

**RE: FOIA Request**

Cecere, Robin &lt;Robin.Cecere@ct.gov&gt;

Thu 10/14/2021 11:39 AM

To: Schulz, David &lt;david.schulz@yale.edu&gt;

Cc: Anastasio, Laura &lt;Laura.Anastasio@ct.gov&gt;; David Froomkin &lt;david.froomkin@YLSCLinics.org&gt;

 6 attachments (7 MB)

#2 Purchase Order.pdf; #2 SOW for TCC Purchase Requisition (002).pdf; #10 2020 2-7 Sheff Stip FAQ for Partners Mtg Reformed.pdf; Phase IV Stipulation and Order 1-10-20.pdf; D Schulz Partial FOI response 10-14.docx; #1 Procurement\_Announcement.pdf;

Good Morning Mr. Schulz,

Please find attached a partial response to your request for records pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act concerning the Student Assignment Plan for voluntary interdistrict schools within the Greater Hartford Region pursuant to the Phase IV Stipulation and Order from January 10, 2020 in *Sheff v. O'Neill*. You refer to the Student Assignment Plan in your request as the “automated decision-making systems in the school lotteries” for the Regional School Choice Office. Non-exempt documents associated with the response are included as attachments to this email.

We appreciate your patience and will provide additional responses as soon as possible.

Thank you,  
Robin Cecere



**Robin Colombo Cecere**  
**Regional School Choice Office Director**  
Connecticut State Department of Education  
Regional School Choice Office  
450 Columbus Boulevard  
Hartford, Connecticut 06103  
Phone: 860-713-6518  
Fax: 860-713-7004

---

**From:** Anastasio, Laura <Laura.Anastasio@ct.gov>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 12, 2021 12:52 PM  
**To:** Schulz, David <david.schulz@yale.edu>  
**Subject:** FOIA Request

Dear Mr. Schultz:

I am writing to acknowledge receipt of your request for records pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, which was received by email on April 6, 2021. Department staff shall review your request and respond in due course. Please be advised that due to the potential volume of records that you are requesting, we anticipate that

it may take significant time to collect and review responsive records. We shall provide such records on a rolling basis as they become available.

**Laura L. Anastasio**

**Attorney**

Connecticut State Department of Education

Division of Legal and Governmental Affairs

Email: [laura.anastasio@ct.gov](mailto:laura.anastasio@ct.gov)

Telephone: 860-713-6512

Fax: 860-713-7004

The information contained in this transmission is CONFIDENTIAL and PRIVILEGED, and is intended only for the use of the recipient listed above. If you are not the intended recipient, please do not read, distribute or take action in reliance upon this message. If you have received this e-mail in error, please notify us immediately by return e-mail and promptly delete this message and its attachments from your computer system. The text of this e-mail is similar to ordinary telephone or face-to-face conversations and does not reflect the level of factual or legal inquiry or analysis, which would be applied in the case of a formal legal opinion. Please note that messages to or from the State of Connecticut domain may be subject to the Freedom of Information Act (Conn. Gen. Stat. sections 1-200 et seq.).

- 1. All documents related to the procurement of automated decision-making systems intended for use in the school lotteries, including but not limited to any requests for proposal.**

Non-exempt documents authored by the Connecticut State Department of Education and representative of the RFP for a cloud-based application and lottery platform can be accessed through the following link on the State of Connecticut Contracting Portal [https://biznet.ct.gov/SCP\\_Search/BidDetail.aspx?CID=50993](https://biznet.ct.gov/SCP_Search/BidDetail.aspx?CID=50993). The procurement announcement is attached as “#1 Procurement Announcement.”

- 2. All agreements for the acquisition of software or services that provide an automated decision-making system to the Department of Education for use in the school lotteries.**

Please see the attachment entitled, “#2 Final Blender Box School Choice TCC SDE SOW” and “#2 Purchase Order” for non-exempt documents representative of CSDE’s agreement for a cloud-based application and lottery platform.

- 3. Documents sufficient to disclose all types of data inputs used in the school lotteries and how often the inputs are updated.**

The process that the SDE uses to place applicants in available seats is based on a complex protocol that considers a variety of factors that can vary by school, program and operator. Key factors in assigning placements are the number of seats available, the grade level, and the applicants’ choices along with socioeconomic factors (SES), student preferences, priorities (like sibling, staff and neighborhood, for example), pathways and other factors to assign students to available seats by school and grade. The Family Guide available at <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/School-Choice/RSCO/RSCOFamilyGuide.pdf> provides specific information on the priorities and pathways that apply to each school as well as FAQs about the application and placement process. Please also refer to the “Phase IV Stipulation and Order 1-10-20” attached to this response for additional information regarding the Student Assignment Plan. Documents regarding specific data inputs and protocols are exempt from disclosure per Connecticut General Statutes Section 1-210 excerpt (5) (A) Trade secrets, which for purposes of the Freedom of Information Act, are defined as information, including formulas, patterns, compilations, programs, devices, methods, techniques, processes, drawings, cost data, customer lists, film or television scripts or detailed production budgets that (i) derive independent economic value, actual or potential, from not being generally known to, and not being readily ascertainable by proper means by, other persons who can obtain economic value from their disclosure or use, and (ii) are the subjects of efforts that are reasonable under the circumstances to maintain secrecy; and (B) Commercial or financial information given in confidence, not required by statute.

**4. All documents describing how an automated decision-making system used in the school lotteries uses or weighs its data inputs.**

The process that the SDE uses to place applicants in available seats is based on a complex protocol that considers a variety of factors that can vary by school, program and operator. Key factors in assigning placements are the number of seats available, the grade level, and the applicants' choices along with socioeconomic factors (SES), student preferences, priorities (like sibling, staff and neighborhood, for example), pathways and other factors to assign students to available seats by school and grade. The Family Guide available at <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/School-Choice/RSCO/RSCOFamilyGuide.pdf> provides specific information on the priorities and pathways that apply to each school as well as FAQs about the application and placement process. Please also refer to the "Phase IV Stipulation and Order 1-10-20" attached to this response for additional information regarding the Student Assignment Plan. Documents describing placement protocols are exempt from disclosure per Connecticut General Statutes Section 1-210 excerpt (5) (A) Trade secrets, which for purposes of the Freedom of Information Act, are defined as information, including formulas, patterns, compilations, programs, devices, methods, techniques, processes, drawings, cost data, customer lists, film or television scripts or detailed production budgets that (i) derive independent economic value, actual or potential, from not being generally known to, and not being readily ascertainable by proper means by, other persons who can obtain economic value from their disclosure or use, and (ii) are the subjects of efforts that are reasonable under the circumstances to maintain secrecy; and (B) Commercial or financial information given in confidence, not required by statute.

**5. The source code of all automated decision-making systems used in the school lottery.**

The process that the SDE uses to place applicants in available seats is based on a complex protocol that considers a variety of factors that can vary by school, program and operator. Key factors in assigning placements are the number of seats available, the grade level, and the applicants' choices along with socioeconomic factors (SES), student preferences, priorities (like sibling, staff and neighborhood, for example), pathways and other factors to assign students to available seats by school and grade. The Family Guide available at <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/School-Choice/RSCO/RSCOFamilyGuide.pdf> provides specific information on the priorities and pathways that apply to each school as well as FAQs about the application and placement process. Please also refer to the "Phase IV Stipulation and Order 1-10-20" attached to this response for additional information regarding the Student Assignment Plan. Documents detailing coding of the placement system are exempt This is exempt from disclosure per Connecticut General Statutes Section 1-210 excerpt (5) (A) Trade

secrets, which for purposes of the Freedom of Information Act, are defined as information, including formulas, patterns, compilations, programs, devices, methods, techniques, processes, drawings, cost data, customer lists, film or television scripts or detailed production budgets that (i) derive independent economic value, actual or potential, from not being generally known to, and not being readily ascertainable by proper means by, other persons who can obtain economic value from their disclosure or use, and (ii) are the subjects of efforts that are reasonable under the circumstances to maintain secrecy; and (B) Commercial or financial information given in confidence, not required by statute.

**6. All documents shared between or among the Regional School Choice Office, Capitol Region Education Council, Cooperative Educational Services, and/or Area Cooperative Educational Services addressing the effects of the 2020 *Sheff v O'Neill* settlement on the use of automated decision-making systems in the school lotteries.**

Please see the attachment entitled, “#10 2020 2-7 Sheff Stip FAQ for Partners Mtg Reformatted” for general communications between or among RSCO and CREC addressing the effects of the Phase IV Stipulation and Order from January 10, 2020 on the application and placement process. Please also refer to the “Phase IV Stipulation and Order 1-10-20” attached to this response for additional information regarding the Student Assignment Plan. Documents regarding specific protocol details are exempt from disclosure per Connecticut General Statutes Section 1-210 excerpt (5) (A) Trade secrets, which for purposes of the Freedom of Information Act, are defined as information, including formulas, patterns, compilations, programs, devices, methods, techniques, processes, drawings, cost data, customer lists, film or television scripts or detailed production budgets that (i) derive independent economic value, actual or potential, from not being generally known to, and not being readily ascertainable by proper means by, other persons who can obtain economic value from their disclosure or use, and (ii) are the subjects of efforts that are reasonable under the circumstances to maintain secrecy; and (B) Commercial or financial information given in confidence, not required by statute.

**7. All documents detailing the appeals process of the school lotteries.**

RSCO does not have an appeals process for families to challenge placements through the Regional School Choice System.

# Procurement Announcement for the State of Connecticut Department of Education School Choice Application and Student Assignment System



(This procurement is being conducted under the auspices of the Connecticut State Department of Administrative Services, Procurement Services, [18PSX0210 Contract Award/Supplement and Participating Addendum](#))

## **Overview**

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) is seeking to procure a secure, Web-based application and student assignment system for use by the CSDE and by magnet school operators/local school districts responsible for recruiting and placing Hartford and suburban-resident students in school choice programs in the Greater Hartford Region. The system must be fully implemented and operational no later than September 1, 2020 for the application and admissions cycle in 2020-21 for the 2021-22 school year. CSDE is seeking a user-friendly system, functional on multiple platforms, adaptive and versatile enough to support multi-faceted efforts to meet the obligations outlined in the *Sheff v. O'Neill* case and Phase IV Stipulation and Order currently in effect.

The Application and Student Assignment System will:

- a) Provide a secure, on-line, user-friendly application for school choice options that families can easily access from all types of devices;
- b) Display educational options, including neighborhood schools available to Hartford residents, based on the applicant's residence with a variety of sortable options;
- c) Provide an ongoing communication system to facilitate correspondence through all phases of marketing, application, placement and enrollment;
- d) Produce adaptive interfaces that allow for the collection of data and information from specified data systems;
- e) Allow authorized CSDE staff to design and modify application questions and features;
- f) Allow CSDE to set and modify lottery protocols for assigning placements;
- g) Utilize design elements that are compatible with student privacy guidelines; and
- h) Enable users to generate real-time, readable and easily accessed reports.

Please see the detailed [Statement of Work](#) for additional information about the cloud solution being requested.

## **How to Respond to this Procurement**

Pursuant to the process established under the [18PSX0210 Contract Award/Supplement and Participating Addendum](#), interested vendors should work through a [reseller who is approved under this contract award](#). For each vendor, the reseller must submit a detailed work plan/proposal that conforms to the [requirements outlined on pages 25 through 27 of the detailed Statement of Work](#). The selected vendor will also need to work with the CSDE to complete the [Cloud Questionnaire](#) that is required by DAS/BEST.

To be considered for this procurement, all work plans/proposals must be in PDF format and must be received from an approved reseller by Ajit Gopalakrishnan at [ajit.gopalakrishnan@ct.gov](mailto:ajit.gopalakrishnan@ct.gov) no later than 5 p.m. on Monday, March 30, 2020.



