

CHAPTER 31 RENAISSANCE SCHOOLS

Authority

N.J.S.A. 18A:36C-1 et seq., specifically 18A:36C-13.

Source and Effective Date

R.2012 d.153, effective August 2, 2012.
See: 44 N.J.R. 2198(a).

Chapter Expiration Date

Chapter 31, Renaissance Schools, expires on August 2, 2013.

Chapter Historical Note

Chapter 31, Renaissance Schools, was adopted as special new rules by R.2012 d.153, effective August 2, 2012. See: Source and Effective Date.

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SUBCHAPTER 1. PURPOSE AND DEFINITIONS

6A:31-1.1 Purpose

The rules in this chapter are promulgated pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:36C-13 and govern the creation and operation

of renaissance school projects under the Urban Hope Act, N.J.S.A. 18A:36C-1 et seq.

6A:31-1.2 Definitions

The following words and terms, as used in this chapter, shall have the following meanings, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

"Comprehensive school facilities plan" means a comprehensive plan showing the renaissance school district's educational specification(s), preliminary facility budget, and design and construction plans as defined in N.J.A.C. 6A:26, Educational Facilities.

"Contract" means an agreement between the nonprofit and school district that has been submitted to the Department and approved by the Commissioner to enable a renaissance school pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:36C-6.

"District contingency plan" means an agreement between the school district and the nonprofit(s) determining how students enrolled in the renaissance school will be educated if the renaissance school is unable to open as determined during the preparedness assessments.

"Initial recruitment period" means the period during which there are the first outreach efforts by a renaissance school to the community for the application, random selection process (if applicable), and enrollment of students for the next school year.

"Long-term financial plan" means a nonprofit entity's continuing plan for funding the daily operation of a renaissance school, including the disposition of the per pupil expenditure paid to the renaissance school pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:36C-7.e.

"Newly-constructed school" means either a new school facility or a significant refurbishment of an existing facility, such that most or all of the building has been reconstructed to build the renaissance school.

"Non-instructional personnel" means prospective or current employees serving or seeking to serve in positions that do not require instructional or administrative certificates or endorsements, as defined in N.J.A.C. 6A:9, Professional Licensure and Standards.

"Nonprofit entity" means a nonprofit educational organization that is either applying to establish or is currently operating a public school in a renaissance school district.

"Preparedness assessment" means a Department assessment that gauges readiness for school opening.

"Record of success" means a track record of success that can be derived from either the nonprofit entity demonstrating success in operating a school in a high-risk, low-income

urban school district, or the nonprofit proposer partnering with an entity to staff, operate, or manage the renaissance school, and that entity has a successful track record in operating a school in a high-risk, low-income urban school district.

“Renaissance school” means a “renaissance school project.”

“Renaissance school district” is a failing school district in which renaissance school projects may be established. The renaissance school districts are determined using data from the Statewide assessment reports issued by the Department under the following circumstances:

1. A school district located in a city of the first class in which at least 40 percent of students scored in the partially proficient range in language arts and mathematics sections of each State assessment administered in the 2009-2010 school year; and

2. A school district located in a city of the second class in which at least 45 percent of students scored in the partially proficient range in language arts and mathematics sections of each State assessment administered in the 2009-2010 school year.

“Renaissance school project” means a newly-constructed school, or group of schools in a common campus setting, that provides an educational program for students enrolled in grades K through 12 or in a grade range less than K through 12, that is agreed to by the school district, and is operated and managed by a nonprofit entity in a renaissance school district.

“Renaissance school rate” refers to the amount that the renaissance school district must pay to the nonprofit entity as required by N.J.S.A. 18A:36C-7.e. This amount shall be distributed in 12 equal monthly installments in an amount per pupil equal to 95 percent of the district’s per pupil expenditure. In addition, the 12 monthly installments shall include the security categorical aid attributable to the student, a percentage of the district’s special education categorical aid equal to the percentage of the district’s special education students enrolled in the renaissance school project, and, if applicable, 100 percent of preschool education aid. The district shall also pay directly to the renaissance school any Federal funds and adjustment aid attributable to the student.

“School district” means the board of education of a renaissance school.

“Short-term financing plan” means a nonprofit entity’s immediate plan for funding or financing the construction of school facilities that will house a renaissance school as well as any necessary acquisitions of land.

“Years of experience” means quantifiable experience that can be derived from either the nonprofit entity having relevant experience in operating a school in a high-risk, low-income urban school district, or the nonprofit proposer part-

nering with another entity to staff, operate, or manage the renaissance school, and that entity has experience in operating a school in a high-risk, low-income urban school district.

SUBCHAPTER 2. REQUESTS FOR PROPOSALS

6A:31-2.1 Renaissance school district’s responsibilities and authority

(a) The school district shall prepare a request for proposals for attracting nonprofit organizations to partner in building a renaissance school and a proposed scoring rubric for assessing and selecting a nonprofit entity to partner with. Both the request for proposal and the proposed scoring rubric need to be approved by the Commissioner before being issued.

(b) The school district shall assign the following weights to a nonprofit entity’s respective qualifications:

1. The following factors shall comprise at least 70 percent of the school district’s decision-making process:

- i. A nonprofit entity’s years of experience in school improvement;

- ii. A nonprofit entity’s record of success in engendering student growth and improving the academic performance of at-risk, English language learner, and special education students; and

- iii. Evidence of a nonprofit entity’s financial stability.

2. Any other factors not prohibited from consideration under (c) below may comprise no more than 30 percent of the school district’s decision-making process.

(c) The school district’s request for proposals shall not be unduly restrictive of competition, which shall mean that the school district shall not require that a nonprofit entity:

1. Exceed State academic performance standards;

2. Exceed minimum State facilities standards in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:26, Educational Facilities, and 6A:26A, Comprehensive Maintenance Plans;

3. Possess more than three years of experience providing educational services;

4. Employ senior internal management or administrative staff with more than three years of relevant experience;

5. Employ non-senior internal management or administrative staff with more than three years of relevant experience;

6. Impose experience requirements for the employment of renaissance school administrative or instructional staff in excess of State licensure standards in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:9;