pages): A narrative demonstrating firm differentiation, identification of the single most comparable completed project, designation of core project leadership, and key strategic lessons learned from past high school replacement undertakings.

TAB 2 – Letter of Interest

TAB 3 – Firm Qualifications

TAB 4 – Relevant Project Experience Matrix: A clean master index capturing: Project Name, Owner, Completion Date, Construction Value, Total Square Footage, Public High School Status (Y/N), Replacement Status (Y/N), Demolition Scope (Y/N), and the explicitly defined roles of the proposed Project Manager, Lead Educational Planner, and Lead Architect.

TAB 5 – Key Personnel & Leadership Team:

- *Mandate:* The proposed **Project Manager** and **Lead Architect** must have personally

served in those exact capacities on at least one (1) completed public educational project valued over \$100,000,000.

- *Experience Lock:* The proposed **Project Manager** and **Lead Architect** must demonstrate direct experience managing a completed public high school campus demolition and reconstruction sequence.
- *Lead Architect Standing:* Must possess a minimum of seven (7) years of dedicated experience designing public educational facilities.

TAB 6 – Project Approach: Narrative detailing programming methodologies, cost/schedule management tracking systems, safety risk mitigation, and the phased demolition/redevelopment blueprint.

TAB 7 – Litigation, Claims, Sanctions & Professional Integrity Disclosure

Provide a complete disclosure for the previous ten (10) years including:

- Litigation | Arbitration | Mediation
- Professional licensing complaints
- Contract disputes | Claims
- Terminations for cause | Debarments
- State agency findings
- Professional disciplinary actions
- Licensing board investigations or findings

Professional Licensing Disclosures

Have you or your firm ever been suspended by or received a reprimand, sanction, letter of warning or any type of disciplinary notification from the North Carolina Board of Architecture or the North Carolina Board of Examiners for Engineers and Surveyors or any similar licensing authority? (Yes/No).

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If yes, please attach copies of the suspension, reprimand, sanction, letter of warning, or notification, and include an explanation.

Additional Integrity Disclosures

Has your firm, any principal of the firm, or any proposed key personnel been subject to any of the following within the past ten (10) years?

- Board of Architecture disciplinary actions
- Board of Examiners for Engineers and Surveyors
- Licensing board actions in any state

- Contract defaults
- Terminations for cause
- Debarments or suspensions from public contracting
- Criminal convictions related to professional services
- Civil judgments related to professional negligence
- State Construction Office findings
- OSHA serious or willful violations

If yes, provide full details and supporting documentation.

Failure to disclose any disciplinary action, reprimand, sanction, letter of warning, licensing board finding, or similar action may result in disqualification from consideration and/or termination of negotiations if discovered after submission. Failure to disclose shall constitute grounds for immediate rejection.

TAB 8 – Owner References: Provide five (5) references exclusively from public educational clients.

TAB 9 – Past Performance Matrix

TAB 10 – Community Engagement Portfolio: Provide three (3) K-12 examples where the firm orchestrated civic/alumni alignment, with at least one (1) example tied to a high school project exceeding \$100,000,000 in construction value.

TAB 11 – Personnel Commitment Certification

TAB 12 – SF-330: Standard Form 330 (exempt from overall page limitations).

VIII. KEY PERSONNEL CONTINUITY REQUIREMENT

The Board demands professional consistency throughout the lifespan of this project. The designated **Project Manager** and **Lead Architect** will remain actively involved across all major milestones from initial programming through final project closeout.

- **Personnel Lock:** Neither the Project Manager nor the Lead Architect may be reassigned or removed from this project without prior express written authorization from Cumberland County Schools.
- **Exceptions:** Staff alterations will only be considered under extreme scenarios (e.g., medical leave, retirement, separation from employment). Any proposed replacement candidate must possess professional credentials and experience that equal or exceed the original team member.

IX. QUALITATIVE EVALUATION MATRIX

Evaluation Criteria Category	Maximum Points Awarded
High School Replacement Experience	30 Points
Educational Design Experience	20 Points
Key Personnel Qualifications (Project Manager & Lead Architect focus)	20 Points
Community & Alumni Engagement Experience	10 Points
Complex Demolition & Redevelopment Experience	10 Points
Verifiable Past Performance History	5 Points
Personnel Continuity Commitment	5 Points
TOTAL EVALUATION VALUE	100 Points

X. SHORTLIST INTERVIEW PHASE

Should the Board elect to execute short-list interviews, the designated **Project Manager** and **Lead Architect** must attend the interview process **in person**. Substitutions or virtual presentations are strictly barred without advance written approval.

XI. BOARD RIGHTS & RESERVATIONS

The Cumberland County Board of Education explicitly maintains absolute discretion to reject any or all submissions, waive technical informalities, request targeted information updates, and execute contracts that align with the best strategic financial interests of the school system. The Board reserves the right to verify all experience parameters directly with past owners; any detected material misrepresentation will trigger automatic disqualification.

The Board reserves the right to request clarification of any submission and to verify any information provided by respondents.

XII. SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS & PROTOCOLS

Respondents must submit their proposal packages matching the volume parameters below:

- **Hard Copies:** Ten (10) high-end, bound printed copies.
- **Digital Copy:** One (1) fully indexed, high-resolution electronic PDF loaded onto a secure USB drive.
- Submittals shall be delivered in a sealed package or sealed envelope.

Delivery Logistics

Cumberland County Schools Operations Department
Attn: Matthew Johnson
RFQ Submission E.E. Smith High School Replacement Project
810 Gillespie Street Fayetteville, North Carolina 28306

- **Hard Deadline:** All submittals must be logged into the Operations Department no later than **August 13th at 2:00 PM EST**.
- **Late Delivery Policy:** Late submissions will be rejected immediately without exception, regardless of the cause of courier or logistics delay.