## STATEMENT OF WORK

This **STATEMENT OF WORK** (“**SOW**”) is effective as of June 15, 2020 and is between Blenderbox Inc. (“**Agency**” or “**us**” and “**we**”) and Connecticut State Department of Education CSDE via a NASPO contract with TCC Software Solutions (“**Client**” or “**you**”). This SOW is subject to the Master Services Agreement between TCC Software Solutions and CSDE effective as of June 15, 2020 (the “**MSA**”). Capitalized terms not defined in this SOW have the meanings given in the MSA.

### Overview & Project Priorities

#### *Background.*

You’ve engaged us to license and configure an implementation of our SchoolChoice Application and Student Assignment System for the Connecticut State Department of Education (the “**system**”).

### Scope, Services & Deliverables

The system includes features that align with each of the itemized requirements (TR.1 - TR.46, PP1.1 - PP.26, AP.1 - AP.42, UR.1 - UR.4) as outlined in the State of Connecticut Department of Education’s RFP entitled “School Choice Application and Student Assignment System” with various exceptions and customizations as noted in Blenderbox’s proposal submitted in response to that RFP and dated March 30th, 2020.

Specific customizations and integrations needed to align with various CSDE requirements are covered by an additional one-time setup fee and the following workplan.

### Workplan

#### Discovery & Workflow Requirements Gathering:

- Discovery, requirements gathering & planning: We’ll assign a Product Manager and coordinate a kickoff meeting to be followed by multiple workshops for requirements gathering and planning purposes. Anyone who will have decision-making input or authority regarding our work or the system is requested to be present. Their presence is critical to budget, schedule and success. The agenda will include setting project goals, defining roles and responsibilities, discussion of technical requirements, and level-setting the overall goals and expectations of the system.
- Product install and configuration: Our cloud-based solution is hosted on scalable cloud-based Amazon AWS architecture. It uses RDS, EC2, S3, Cloudfront, Auto-Scaling Groups (ASG), and elastic load-balancing (ELB). We use Terraform to deploy infrastructure as configuration and will setup and install our SchoolChoice application to a UAT, Staging and Production environment in a new AWS VPC dedicated to CSDE.

Once set up, we will initialize the tools in anticipation of the September launch (2020-2021 School Year) of School Choice applications for the 2021-2022 School Year. We will “seed” the database with all of your programs, operators, and schools, and initialize the three core admission workflows for CT technical high schools, magnet schools and Open Choice schools.

We will deliver a clickable prototype of the parents portal, the school portal, and the administrator portal within four weeks of commencing work and then transition from the initial configuration phase to the customization phase.

· Customizations & Integrations, Planning and Preparation for Training: Armed with the business requirements documentation, we will organize our engineering team and begin a sprint-based approach to implementing the various features that will be extended or customized for CSDE RSCO workflows.

Specific known points of customization based on our conversations to date include the items listed below. Priorities for first day of school will be captured during discovery, with timing-per-feature to be shared within general project plan / roadmap:

- customizing application questions to include questions about education level, ethnicity, language, etc. and configuring our question tools so that your team can manage and add more questions as needed.
- **American Community Survey Census Data** - adding business logic related to geo-coding addresses entered by guardians and mapping them to census tract data that can be imported and managed by CSDE which will map to Socio-Economic Status (SES) tiers.
- adding logic to map zone data to addresses (e.g. logical implementation of the 4 hartford zones (which are pre-populated based on geo-coded address in the current application. Implementing logic for school pathway, siblings, staff prioritizations as well as workflow for administrative verification after applications close.
- Setup and implementation of user roles and permissions. This may include pre-populating or importing users or setup and configuration of an SSO solution (SchoolChoice supports SAML, SOAP, LDAP, OATH, and OpenID).
- Planning and consideration for multi-language functionality. (This may entail a phased approach based on CSDE resources, capacity and availability).
- Ingest and outgest of data between SchoolChoice and Connecticut **Public School Information System** (PSIS).

· Training Sessions, Testing, Build/Launch Preparations: The month of August will parallel track ongoing customizations with delivery of face-to-face, remote, online and train the trainer modules for each of your SchoolChoice user types (Operators, Counselors, CSDE staff etc.) as planned during the discovery and planning sessions.



We will also be conducting scheduled security, accessibility, performance and vulnerability testing against the future production environment. The finalized tools will be opened for User Acceptance Testing (UAT) with your team, and we'll begin preparations for launch including setup for whatever domain you'd like to use for these white-labelled tools. (e.g. [rsco.ct.gov](https://rsco.ct.gov), [schoolchoice.ct.gov](https://schoolchoice.ct.gov), [myschools.ct.gov](https://myschools.ct.gov) or other).

· Ongoing support/maintenance & Development: With back-to-school, we'll be coordinating the actual date for opening the application and shifting our team's role from onboarding and configuration to the day-to-day support role as a managed service provider. We'll introduce you to our 24/7 helpdesk platform, while also continuing any necessary post-launch development and customization activity such as the aforementioned long-term Operator Student Information System integration plans.

October - 2021: Our team's support and collaboration with your team will settle into a natural cadence that will ebb and flow in accordance with your seasonal workflow. Year one will likely require additional up-front support and assistance as you move into the GAP application review phase and then into lottery, waitlists and placement.

## **Service Levels**

We guarantee the same infrastructure service level that Amazon AWS offers in regards to availability, bandwidth and uptime.

For support, we'll provide access to a custom email address that will notify support staff of your critical issue. Technicians will be trained on your project and provided custom escalation procedures to contact relevant project team members outside of normal business hours. During normal business hours, we guarantee responses confirming receipt of emergency issues within 1 hour of notifying us, and incremental updates every 4 hours until a resolution is in place.

## **Exclusions**

Agency's services and Deliverables only include the items described above, and do NOT include the following:

- Copywriting and copyediting
- Creation or licensing of photographs, icons, or graphic designs for the system
- Trademark, patent, or copyright clearances
- SchoolChoice Testing module
- SchoolChoice Talent and Auditions module
- Integration with PowerSchools or other Student Information Systems (beyond PSIS)
- CRM integration

Any requested work provided by Agency beyond the included services and deliverables will be billed at Agency's current hourly rate for such services.

## **Specifications**

Agency's work will be prepared to the following specifications:

- The system will be tested for compatibility with the latest (non-beta) versions of Chrome, Firefox, Edge, and Safari, and for mobile compatibility with iOS versions of Safari and Chrome, and the Android version of Chrome
- Responsive for a mobile breakpoint.

## **Assumptions and Client Obligations**

In addition to Client's obligations described in the MSA, Agency's obligations under the agreement are subject to the following:

- CSDE's approval of the discovery requirements and project plan-must occur by July 15th, 2020 in order to keep the project on schedule, otherwise new mutually approved dates and milestones would need to be approved.
- This SOW is correct based on information currently available
- CSDE's data handling practices comply with all applicable privacy laws
- CSDE's engagement of Agency will not cause Agency to be treated as a "data processor" or "data controller" under GDPR
- No personally identifiable customer or user data relating to EU citizens will be provided by CSDE to Agency
- All requested approvals and feedback within 5 business days of request

## **Schedule**

We anticipate a project plan that runs from June 2020 through November 2020 that will include setup and configuration of our SchoolChoice system with CSDE data and customizations that will be fully live and tested in time for planned marketing, outreach and training activities over the summer to culminate with launch by September 2020 during the back-to-school season. From that point forward, the system will be in place for a term of three (3) years from date of this agreement and may be extended annually after that.

## **Fees, Expenses, and Payment**

The fee for this engagement is \$626,500.00 plus a 5% handling fee for the NASPO contract with TCC for a total fee of \$657,825.00. The licensing and management fee of \$451,500 will be billed in annual installments of \$150,500 the first of which will be invoiced upon signing this agreement with subsequent installments due on the anniversary of signing this agreement in accordance with the schedule below.

An additional one-time setup cost of \$175,000 will be billed in four quarterly installments of \$43,750 with the first installment to be invoiced upon signing this agreement and subsequent installments due in accordance with the schedule below.

<b>Payment No.</b>	<b>Invoice Date</b>	<b>Payment Amount</b> (includes 5% NASPO fee)	<b>Description</b>
1	July 1, 2020	\$203,962.50	Year 1 License + One-Time Setup Fee (payment 1 of 4)
2	October 1, 2020	\$45,937.50	One-Time Setup Fee (payment 2 of 4)
3	January 1, 2021	\$45,937.50	One-Time Setup Fee (payment 3 of 4)
4	April 1, 2021	\$45,937.50	One-Time Setup Fee (payment 4 of 4)
5	July 1, 2021	\$158,025.00	Year 2 License
6	July 1, 2022	\$158,025.00	Year 3 License

Invoice terms are net 30 from the date of the invoice.

This fee does not include any expenses or other costs that may be required to complete your project. Examples of expenses include translations, licensing fees, stock or original photography, font or media licensing, additional 3rd party online services, and similar costs. Agency will obtain your consent before incurring any additional costs on your behalf. Once approved, Agency may advance such costs on your behalf and include the amount on your invoice. Alternatively, Agency may require that you advance such costs before they are incurred or that you contract directly with the vendor.

### **Project Management**

- Agency appoints Jay Jones as its Project Manager, who will be Client's primary point of contact for feedback, approvals and other matters relating to this SOW.
- Client appoints Robin Cecere as its Project Manager, who will be Agency's primary point of contact and responsible for providing consolidated feedback and approvals.
- Meetings will be coordinated primarily through Project Managers. Changes to Client's Project Manager may delay schedule.


*[signature page follows]*

## Approval

The parties signed this SOW as of date first written above.


### “Agency”

**Blenderbox Inc.**

By:   
Name: Jason Jeffries  
Title: CEO

### “Client”

TCC Software Solutions

By:   
Name: ANDREW HWANG  
Title: CED

# **Connecticut Department of Education**

## School Choice Application and Student Assignment System

March 30, 2020

# Table of Contents

Cover Letter	2
A. Qualifications and Experience	3
B. Required Elements in the Proposal	14
C. Organizational Resources	38
D. Budget	45
E. Organization Information	46
F. NYC MySchools Case Study	50

# Hello CSDE

We are Blenderbox. Our team is excited to partner with CSDE to deliver the next generation of your RSCO application and lottery system. As you prepare to meet the Phase IV Stipulation and Order of Sheff v. O'Neill, we are prepared to offer you the best-in-class SchoolChoice application on the market today.

**Blenderbox SchoolChoice™** is a premium offering that has been battle-tested for two years with the largest school district in the country. It goes far beyond a simple application, lottery and seat reservation tool to include a highly interactive and human-centric interface that is 100% mobile responsive, WCAG compliant and multi-language compatible. It also offers the most comprehensive and flexible “rules engine” available today that is powered by an implementation of the Gale-Shapley deferred acceptance algorithm and is specifically designed to accommodate the rapidly changing policy landscape that DOE’s face today as they grapple with increased calls for transparency, equity, and diversity in school choice admissions.

SchoolChoice is brought to you by a woman-owned full service application design and development firm based in Brooklyn, NY. Our dedicated and loyal staff collectively have decades of experience with school choice and are ready to lend their expertise in support of CSDE!

Since the establishment of Blenderbox nearly 20 years ago, we have continuously sought to serve as a true partner to our clients. We deliver best-in-class digital experiences and anticipate working closely with your team and stakeholders to serve your bespoke business requirements with a fresh new technological approach.

Sincerely,



Sarah Jeffries  
President/Co-Founder  
Blenderbox, Inc.

**NYS Certified WBE: 52530**

**EIN: 11-3564958**

# A. Qualifications and Experience

## Organizational Experience

Blenderbox is a full-service application design and technology provider based in Brooklyn, New York. We work exclusively with mission-driven organizations that include education, government, foundations, and social service nonprofits. Our motto is “Good Work for Good Causes”.

For over twenty years, we have been providing instructional design, e-Learning, professional development, and all manner of integrated registration, CRM, ERP and student information system solutions for partners such as Yale Law School, the New Hampshire Department of Education, and the New York City Department of Education.

### **Blenderbox SchoolChoice™**

One of our marquee products is a flexible engine for school choice, admissions, enrollment, reporting, lottery and matching called Blenderbox SchoolChoice. Originally developed for Yale Law School (YLS), our SchoolChoice engine is now also in use to power MySchools.nyc, the centralized school choice and lottery system serving all 1,2MM NYC students across 1,700 public schools for the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE).

Our SchoolChoice engine consists of numerous components that are highly flexible and customizable as evidenced by the vastly different implementations we were able to deliver to both Yale Law School vs NYCDOE.

The YLS SchoolChoice implementation is used for incoming student placement, bidding, course placement, and anonymous grading and is fully integrated with a commercial higher-ed student information system—Ellucian Banner. The system features a faculty view, a registrar view and a student view. The registrar tools facilitate an even distribution of incoming students based on a range of equity and diversity characteristics that include ethnicity, geography, socio-economic status, and undergraduate institution while factoring complex business rules for prerequisite graduation requirements before generating offer and course placements each trimester.

The NYCDOE SchoolChoice implementation features a Parent Portal, a School Portal and a Central Administrative Portal which is used to manage twelve separate admission processes from Universal Pre-K through High School for New York City. The matching process is based on an implementation



of the Gale-Shapley deferred acceptance algorithm that has been independently tested and verified by MIT. This solution features a highly flexible “rules engine” that allows New York City to quickly and easily modify rules in response to rapidly changing policy from school year to school year.

The Parent Portal is a fully mobile responsive experience that is WCAG compliant, multi-language, and features a map-based directory of schools and programs that are automatically geo-coded to deliver an intuitive and easy-to-use application experience for parents and guardians.

Our implementation for NYC is highly relevant to the configuration of SchoolChoice that we can offer to CSDE. It handles Pre-K, 3-K, Elementary School, Middle School, Gifted and Talented programs, a specialized middle school for the arts called Mark Twain, a specialized performing arts high school that requires auditions (Laguardia), and nine specialized High Schools that require testing (SHSAT). It handles admissions to over 900 programs across 500 public high schools throughout the city as well as admissions from non NYCDOE public schools such as charter and private schools that send rising 8th graders to NYC public schools.

All of the requirements itemized in your RFP can be easily mapped and configured to features that are core to our SchoolChoice platform in service of CSDE’s specific requirements for Open Choice schools, Magnet schools and CTECS that are currently managed by Connecticut’s Regional School Choice Office (RSCO) School Placement Process.

# References

## MySchools

David Yang

NYC Office of Student Enrollment Solutions Architect

[Dyang2@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:Dyang2@schools.nyc.gov)

212-374-4251

## Project Overview

We designed and built [MySchools.nyc](https://www.schools.nyc.gov), New York City's admissions and enrollment platform for 1.2MM students. The platform features a public-facing Guardian portal, as well as a portal for Schools and a portal for Administrators.

The guardian portal is mobile responsive and can toggle between 10 languages including two right-to-left (RTL) languages. The system handles the application, lottery, matching, waitlist and offer process for all New York City 3K, PreK, Kindergarten, Middle School, High School, Gifted & Talented, and Specialized High School programs, as well as two performing arts schools (Mark Twain and LaGuardia). There are over 3,000 school programs, and approximately 80,000 applicants per admission process annually.


The application features a live GIS-encoded directory of schools and programs with business logic for eligibility and prioritization that considers an applicant's address and zoned school alongside seat availability while browsing school programs.

The administrative portal features the ability to run a school matching algorithm based on a highly customizable "rules engine" that includes rules for eligibility and prioritization that factor in student and school rankings; student characteristics such as attendance, ELA and Math Scores; disabilities, accommodations, and IEP; equity and diversity; and 504 Plans. The engine can run scenarios that allow administrators to analyze distribution results while factoring criteria such as Free and Reduced Lunch eligibility and English as a Second Language status.

The matching engine implements a variation of the Gale Shapley deferred acceptance matching algorithm which has been tested and verified independently by MIT. After running multiple lottery/matching scenarios, a final match is configured and the system generates notifications and printed offer letters. The system also manages and administers waitlists which track real-time seat inventory as schools manage enrollment and waitlists via the School Portal.

## Dashboard

Search for schools, track your progress and apply by selecting an admissions process for your child.

[Edit Profile](#)

*In pre-k at 02M700: Universal Pre-K C.B.O.*

All Kindergarten Results

[View Results](#)

All G&T Application Results

[View Results](#)

All G&T Test Results


[View Results](#)




**Add a child**

### Your Key Dates


Select your child's name to go to their application overview page.

**1/5/2019**  **Test**  
1 p.m.  
*Isha Shergill*

G & T Assessment

**1/22/2019**  Jan. 22, 2019  
**Application Deadline**  
*Isha Shergill*

Submit your Kindergarten application by **January 22nd**.

**5/10/2019**  May 10, 2019  
**G&T Application Deadline**  
*Isha Shergill*

Submit your Gifted & Talented application by May 10, 11:59pm.

NYC

OSE ADMINISTRATION

PRODUCTION

WELCOME, JJEFFRIES@BLENDERBOX.COM.

View Site

Change Password

Log Out

2018

Dashboard

Applications

Administration

Admission Process

School Year (2018)

Quick Links

Find a Student, School or Program

Home > Auditor > Audit logs

Select audit log to change

Q

Search

7255923 results (7255923 total)

DATETIME	MODEL CHANGED	ACTION	USER	IMPERSONATOR	SITE NAME	OBJECT ID	OSIS ID
June 5, 2019, 3:06 p.m.	schools.WaitlistProgram	Change	REDACTED	-	School Admin (PROD_DIIT)	422589	-
June 5, 2019, 3:06 p.m.	schools.WaitlistProgram	Change		-	School Admin (PROD_DIIT)	375174	-
June 5, 2019, 3:06 p.m.	WaitlistProgram	Change		-	School Admin (PROD_DIIT)	428291	-
June 5, 2019, 3:06 p.m.	schools.WaitlistProgram	Change		-	School Admin (PROD_DIIT)	428291	-
June 5, 2019, 3:05 p.m.	schools.WaitlistProgram	Change		-	School Admin (PROD_DIIT)	288001	-
June 5, 2019, 3:05 p.m.	schools.WaitlistProgram	Change		-	School Admin (PROD_DIIT)	428731	-
June 5, 2019, 3:05 p.m.	schools.WaitlistProgram	Change		-	School Admin (PROD_DIIT)	428291	-
June 5, 2019, 3:05 p.m.	schools.WaitlistProgram	Change		-	School Admin (PROD_DIIT)	428260	-
June 5, 2019, 3:05 p.m.	WaitlistProgram	Change		-	School Admin (PROD_DIIT)	428731	-
June 5, 2019, 3:05 p.m.	schools.WaitlistProgram	Change		-	School Admin (PROD_DIIT)	428731	-

FILTER

By content type

All

application program

student

student program rank

student application

student course

Sign-up Roster

No Matching Timeslot

student result

finalized student match result

student shot result

student lga result

mark twain score

gifted and talented score

waitlist program

## Yale Law School

Susan Monsen

Director / CTO

[susan.monsen@yale.edu](mailto:susan.monsen@yale.edu)

203-432-4044

### Project Overview:

We designed and built a custom system for enrollment, lottery, bidding, grading and anonymized exam IDs that integrates with Yale Law School's student information system. The system has a registrar view, a faculty view and a student view and is used to manage distribution and places of incoming classes according to a series of customizable business rules.

SPRING 2017
Course Information
Manage Enrollment
Grades
First-Term Groups
Welcome, Caleb
Settings | Log off

- [Notifications](#)
- [Change Requests](#)
- [Change Log](#)
- + [New Change Request](#)
- [Scheduler](#)
- [Import Courses](#)
- [Save](#)
- [Run Lottery](#)
- [Notify Instructors](#)

## - RULES:

Allow lottery to be run for an ☒ Individual class  
This should be checked for all lotteries except open enrollment.

Overwrite accepted and waiting ☐  
list

Write to waiting list only ☐

<b>Attributes to include</b>	<input type="text" value="LWY1 x"/> <input type="text" value="LWY2 x"/> <input type="text" value="LWY3 x"/> <input type="text" value="LWY4 x"/> <input type="text" value="MGY1 x"/>	<a href="#">preview student list</a>
<b>Priority01Attributes</b>	<input type="text" value="LWY3 x"/> <input type="text" value="LWY4 x"/>	<a href="#">preview student list</a>
<b>Priority02Attributes</b>	<input type="text" value="LWY1 x"/> <input type="text" value="LWY2 x"/> <input type="text" value="MGY1 x"/>	<a href="#">preview student list</a>
<b>Priority03Attributes</b>	<input type="text" value="Select Some Options"/>	<a href="#">preview student list</a>
<b>Priority04Attributes</b>	<input type="text" value="Select Some Options"/>	<a href="#">preview student list</a>

▼

SPRING 2017

Course Information

Manage Enrollment

Grades

First-Term Groups

Welcome, Caleb

Settings | Log off

Notifications

Change Requests

Change Log

+ New Change Request

📅 Scheduler

📄 Import Courses

💾 Save

💾 Save and Return to Classes

👤 Notify instructors

🗑️ Delete

🖨️ Print

📖 Course Syllabus

– ENROLLMENT:

Course Selection Category

open enrollment ▼

Maximum

150

☐ Display on web

– LOTTERY EXCEPTION:

Has Exception

☐

Overwrite Accepted and Waiting List

☐

Write to waiting list only

☐

Attributes to include

preview student list

Priority 01 Attributes

preview student list

Priority 02 Attributes

preview student list

Priority 03 Attributes

preview student list

The screenshot displays the CSDE School Choice Application and Student Assignment System interface. The top navigation bar includes 'SPRING 2017', 'Course Information', 'Manage Enrollment', 'Grades', and 'First-Term Groups'. A sidebar on the left contains links like 'All Courses', 'My Courses', 'Save', 'Submit to Registrar', 'Export To CSV', 'Notify Instructors', and 'Student Uploads'. The main content area shows a 'Registration Status' dropdown set to 'inactive, needs review'. Below this, a large heading reads '- ACCEPTED (84)'. A table lists students with columns for Student, DegreeType, Year, Bid, and Units. A dropdown menu is open for the first student, showing options: 'move to --', 'Awaiting Placement', 'Accepted', 'Waiting List', 'Denied', 'Declined', 'Dropped', 'Accepted, Awaiting Enrollment by Registrar', and 'move to --'.

## Training and Support to CSDE

We understand that the success of any digital system relies on users who are equipped with the tools and knowledge necessary to utilize it, and that while best practices in design and interface can do a lot to guide users where they need to go, complex workflows and operations often require a more hands-on approach. This is where training sessions and evergreen documentation become paramount.

Our implementation of SchoolChoice for CSDE will be unique to your bespoke requirements and needs. Therefore, our training approach will be tailored to your workflow and requirements. Instead of handing off a one-size-fits-all training manual. We repurpose components of past training and package it up with your audience in mind using your taxonomy and your language (e.g. operators, interdistrict Magnet Schools, Open Choice, CTECS, magnet, etc.)

Since we have a wealth of experience developing and delivering instructional design solutions, we have a team and a process that will allow us to prepare and deliver the training you need efficiently and effectively.

## Onsite in-person regional training methodology

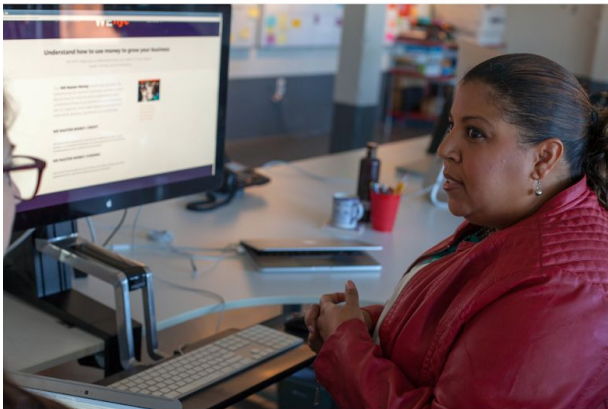
We have trained both small and large teams and will design a training solution to meet the specific needs of your operators, parent information center staff, CSDE/RSCO staff, and district staff. Our training solution will likely include system administration guides, evergreen digital videos which tour the system and describe its features, “training the trainers” workshops, and any additional remote training we deem necessary. In addition, as a baseline we always deliver a manual which includes best practices, guidelines, style-guides and instructions for using each of the three portals—school, parent, admin.

Our headquarters in Greenpoint, Brooklyn has ample space for training workshops and working sessions and has been used in this capacity to great effect, and we are also available to travel to Hartford for in person training and can always arrange remote training.

Our training methods are flexible and can be tailored to meet the needs of your staff. Generally, we offer high level onboarding sessions for the larger stakeholder group where we introduce the system and provide an overview of the core functionality. In addition, we provide documentation to support the onboarding experience for members to review post training sessions. Once the full team has had a baseline review we schedule subsequent smaller sessions by role/department. In our smaller focus groups we train staff on how the new tool supports their specific role and necessary tasks/workflows. We always train new users in a test production environment so that team members can click around freely without concern of making real, live changes to data. Whether done in person or remotely, we give team members the ability to follow along on their own to build user confidence.

We understand that all questions may not come up during the training session so in addition to providing training materials for teams to refer to, we maintain a line of communication as team members get familiar with the tool over time and find that having follow up sessions is usually required.





*User-testing and Training at our facility with Women Entrepreneurs for We.NYC*



## Ongoing 'online' training modules

We have a standing manual "SchoolChoice Guide", which is updated as features are added/edited. It outlines functionality and behaviors of the tools. We use screenshots of the tool and supporting copy to describe what different items support. We keep track of updates and reflect them in the manual so that at no matter what time staff members have materials at your disposal and can on-board new internal staff after the launch.

The public-facing view of our SchoolChoice product also includes built-in "coach-marks" that automatically on-board new users to orient them to the application process and introduction them the map-based directory of schools and the process for choosing and ranking school choices.

### Creating Pages (Backend)

38

*This is your page tree, where pages can be added, edited, nested, published, and edited. This screen allows you to:*

**View** how the page looks like on the frontend.

**Publish or unpublish** pages.

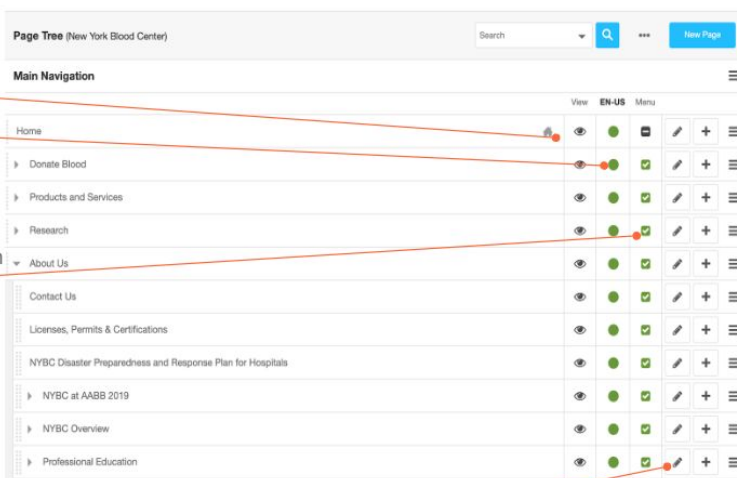
Green = published.  
Blue = edited but not published.  
Grey = not published.

**Include in main site navigation.** Green check mark means the page will appear in the main navigation. Black minus sign means it won't appear.

**Important notes:**

- Please double check if a page should or should not be in the menu, before publishing! Pages appear "in menu" by default.
- Subpages with menu option should checked will appear in the dropdowns.

**Edit page properties** with the pencil icon (page names, URL's, templates, metadescrptions, etc)



Select screen from New York Blood Center CMS Guide

# Train-the-Trainer Module

Our approach to the development of CSDE school operators will be based on extensive learning from previous train-the-trainer models in both domestic and international settings. To promote consistency, and fidelity of implementation we advocate for a shared workshop experience that integrates differentiated content for school and operator-level users working in different capacities, rather than separate workshops. This approach promotes a shared understanding of the underlying principles and strategies to be used, and invites cross-cohort collaboration and planning. By creating and supporting a community of practice within the facilitator group, the Open Choice district has a greater likelihood of sustaining a well-equipped and consistent staffing pool to support this tool.

## Preparation

Effective training requires advance preparation. Trainers will be acquainted with their material, make notes, and highlight what to focus and stress based on materials we provide in advance.

- Learning Objectives and Goals
- Expectation Management
- Training Materials
- Interactive Tasks

## Execution

A key principle is establishing a climate conducive to learning is to create an open and honest learning environment.

- Establish confidence and credibility
- Management and Rules
- Set the tone
- Speaking and visuals
- Facilitating Discussion

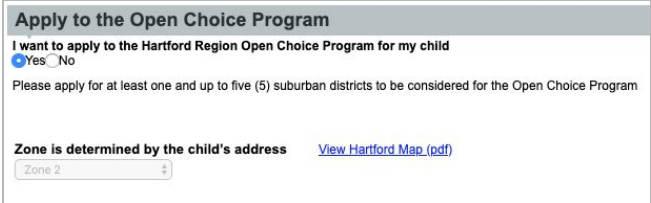
## Evaluation

In order to ensure participants are leaving feeling positive and prepared closing activities will summarize main points and allow for open discussion.

## B. Required Elements in the Proposal

### Work Plan

<b>April 2020</b> <i>Procurement &amp; Product Demonstration</i>	<p>If short-listed, we would take the opportunity to fully demonstrate the capabilities of Blenderbox SchoolChoice via a tour of all three portals for the New York City MySchools website.</p> <p>We'd also like the opportunity for CSDE to provide us with a tour of the current RSCO application workflows, especially any non-public or password-protected views that may give us insight into areas of overlap vs. areas of customization should we win the project.</p>
<b>May 2020</b> <i>Discovery, requirements gathering &amp; planning</i>	<p>We'll presume a swift transition from award to contract via the NASPO ("National Association of State Procurement Officials") Valuepoint for purchase of Cloud Solutions. Once a Purchase Order (PO) is in effect, we'll assign a Product Manager and coordinate a kickoff meeting to be followed by multiple workshops for requirements gathering and planning purposes.</p> <p>Presuming a May 1st start, we'll outline a project plan that runs from May through November 2020 that will include setup and configuration of our SchoolChoice engine with CSDE data and customizations that will be fully live and tested in time for planned marketing, outreach and training activities over the summer to culminate with launch by September 2020 during the back-to-school season.</p> <p>Discovery and Requirements Gathering will include stakeholder interviews and review of data and existing business workflows that will be captured in a series of business requirements documents (BRDs), that will cross-reference the needed configurations for Blenderbox SchoolChoice as it pertains to CSDE operations. For example, it will capture the demographic data dictionary needed for applications that are originated by parents or caregivers, the need for geo-coding and census tract data that correlates to Hartford area Socioeconomic status (SES), data for zoning and district information for each of the various school types and application processes, and information for rules and prioritizations relating to school pathway, siblings and staff.</p>
<b>June 2020</b> <i>Product install and configuration</i>	<p>Our cloud-based solution is hosted on scalable cloud-based Amazon AWS architecture. It uses RDS, EC2, S3, Cloudfront, Auto-Scaling Groups (ASG), and elastic load-balancing (ELB). We use Terraform to deploy infrastructure as configuration and will setup and install our SchoolChoice application to a UAT, Staging and Production environment in a new AWS VPC dedicated to CSDE.</p> <p>Once setup, we will initialize the tools in anticipation of the September launch (2020-2021 School Year) of School Choice</p>

	<p>applications for the 2021-2022 School Year. We will “seed” the database with all of your programs, operators, and schools, and initialize the three core admission workflows for CT technical high schools, magnet schools and Open Choice schools.</p> <p>By the end of June, you will have a clickable prototype of the parents portal, the school portal, and the administrator portal as we transition from the configuration phase to the customization phase.</p>
<b>July 2020</b> <i>Customizations &amp; Integrations, Planning and Preparation for Training</i>	<p>Armed with the business requirements documentation developed in May, we will organize our engineering team and begin a sprint-based approach to implementing the various features that will be extended or customized for CSDE RSCO workflows.</p> <p>Specific known points of customization based on our conversations to date include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• customizing application questions to include questions about education level, ethnicity, language, etc. and configuring our question tools so that your team can manage and add more questions as needed.</li> <li>• adding business logic related to geo-coding addresses entered by guardians and mapping them to census tract data that can be imported and managed by CSDE (which will map to SES tiers)</li> <li>• adding logic to map zone data to addresses (e.g. logical implementation of the 4 hartford zones (which are pre-populated based on geo-coded address in the current application.</li> </ul>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementing logic for school pathway, siblings, staff prioritizations as well as workflow for administrative verification after applications close.</li> <li>• Setup and implementation of user roles and permissions. This may include pre-populating or importing users or setup and configuration of an SSO solution (SchoolChoice supports SAML, SOAP, LDAP, OATH, and OpenID).</li> <li>• Planning and consideration for multi-language functionality. (This may entail a phased approach based on CSDE resources, capacity and availability).</li> <li>• By far, the biggest unknown area will be related to integration and planning for integration with central registration and operator Student Information Systems such as PowerSchools,</li> </ul>

	<p>Infinite Campus and Rediker. It is anticipated that this will likely entail a near-term and long-term phased approach that can be a workstream that runs parallel to the training and September launch date. The business goal will be to move CSDE closer to real-time data during the offer/waitlist and acceptance phase while reducing redundancies and mitigating human errors.</p>
<p><b>August 2020</b>  <i>Training Sessions,  Testing, Build/Launch  Preparations</i></p>	<p>The month of August will parallel track ongoing customizations with delivery of face-to-face, remote, online and train the trainer modules for each of your SchoolChoice user types (Operators, Counselors, CSDE staff etc.) as planned during the May discovery and planning sessions.</p> <p>We will also be conducting scheduled security, accessibility, performance and vulnerability testing against the future production environment. The finalized tools will be opened for User Acceptance Testing (UAT) with your team, and we'll begin preparations for launch including setup for whatever domain you'd like to use for these white-labelled tools. (e.g. <a href="https://rsco.ct.gov">rsco.ct.gov</a>, schoolchoice.ct.gov, myschools.ct.gov or other).</p>
<p><b>September 2020</b>  <i>Ongoing  support/maintenance &amp;  Development</i></p>	<p>With back-to-school, we'll be coordinating the actual date for opening the application and shifting our team's role from onboarding and configuration to the day-to-day support role as a managed service provider. We'll introduce you to our 24/7 helpdesk platform, while also continuing any necessary post-launch development and customization activity such as the aforementioned long-term Operator Student Information System integration plans.</p>
<p><b>October - 2021</b></p>	<p>Our team's support and collaboration with your team will settle into a natural cadence that will ebb and flow in accordance with your seasonal workflow. Year one will likely require some more up-front support and assistance as you move into the GAP application review phase and then into lottery, waitlists and placement.</p>

## Component/Module Sections

The following section itemizes each of the requirements outlined in your RFP and denotes how our SchoolChoice product meets those requirements and whether the particular requirement will require customization during our onboarding and implementation phase.

- ✓ = Out-of-Box Functionality SchoolChoice Functionality
- </> = Requires customization during implementation phase
- ! = Needs more information during discovery
- ◆ = Unique SchoolChoice Value Proposition!

## Technical Requirements and Security

<b>TR.1</b>	Create a system that may be accessed and operated from multiple end-user platforms and devices using multiple web browsers and commonly used operating systems with the capacity to handle high usage.	✓	SchoolChoice supports all of the latest supported versions of the major browsers, Chrome, Microsoft Edge, Safari and Firefox.  SchoolChoice is hosted on Amazon AWS infrastructure on scalable architecture using an Elastic Load Balancer with auto-scaling groups as well as a CDN which allows it to easily handle spikes in traffic and usage.
<b>TR.2</b>	Provide on-line help options that can be updated on an ongoing basis as needed.	✓	SchoolChoice comes with a suite of “coach-marks” that help on-board parents. All of the coach-marks as well as additional help-text are customizable and administrable from the back-end administrative tools.
<b>TR.3</b>	Employ high quality graphic user interface (GUI) tested for usability according to industry best practices and that is Section 508 compliant (accessibility compliance).	◆	SchoolChoice (as demonstrated via MySchools.nyc), is fully 508 and WCAG 2.0 Level AA compliant. One of our key differentiators with other online systems is our attention to the high-quality design of a human-centric GUI that can help parents and guardians regardless of language, background, or socioeconomic status.
<b>TR.4</b>	Leverage role-based user access to system functionalities and available data.	✓	The SchoolChoice platform has been implemented with an open source framework (Python and Django), the comes with a robust user authentication and permissioning infrastructure which has allows us to finely tune access and permissions to specific features in each of the portals.
<b>TR.5</b>	Develop data schemas with consideration for CSDE’s existing functional specifications.	</>	This requirement will be covered during the implementation phase. We’ll go over all requirements during discovery and then adapt SchoolChoice accordingly as overviewed under the work plan referenced above.

<b>TR.6</b>	Provide functionality at state, district, school and program levels.	✓	SchoolChoice allows a flexible grouping of “schools” and “programs” which can be further grouped by “districts” that can easily map to CSDE’s needs.
<b>TR.7</b>	Enhance data quality and accuracy by controlling for data conformity (e.g., phone number formats, dates) in accordance to industry best practices and CSDE approved formats.	✓	Our SchoolChoice platform already conforms to industry best practices for standardizing data formats for numbers, currency, address verification, internationalization, timezones, and both front-end and back-end validation rules which are built into the open source React front-end and Django back-end that SchoolChoice is built upon.
<b>TR.8</b>	Rely on common printing solutions such as Adobe Acrobat or Nitro for printing functionality and exportable reports in multiple formats.	✓	SchoolChoice offers most data views for export as PDF, CSV, or XLS format. All offer letters are controlled by a master template that is 100% editable from within the administrative tools and dynamically and securely exposed to end-users in PDF format. (See MySchools.nyc for examples).
<b>TR.9</b>	Meet all technical, security, web accessibility and privacy standards in effect with the CSDE at the time of implementation, including but not limited to Section 508 and FERPA.	✓	Our solution already meets or exceeds security, accessibility and privacy standards including FERPA for institutions such as Yale Law School and the city of New York and should be well equipped to also meet the standards for CSDE.
<b>TR.10</b>	Support integration with a single-sign-on authentication and provide role-based authorization controls to different aspects of the application/lottery system. (For example: manager for multiple magnet schools should be able to sign in once and toggle access between locations.)	✓	SchoolChoice offers SAMP, SOAP, LDAP, OATH and OpenID SSO implementations. The School portal is also capable of supporting access to a configurable number of schools including the ability to toggle among multiple schools. (See demo of Family Welcome Center permissions or District permissions with MySchools.nyc)
<b>TR.11</b>	Meet industry standard for accessing all browsers and platforms.	✓	SchoolChoice already meets the standards for all latest supported browsers including Chrome, Safari, Microsoft Edge, and Firefox.
<b>TR.12</b>	Require necessary data elements to be compatible to CSDE formatting.	</>	This requirement will be covered during the implementation phase. Our engineers are quite adept at ETL and various other methods for mapping and integrating data across multiple platforms. (SchoolChoice uses Unicode but integrate with NYC data that is encoded in Latin-1)



<b>TR.13</b>	Provide error messages that are user-friendly and advise of possible corrections. Ensure master list of all error messages and rules is compiled for CSDE review.	✓	All of the messaging in SchoolChoice is configurable and manageable from the administrative tools and includes the ability to manage all error messages and help-text in one or more languages. (For NYC, all help text and error messages are provided in 10 languages, two of which are right-to-left (RTL)).
<b>TR.14</b>	Maintain computerized audit trail of any user access (both read and write) to student application/placement records and user change logs for application and placement changes. Log must be printable and contain user name, date/time stamps, and purpose for access.	✓	SchoolChoice maintains an active log of every user-action for all student and family records including applications and admission information. This log is complimented by both an application-level log as well as a system and server log that is managed on an ELK Stack: Elasticsearch, Logstash, Kibana that can be used for detailed forensic analysis and reporting.
<b>TR.15</b>	Ensure document repository employs a data directory schema to organize files.	</>	SchoolChoice includes a document repository that can be used on either the Parent, School or Admin side. We can configure a directory schema customized for CSDE's requirements during the implementation phase.
<b>TR.16</b>	Require FERPA confidentiality statement acknowledgement upon each sign-in to the system.	</>	We can customize and configure the login workflow to include your terms and conditions including required FERPA confidentiality during the implementation phase.
<b>TR.17</b>	Printing options should allow for standard printing, printing to secure/password protected PDF for FERPA compliant emailing, and options for translating all required documents into other languages per regulatory requirements.	✓	Our SchoolChoice platform already offers a variety of configurations for standard printing as well as secure protected access to PDF's for compliant emailing. NYC's offer emails link back to MySchools.nyc where user's must be authenticated before accessing secure downloadable PDFs. We'd be happy to demo these features to you in MySchools.nyc.
<b>TR.18</b>	A multilevel reporting component must fulfill several requirements. System-wide reports, Operator and Open Choice District Aggregate Reports, School Reports, Data Cleaning Reports, Compliance Monitoring and Indicator Reports, Student-level current and longitudinal reports.	</>	A flexible number of reports can be configured at the outset of the project during the implementation phase. Reports can be permissioned by group or user and tied to Operator, Open Choice or District Aggregate as defined by your requirements during the discovery phase.



<b>TR.19</b>	Ensure nightly access by CSDE to all application/lottery data in the form of a sql server or equivalent view or download.	</>	We can configure automated or manual exports as required. The database is a PostgreSQL database that we can even grant read-only SQL access to if desired. It can also replicate or sync with an on-premise SQL Server if desired. This can all be discussed and planned during discovery and implementation.
<b>TR.20</b>	Guarantee the application/lottery system is interoperable on a nearly real-time basis with existing CSDE DM system.	!	We'll need to audit and plan for integration with CSDE DM which will be covered during initial discovery and requirements gathering.
<b>TR.21</b>	Application/Lottery system must interface with Operator and Open Choice District Powerschool and related data systems.	</>	SchoolChoice provides an out-of-box REST API which is easily configured and can be secured depending upon your exact needs. We can also develop schedule jobs for import and ETL capabilities as required during the discovery and implementation phase.
<b>TR.22</b>	Allow families to use an email address or mobile number as their username	✓	SchoolChoice Users can already use either an email address or mobile number as their username.
<b>TR.23</b>	Mobile compatibility so that parents/students can submit applications and view lottery results on a range of devices, including smartphones	✓	SchoolChoice is already a 100% mobile optimized "responsive" solution that works well on desktop, tablet and mobile.
<b>TR.24</b>	A system that is SSL encrypted to ensure student data is not transmitted unencrypted or housed on non-secure servers.	✓	SchoolChoice is designed to encrypt all data in transit and at rest. The solution is hosted on Amazon AWS infrastructure and leverage Amazon Certificates for the latest secure TLSv1.2 SSL implementation.
<b>TR.25</b>	Permits vendor customization to reflect district colors, logos, and processes.	</>	SchoolChoice is 100% white-labelled and can be customized to reflect CSDE and District colors, logos and processes as needed during the discovery and implementation phase.
<b>TR.26</b>	Exchanges information nightly, periodically through the day, instantaneously or a combination of these processes.	!	Need more information about this requirement. SchoolChoice is available 24/7, can integrate with certain systems in real-time and uses a Distributed Task Queue called Celery to manage a series of scheduled processes in the background.
<b>TR.27</b>	Houses form data within the system and is capable of generating reports	✓	SchoolChoice has built-in reporting capabilities that are highly customizable using the Django/Python framework

	from that data without the need for a separate report generation product.		and does not require any offline or 3rd party reporting tools such as SAP Crystal Reports.
<b>TR.28</b>	Provides for an unlimited number of online forms.	✓	There is no limit to the number of applications or questions that can be configured/added to a particular application built-into the system.
<b>TR.29</b>	Allows any field to be established as a "required" field as designated by the CSDE.	✓	Required fields are fully manageable via the administrative tools.
<b>TR.30</b>	Offers conditional logic by showing or hiding fields based on certain conditions.	</>	The application process can accommodate this logic but it needs to be initially setup and configured during the discovery and implementation phase.
<b>TR.31</b>	Disseminates CSDE, operator, Open Choice District documents as PDF files to families	✓	SchoolChoice offers a robust capability for both public and private documents as well as a mechanism for notifications, alerts, and emails that link back to system documents.
<b>TR.32</b>	Allows for a variety of data fields – text fields, date fields, radio buttons, and dropdown menus – on the application that are programmable and changeable by CSDE	✓	SchoolChoice offers a variety of data fields that are all completely customizable by the administrative tools.
<b>TR.33</b>	Protect an applicant's application information from unauthorized access, use, modification, disclosure or destruction in accordance with State of Connecticut retention policies, and state and federal student privacy laws	✓	We take security very seriously. Our SchoolChoice platform has been rigorously designed, vetted, and tested to incorporate modern best practices for security, compliance and municipal, state, and federal student privacy considerations.
<b>TR.34</b>	Produce adaptive interfaces that allow for the collection of data and information to and from the following data systems: CSDE's DM System; the American Community Survey and other data collections from the United States Census Bureau; operator and district PowerSchool	!	SchoolChoice has powerful REST API capabilities and can also integrate with numerous external and 3rd party data providers, however, this will require discovery, planning and consideration during the implementation phase.

	records and other related software programs.		
<b>TR.35</b>	Reformats data provided by families via online forms into a consistent format prior to loading back into PowerSchool SMS.	</>	All data in SchoolChoice is available for export and fields can be mapped or translated accordingly however this requires planning and configuration during discovery and implementation.
<b>TR.36</b>	Provide sufficient capacity to manage approximately 20,000 applicants per year for placement in approximately 4,000-5,000 seats available in interdistrict magnet schools, Hartford and suburban school districts through the Open Choice program, and 3 CTECS technical schools.	✓	There will be no problem at all managing 20,000 applicants for 4,000-5,000 seats across the various programs available for CSDE. SchoolChoice is set up on highly scalable architecture on Amazon AWS and the NYC implementation already handles over 400,000 applications to more than 3,000 programs annually.
<b>TR.37</b>	Customizable features in the application to provide narrative explanations for families. Include capability to add explanatory text while hovering on an icon in the application or other symbol.	✓	SchoolChoice offers a full suite of “coach-marks” as well as tooltips, help text, and additional messaging that can all be easily administered via the administrative tools.
<b>TR.38</b>	Assign unique identifiers to each applicant and appropriately safeguard student information in accordance with CSDE policies and state and federal student privacy laws.	✓	SchoolChoice creates unique application and lottery ID using a python library called UUID (Universal Unique Identifier) which is used to securely manage and administrate the matching, sorting, ranking and lottery processes.
<b>TR.39</b>	Using the address provided on the application, identify whether an applicant is eligible for any geographic-based preferences, and attaching any preferences to the particular school selection in the database.	✓	SchoolChoice uses a combination of Google Maps API, and Address Verification Service (AVS) as well as MapBox to automatically geocode all user-provided addresses which can then be coded to pre-calculate eligibility, prioritization and district for use throughout the application process.

<b>TR.40</b>	Preventing duplicate applications, and allowing for the screening and deletion of duplicate applications .	✓	SchoolChoice has a number of design accommodations to prevent duplicate applications but also has full administrative functionality for performing “de-dupe” workflows.
<b>TR.41</b>	Geocode each applicant by residential address and match census data based on geocoding.	</>	SchoolChoice already geocodes each applicant by residential address, we simply need to configure a mechanism for uploading census data during our discovery and implementation phase.
<b>TR.42</b>	Assign each applicant an SES indicator based on census data and criteria established by CSDE.	</>	If you provide us with the SES indicators and the business logic, we'll configure the mappings to census tract data during the discovery and implementation phase.
<b>TR.43</b>	Captures electronic signature on application and placement forms without the purchase of additional hardware	✓	SchoolChoice has a configurable system for final submission that allows you to customize an agreement and official attestation before a guardian submits their application.
<b>TR.44</b>	Offers password self-reset functionality	✓	SchoolChoice sense an email with a link back to reset passwords as needed.
<b>TR.45</b>	Provides data validation at the data entry point to ensure accuracy and proper format of all data collected.	✓	SchoolChoice offers a robust and configurable suite of front-end (React) and back-end (Django) data validation.
<b>TR.46</b>	Uses United States Postal validation	✓	SchoolChoice can integrate with any AVS service. It comes with Google Maps API but it can also be configured with other AVS service providers.

## Parent/Guardian Application Portal

<b>PP.1</b>	Provides a unique sign-on ID for each family with secure user name and password.	✓	The SchoolChoice platform supports a primary guardian role with a unique sign-on.
<b>PP.2</b>	Allow families to use an email address or mobile number as their username.	✓	The platform supports using an email address or mobile number.
<b>PP.3</b>	Allow families to use a single account to submit applications for multiple children and to multiple schools from a mobile device or computer.	✓	The SchoolChoice platform supports a single account for multiple students and also supports applying to multiple schools across multiple admission processes from mobile, tablet or desktop.
<b>PP.4</b>	Allow families 24/7 secure access to the application portal.	✓	As a cloud based web application, the application is secure and available 24/7.
<b>PP.5</b>	Provides a user-interface that includes simple form fields, check boxes, radio buttons, with one-click submission upon completion of required fields	✓	The application is intuitive and uses simple form-fields with a one-click submission process at the end of the process. We can demonstrate the application workflow with MySchools.nyc upon request.
<b>PP.6</b>	Provides a parent portal “stop, exit and return” functionality with auto save.	✓	The application allows stop, exit and return and automatically saves your progress. It also includes the ability to save favorite programs as you browse the directory to programs and schools.
<b>PP.7</b>	Ability to edit applications and re-submit prior to key deadlines. Provide an alert reminder to complete unfinished application prior to deadline.	✓	The SchoolChoice platform has settings for key dates, includes reminders and notifications, and allows Parents and Guardians to edit and re-submit their application up until the designated deadline.
<b>PP.8</b>	Allows parents to save and/or print a copy of the forms after submission in pdf	✓	The SchoolChoice platform allows parents to save and/or print a copy of forms after submission and also send an email “receipt” upon successful submission of an application.
<b>PP.9</b>	Allow for required fields that parents must complete prior to submission.	✓	The SchoolChoice platform allows a configurable number of fields and additional questions that can be denoted as required or optional as needed.

<b>PP.10</b>	Provides real-time support to parents using the online forms.	!	SchoolChoice includes real-time support in the form of coach-marks, help text, tool-tips and links to materials but it does not include a facility like "live chat." It can be configured to support helpdesk requests directly from the application.
<b>PP.11</b>	Utilize prompts to guide applicants through the application and placement process, from information gathering, through application, placement outcome, placement/waitlist response, and registration.	✓	The SchoolChoice platform includes "coach-marks" as well as prompts and reminders that guide users through the application process.
<b>PP.12</b>	Provide an interactive map for end-users that provides an interactive visual framework for educational options based on applicant's residence, grade configuration, theme interest. For Hartford residences, the system should display both school choice options and neighborhood school options based on applicant's home address and grade configuration.	✓	The SchoolChoice platform features a map for both mobile and desktop that provides a highly interactive experience showcasing available opportunities, different types of schools, as well as district boundaries with the parent's home address clearly marked.
<b>PP.13</b>	Allow families to rank their preferences and track application status, respond to offers, and fill out or upload additional enrollment forms.	✓	In SchoolChoice, Families are able to rank their preferences for a configurable number of programs/schools (for NYC it is 12, the current CSDE application is 5), and also supports uploading additional forms and responding to offers.
<b>PP.14</b>	Mobile compatibility so that parents/students can submit applications and view lottery results on a range of devices, including smartphones.	✓	The SchoolChoice parent portal is 100% mobile responsive, even in multiple languages and also WCAG compliant.
<b>PP.15</b>	Individual parent/student users able to select school choices and rank them in preferred order	✓	The SchoolChoice application supports school choice ranking by an easy-to-use drag and drop interface.
<b>PP.16</b>	School choice information and application/lottery placement must be	◆	The SchoolChoice application supports a configurable number of languages. All navigation and interface taxonomy is 100% configurable in each language from

	accessible in multiple languages.		the administrative tools and it even supports right-to-left (RTL) languages as alternate character sets such as russian, chinese and arabic. The NYC implementation of MySchools.nyc is 100% available in 10 different languages.
<b>PP.17</b>	All information is available in multiple language options and as a completely mirrored site (Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, etc.)	✓	SchoolChoice supports availability of all content in multiple languages which can all be managed directly from within the administrative tools. Translation services are not included in the scope of this agreement, but we can refer capable partners for translation.
<b>PP.18</b>	Provides a security feature to insure only designated parents/guardians are able to access student information	✓	SchoolChoice is highly secure with measures and protocols in place to ensure that only designated parents/guardians have access to student information.
<b>PP.19</b>	Provide families/applicants with regular alerts and communication regarding outreach efforts, application information and updates, placement status and details, waitlist updates, and other correspondence	✓	The SchoolChoice platform has scheduled and manual notification capabilities. Messages can be broadcast to individuals, groups, or all users within the platform or via email.
<b>PP.20</b>	Identify local (for Hartford-resident students) and choice options based on applicant grade, theme and residence.	</>	SchoolChoice options are entirely configurable and can be shown or hidden based on a robust matrix of eligibility and prioritization requirements. Exact requirements related to grade, theme and residence will need to be configured during the discovery and implementation phase.
<b>PP.21</b>	Allow parents to access real-time information regarding the number of seats available by school, program and grade; the number of applicants by school, program and grade; the selection preferences that are available by school and program; prior data on placement percentages by school, by program, by grade.	✓	The SchoolChoice platform includes the ability to display real-time information about the number of seats available by school, program and grade as well as the number of applicants by school, program and grade. Prior data on placement percentages can be displayed within the directory via the administrative interface.
<b>PP.22</b>	Allow parents to view local district and school	✓	The SchoolChoice platform includes a highly robust search, sort and filtering mechanism. Please see a



	choice options for their student's grade and sort such information in various ways, including by grade, by alpha order, by theme, and by geography.		demonstration of MySchools.nyc to see the various ways school programs can be sorted and searched.
<b>PP.23</b>	Allows families to respond on-line to placement/waitlist information and provide alerts to remind families when responses are coming due.	✓	The SchoolChoice platform includes the ability for families to respond on-line to placement and waitlist information as well as provide alerts and reminders.
<b>PP.24</b>	Allows families to register on-line for enrollment at assigned school and upload residency documents for proof of residency.	</>	SchoolChoice applications can be figured for various required files such as residency documents and proof of residency. These features can be configured during the discovery and implementation phase.
<b>PP.25</b>	Ability to edit applications and re-submit prior to key deadlines.	✓	The SchoolChoice platform has the ability to set internal and external controls for dates and deadlines as well as permissions that allow applications to be edited and re-submitted up until key deadlines.
<b>PP.26</b>	Offers single entry for all data points	!	Need more clarity on this requirement. It is presumed that SchoolChoice will be the "single source of truth" as first point of entry for intake of applications from families which is later validated and/or reconciled with one or more back-end Student Information Systems.



## Administrator Portal

<b>AP.1</b>	Customizable user interface that allows for branding of the overall initiative for marketing, recruitment, outreach and information.	</>	The SchoolChoice platform is 100% white-labelled. We will setup and configure the platform with CSDE branding during the discovery and implementation phase.
<b>AP.2</b>	Provide a data repository for monitoring outreach to families and data tracking to match outreach with application data, placement, registration, and enrollment.	</>	The SchoolChoice platform can be configured to connect with a 3rd party tool or CRM to monitor, track and manage outreach to families. Such a system is in place for NYC's Pre-K and 3-K outreach initiatives which we can demo upon request.
<b>AP.3</b>	Customizable and easy-to-navigate website where families can research and access information about school choice options and the RSCO application/lottery process. Allow CSDE and Operator/Administrative Users to customize website and update as needed on a real-time basis.	✓	The SchoolChoice platform is not only easy-to-navigate, but also includes the ability for authorized users to "impersonate" families in order to easily help them through the process. It also includes a robust suite of administrative tools that will allow CSDE and Operator/Administrative users to customize content and update relevant information in real-time.
<b>AP.4</b>	Track usage by families of website access for interest monitoring.	✓	The SchoolChoice platform includes full auditing and tracking information and is also configured with Google Analytics and Google Tag Manager to facilitate customization and tracking of key metrics and behavior patterns throughout the entire application workflow.
<b>AP.5</b>	Provide an interactive communication vehicle to allow CSDE, School Choice Operators/Open Choice Districts, and individual schools to communicate marketing and recruitment information, receive RSVPs for outreach events, confirm application receipt, update application status, communicate offers and waitlist status, and respond to placement and waitlist information.	</>	The SchoolChoice platform can be configured to track and record "expressions of interest" as well as scheduled events (this is used for scheduling testing in New York City for the Specialized High School Exams). It provides application receipts and notifications about offers and waitlist statuses. These workflows need to be defined during discovery and configured during implementation.

<b>AP.6</b>	Customizable application that allows CSDE to adapt and change application from year to year and during the course of the application period, as needed.	✓	The SchoolChoice platform allows full control and management of each application instance as needed from year to year.
<b>AP.7</b>	Allows for an unlimited number of administrative users	✓	There is no limit to the number of users. (The MySchools.nyc platform has over 3,000 users when including guidance counselors, principals, and other administrative staff).
<b>AP.8</b>	Accommodates different types of users with different access entitlements, including central administrators with "super admin" access.	✓	The SchoolChoice platform includes a robust authentication and user permissions engine that allows finite permissioning down to the field and model level across each core component of the system.
<b>AP.9</b>	Provide unrestricted access for the CSDE to all data in the system and restricted access for operators and local school districts based on parameters specified by the CSDE.	✓	The SchoolChoice system will be dedicated to CSDE and we can grant full access to the underlying SQL database (PostgreSQL). We can also grant permissions to operators and school districts based upon parameters specified by CSDE.
<b>AP.10</b>	Provides school/operator administrators with the ability to make limited, defined edits to applications according to defined rules to verify specific preferences.	</>	The SchoolChoice platform can be configured to allow school/operator administrators to have access and the ability to edit specific fields. It can also be configured to hide/show specific fields according to permissions. This will need to be defined and configured during discovery and implementation.
<b>AP.11</b>	Allows applicants to indicate that an applicant is eligible for a specific school preference, and allows school/operator administrators with permissions to approve or deny eligibility for the preference.	</>	The SchoolChoice platform can be configured to allow school/operator administrators to approve or deny eligibility for specific school criteria. This must be defined and configured during discovery and implementation.
<b>AP.12</b>	Allow linking of sibling applications in the database if submitted by the same parent user to allow for sibling preference at applicable schools.	✓	The SchoolChoice platform fully supports family or operator administered sibling applications which can be tied to sibling eligibility and/or prioritization rules for lottery and matching. It also includes a complete module for sibling verification.

<b>AP.13</b>	Interface with CSDE student information systems to pre-fill online forms and to compare year-to-year data changes.	</>	The SchoolChoice platform can be configured to pre-populate as much information as available. For MySchools.nyc, there is no information for new/transfer and 3-K/Pre-K and Kindergarten students, however all other students have their information pre-filled in from New York City's student information system. This integration will require discovery, planning, and configuration during the implementation phase and depends upon the availability of information from other CSDE systems.
<b>AP.14</b>	Automatically flag records based on pre-defined criteria, such as a change in address.	✓	The SchoolChoice platform can be configured to allow triggers for specific changes such as a change in address.
<b>AP.15</b>	Allow administrative users to manually flag records to indicate missing information, proof of residency, etc.	✓	The SchoolChoice administrative view allows users to easily search and sort records in order to run reports and flag records that have missing information.
<b>AP.16</b>	Allows on-demand email/text communications to groups of families based on specified criteria.	✓	The SchoolChoice platform has a complete messaging and notification system that allows the scheduling and sending of communications to groups of families based on specific criteria.
<b>AP.17</b>	Allows administrators to generate correspondence to all families, specific groups of families, or individuals based on specified criteria.	✓	Same as above, the platform features a complete messaging system and messages can be triggered by system events or scheduled on demand.
<b>AP.18</b>	Provide an alert system to communicate with all authorized users regarding changes and updates to application and placement records.	</>	Alerts can be configured based on business logic which must be reviewed during discovery and implementation.
<b>AP.19</b>	Allow administrative users to be able to create their own communication templates and add them to the system library	✓	Same as above, the platform features a complete messaging system with templates that can have dynamic fields and can be customized in any language.
<b>AP.20</b>	Provides an unlimited number of pre-defined report forms on applications, demographics, placements, compliance	</>	There is no limit to the number of pre-defined reports that can be configured, however they must be reviewed and configured during the discovery and implementation phase.

	and other relevant data points.		
<b>AP.21</b>	Provide 24-hour access for an unlimited number of users to access applications.	✓	As a cloud-based application with scalable infrastructure, there are no imposed limit to the number of users or applications and the system is available 24/7.
<b>AP.22</b>	Provide an alert system to communicate with applicants regarding changes and updates to the application status of individual applicants as well as updates/changes regarding applications, placement processes, and/or marketing/outreach.	✓	The SchoolChoice platform features a complete messaging, alert, and notification system that can be tied to trigger events and/or scheduled and broadcast to all users, specific groups, or users based on specific filters.
<b>AP.23</b>	Provide variable-level edit checks and data cleaning reports for the purpose of identifying potential inconsistencies and errors in data to ensure data quality and accuracy	✓	The SchoolChoice platform features comprehensive filtering, sorting, reporting and can also be easily downloaded as a CSV for XLS files to aid in offline checks and data-cleaning. It also supports re-import of cleaned data.
<b>AP.24</b>	Monitor application data on a real-time basis.	✓	The system is a live system and all three portals (parents, school/operator, administrative), are in sync with live real-time data at all times.
<b>AP.25</b>	Allow CSDE to specify lottery protocols, placement preferences and weighted priorities, sorting orders, and other algorithms for placing applicants to the RSCO lottery.	◆	<p>The SchoolChoice platform is arguably one of the most robust implementations of a rules engine and lottery matching algorithm available on the market today.</p> <p>The rules engine allows an infinite number of complex criteria to govern both eligibility and prioritization of applicants and can be tied to any data field in the system. It goes well beyond simple age, grade, and zone to potentially include equity and diversity metrics such as SES, ELL, FRL, IEP, SWD, and any other dimension that you care to add to the system and configure.</p> <p>The SchoolChoice rules engine is one of the primary value propositions of our product!</p>
<b>AP.26</b>	Allow authorized administrators to set, modify and update the number of available/open seats by school, by grade, and by other specified criteria, throughout the	✓	Seat availability is entirely administrable by users with proper access credentials by user, group, school/operator and administrator role.

	application, placement, and waitlist process.		
<b>AP.27</b>	Allow authorized administrators to view applications and application data, filtering by grade, school, SES status and other criteria for groups of students and individual applicants.	✓	<p>The SchoolChoice platform offers a robust matrix of permissions that allow you to turn on and off field level data for specific groups of users.</p> <p>For example, for New York City, sending schools can see specific data such as SES, and Students w/ Disabilities information such as whether a student requires specific accommodations or inclusive teaching aids. Receiving schools when viewing the same applications cannot see this demographic information until after the lottery/waitlist and acceptance period is finalized.</p>
<b>AP.28</b>	Provide built-in, heavy usage reports based on input from CSDE and various data points, including applicant data and lottery data. Allow CSDE to customize reports for current data and historical data.	</>	Specific reports will need to be defined during discovery and configured during the implementation phase.
<b>AP.29</b>	Allow administrators to customize communications to all applicants, groups of applicants and individual students regarding the application, lottery, placements, waitlists and registrations.	✓	Same as above, the platform features a complete messaging system with templates that can be sent to specific groups or all applicants manually, scheduled, or triggered.
<b>AP.30</b>	Enable CSDE staff, operators and Open Choice districts to generate real-time, readable and easily accessed reports to monitor applications, placements, communications, waitlists, and marketing/outreach information.	✓	The SchoolChoice platform includes a series of “dashboards” for CSDE staff, operators, and Open Choice districts that allow them to easily access, monitor and report on current applications, placements and waitlists.
<b>AP.31</b>	Allow administrators to send customizable communications to parents based on the communication preferences parents selected in the	</>	Communication preferences and customizable communications need to be reviewed during discovery and configured during the implementation phase. We'll need examples of the type of communications required.

	application/profile documents, including communications via email and/or text .		
<b>AP.32</b>	Monitor the application process on a real time basis and provide Open Choice districts, participating technical schools, and magnet school operators information and reports on the number of seats that have been declared for the choice school by school and grade; overall number of applicants by school and grade; selection and school preferences of each applicant; the number of applicants for the choice school by grade; census data by applicant and/or block group; self-reported data, and other demographic information of applicants in the aggregate and by school, by grade, and by census tract.	◆	<p>This capability is core to the SchoolChoice platform. The School Portal gives this level of access and information and adjusts based on the application lifecycle to show current applicants, and later available seats, waitlists and accepted offers. It will also be set up to hide/show various information such as age, grade, district, zone, census tract and SES as configured for each school type, group, and user and adjust according to application workflow states.</p> <p>This robust workflow permissioning is another core value proposition of the SchoolChoice platform!</p>
<b>AP.33</b>	Provide data reports for analyzing data regarding application trends, including characteristics relative to acceptances, declines, applications, SES status, and other relevant information.	</>	This type of reporting will need to be outlined and configured during discovery and implementation. At all times you have the ability to export all data (and or connect directly via SQL), in order to continue offline analysis.
<b>AP.34</b>	Export applicant and placement data to Excel.	✓	Virtually all data in the system can be exported to CSV or XLS with property permissions and configuration.
<b>AP.35</b>	Provide audit trail for any changes to applications, placements, waitlists, registrations and enrollments.	✓	The SchoolChoice platform comes with a comprehensive logging system in order to provide detailed forensics and logging for every action that happens to a student/family record and/or application.
<b>AP.36</b>	Allow CSDE to assign applicants an SES indicator based on criteria	</>	Business requirements and data will need to be provided during discovery and implementation to setup this functionality.



	set by CSDE and census tract data.		
<b>AP.37</b>	Customizable placement and waitlist system. Able to run student assignment algorithm based on highly customizable rules and prioritizations, including census data, self-reported data, applicant residence, school/program preferences, and other factors.	◆	<p>The SchoolChoice platform includes waitlist functionality and is arguably one of the most robust implementations of a rules engine and lottery matching algorithm available on the market today.</p> <p>The rules engine allows an infinite number of complex criteria to govern both eligibility and prioritization of applicants and can be tied to any data field in the system. It goes well beyond simple age, grade, and zone to potentially include equity and diversity metrics such as SES, ELL, FRL, IEP, SWD, and any other dimension that you care to add to the system and configure.</p> <p>The SchoolChoice rules engine is one of the primary value propositions of our product!</p>
<b>AP.38</b>	Assign applicants to SES tiers and allow sorting and ranking algorithms customizable by school, by grade, and by placement round.	✓	See above, this functionality is core to the system and includes the ability to customize and configure eligibility, prioritization, and ranking by any criteria required.
<b>AP.39</b>	Able to run various simulations prior to the actual running of the lottery and waitlist.	✓	The SchoolChoice platform includes the ability to run a “match iteration” at any point, even with incomplete data. These match iterations can then be viewed or downloaded allowing administrators to perform multiple “dry runs” or “simulations” of results before picking on to become the “finalized” result which then kicks off the process of generating offers and notifications. We can demonstrate this functionality with the MySchools.nyc system.
<b>AP.40</b>	Able to allocate placements in accordance with the established algorithm and protocols and generate parent communication about placement results.	✓	<p>The rules engine and matching algorithm are a key component and value proposition of the SchoolChoice platform. Once a match is finalized the system generates “offer letters” and parent communications can be scheduled. The parent portal can then be opened up to show results at the scheduled time.</p> <p>For New York City, the day we release High School offers the highest traffic day of the year for MySchools as 87,000 parents and guardians log on to the system at the same time to see their offers.</p>
<b>AP.41</b>	Able to manage an ongoing waitlist and late applicant pool for placement opportunities as they become available.	</>	The SchoolChoice platform includes full waitlist functionality as well as rolling (late) admission capabilities. This will need to be configured to your business rules during discovery and implementation.

<b>AP.42</b>	Capacity to manage waitlist data using the same business rules as applied to lottery applications so that applicants are slotted onto the correct place on the waitlist and status is updated in real-time.	◆	<p>This is the precise functionality for the New York City schools waitlist process. Waitlists use the same business rules and applicants are placed in queue according to the same eligibility and prioritization rules (e.g. zone, sibling, and other data such as SES/Census), which is all updated in real-time as students are added or removed from waitlists as offers are accepted.</p> <p>This comprehensive waitlist functionality is another core features and value proposition of the SchoolChoice platform!</p>
--------------	---	---	---

## User Roles

<b>UR.1</b>	Vendor System Administrator Role: Set configurations for the whole system; create operator, Open Choice District and school level accounts; have the ability to create users and user account information; deactivate and restore user accounts; and create new system roles as determined necessary by the CSDE.	✓	This is all core to SchoolChoice and completely customizable. We can demonstrate the user and group role and permissioning with the MySchools.nyc system.
<b>UR.2</b>	CSDE System Administrator Role: Will have access to system-wide applicant/placement data for the purpose of fulfilling state obligations pursuant to the Phase IV Stipulation; create school and district level accounts; deactivate and restore user accounts; approve deletion of applicant records; and ability to assign levels of CSDE administrator roles.	✓	This is all included and can easily be configured and managed from the administrative tools.
<b>UR.3</b>	Operator/Open Choice District System Administrator Role: Will have access to operator/Open Choice District specific applicant data for the purpose of	✓	All included functionality—easy to configure and manage.



	recruiting, monitoring and assigning students to school choice programs; ability to create district and school accounts, or assign account creation duties; approving parent/guardian preferences; can deactivate and restore user accounts; running and viewing reports; and entering seat allocations.		
<b>UR.4</b>	Parent/Guardian/Applicant Role: Will input specific student-level data for the purpose of accessing school choice options.	</>	All included. Requires initial configuration and setup during discovery and implementation.

## User Support/Help Desk



We use the atlassian suite of business productivity tools for our products and services. We will setup a Jira ServiceDesk account for CSDE that will allow users to open up tickets for support. Specific workflows and processes for service levels and tiers will be defined during discovery and implementation (for example, certain service requests will need to be directed to members of your team, while more technical support requests can be directed to our team). We'll define a service and support plan with tiers and escalation rules in order to accommodate CSDE, school/operators and as well as parents.

## C. Organizational Resources

Personnel	Labor Category & Role
Sarah Jeffries	<b>Specialist</b> Will oversee general direction of project and account relationship
Jason Jeffries	<b>Solutions Architect</b> Will oversee overall strategic approach and technical implementation.
Ashley Scrivener	<b>Training &amp; User Experience Specialist</b> Will oversee requirements gathering, business requirements definition and product management specific to CSDE as well as all Training activities
Jayson Jones	<b>Product Manager</b> Will oversee all engineering, configuration and customizations with our engineering team as well as serve as day-to-day project and support manager.
Adam Hochstetter	<b>Lead Engineer</b> Will oversee configuration, setup and any ongoing development and customization.
George Griffin	<b>Programmer/Developer</b> Will oversee development and coordination of the technical solution, including DBA, DevOps infrastructure, and security.
Ed Menendez	<b>Programmer/Developer</b> Will oversee development of all back-end technologies.
Chris Doss	<b>Programmer/Developer</b> Will oversee all front-end development and interaction design, UI.

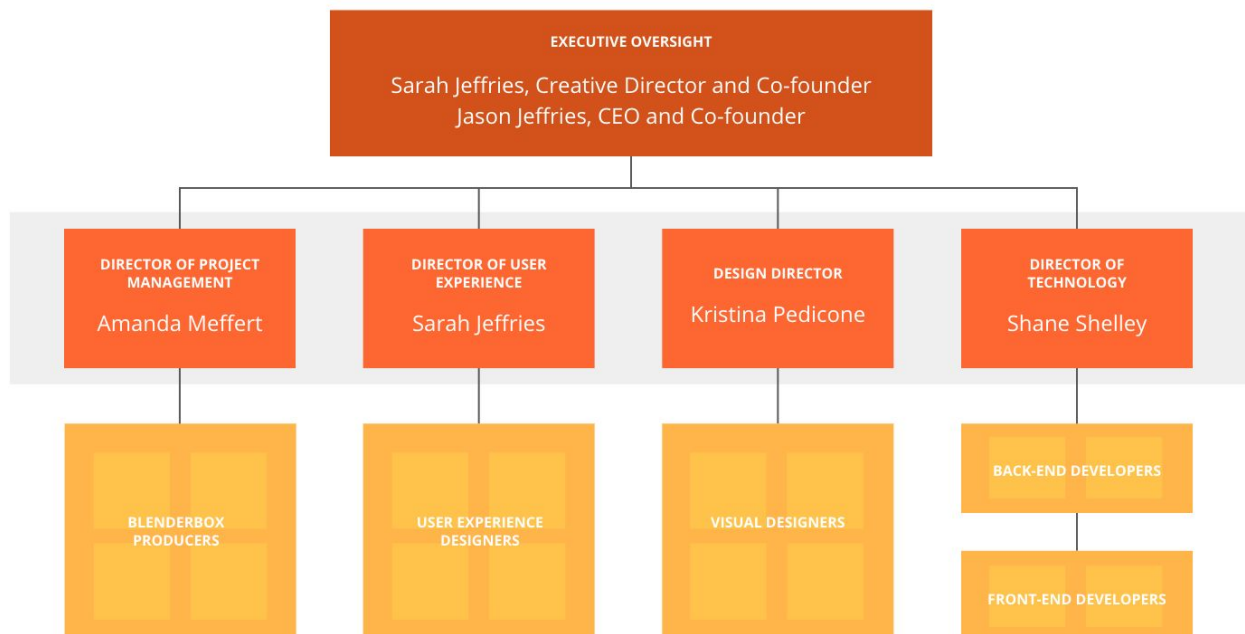
# Organizational Capacity

## Our Team ...is your team

We approach every project with a “same team” mentality. Our role as subject matter experts in all things related to SchoolChoice is to marry our years of experience designing best-in-class web solutions with your unique requirements.

Our team consists of a combination of experts in content strategy, human-centered web design, and web application development. We have an excellent project management team that will oversee the project and act as your day-to-day liaison for the life of the contract. As a woman-owned NYC business, ultimate accountability rests with our leadership who will be personally involved with the project at every step of the way.

*Our home office is in Brooklyn, New York. We have an 8,000 square foot space. We have been around for nearly 20 years. We are owned by our founders and have no subsidiaries or affiliates*





## Sarah Jeffries

*President and Co-Founder*

Sarah founded Blenderbox with Jason Jeffries in 2000, and oversees the Design Department as well as all management decisions. She is in charge of marketing and branding for the company and has ultimate sign off on all creative for the company. Sarah has honed the creative team's experience with clients like the Smithsonian Institution, Carnegie, Scholastic, and The New York City Department of Education.

### KEY PROJECTS

WeTeachNYC [weteachnyc.org](http://weteachnyc.org)

Yale Law School: [courses.law.yale.edu](http://courses.law.yale.edu)

Massport/Boston Logan International Airport: [massport.com](http://massport.com)

National Geographic Education: [nationalgeographic.org/education](http://nationalgeographic.org/education)

WE NYC: [we.nyc](http://we.nyc)

Carnegie Corporation of New York: [carnegie.org](http://carnegie.org)

### EMPLOYMENT

2000-Present: President, Creative Director and Co-founder, Blenderbox

1999- 2000: Art Director, Firstborn Media

1996-1999: Designer, Cosmedia, Dublin

### EDUCATION

NCAD (National College of Art & Design), Dublin

1992-1996, Bachelor of Design in Visual Communication



## Jason Jeffries

*CEO and Co-Founder*

Jason co-founded Blenderbox in 2000, and has grown the business with a roster of projects including National Geographic, Goldman Sachs, Harvard University, Scholastic, and the NYC Department of Education. Jason not only manages the day-to-day operations of the agency, but also helps on web development and strategic oversight for key projects.

### KEY PROJECTS

WeTeachNYC [weteachnyc.org](http://weteachnyc.org)

Yale Law School: [courses.law.yale.edu](http://courses.law.yale.edu)

Massport/Boston Logan International Airport: [massport.com](http://massport.com)

National Geographic Education: [nationalgeographic.org/education](http://nationalgeographic.org/education)

WE NYC: [we.nyc](http://we.nyc)

Carnegie Corporation of New York: [carnegie.org](http://carnegie.org)

### EMPLOYMENT

2000-Present: CEO and Co-founder, Blenderbox

1998-2000: Razorfish

### EDUCATION

1996, University of Vermont, Bachelor of Arts in French.



## Amanda Meffert

*Director of Project Management*

Since 1996, Amanda has worked exclusively in the digital realm, first for content sites including Worth magazine and Time Out North America before joining Blenderbox, where she's managed work for clients like Hearst, the NYC Economic Development Corporation, and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

### KEY PROJECTS

WeTeachNYC: [weteachnyc.org](http://weteachnyc.org)

Yale Law School: [courses.law.yale.edu](http://courses.law.yale.edu)

Institute of International Education: [iie.org](http://iie.org)

New York City Economic Development Corporation: [nycedc.com](http://nycedc.com)

### EMPLOYMENT

2011-Present: Director of Project Management, Blenderbox

2001-2010: Time Out New York, Director of Business Analysis

1999-2001: Investorama.com, Managing Producer

1998-1999: Citysearch, Producer

1996-1997: Worth Magazine / Capital Publishing, Associate Producer

### EDUCATION

1991-95, University of Georgia, Bachelor of Arts & Bachelor of Arts in Journalism.

2008, NYU, Continuing Ed., New Product Development for Web and Mobile.



## Ashley Scrivener

### *Instructional Design Specialist*

Ashley specializes in designing custom learning products, tools, and platforms. Her work employs digital interaction as a primary method of engagement, harnessing the human-computer relationship as a proxy for student-to-teacher, and peer-to-peer learning environments. She brings over five years of experience developing interactive, digital curricula based on research in pedagogical techniques, learning structures/styles, and content dissemination.

#### **EMPLOYMENT**

2017 - Present: Senior User Experience Designer at Blenderbox

2014 - 2017: Interactive Producer and User Experience Designer at The Philadelphia Museum of Art

#### **KEY PROJECTS**

Harvard Graduate School of Public Health: [repository.gheli.harvard.edu](https://repository.gheli.harvard.edu)

The Society for Neuroscience: [brainfacts.org](https://brainfacts.org)

Center for Court Innovation: [blenderbox.com](https://blenderbox.com)





## **Adam Hochstetter**

*Lead Engineer / SchoolChoice*

Adam has been developing applications with an eye towards efficiently presenting complex information simply and meaningfully. Since joining Blenderbox in 2016 he has been the lead Drupal developer on numerous projects and initiatives including SchoolChoice implementation for NYC's MySchools.

### **KEY PROJECTS**

Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund: [cepf.net](http://cepf.net)

RISD Alumni: [alumni.risd.edu](http://alumni.risd.edu)

Baby's First Test: [babysfirsttest.org](http://babysfirsttest.org)

Smithsonian American Women's History Initiative: [womenshistory.si.edu/](http://womenshistory.si.edu/)

### **EMPLOYMENT**

2016-Present: Senior Developer, Blenderbox

2015-2016: Programmer/Analyst CyberDH, Indiana University

2014-2015: Omeka Developer, Indiana University

2012-2015: XML Analyst for Digital Humanities, CHMTL, Indiana University

## D. Budget

We have prepared the following budget which includes our annual license fee as well as our managed hosting and support fees. Year 1 also includes a one-time implementation budget which covers the estimated consultative fees required for on-boarding, setup, configuration, training, and all required customizations as outlined in green from the requirements matrix above.

### Annual License for Blenderbox SchoolChoice

Annual License*	\$42,500
- does not include testing module	
- does not include auditions module	
- does not include CRM integration	
Technical Support	\$60,000
- includes support during normal business hours	
Annual Managed Hosting Fees	\$48,000
Includes scheduled maintenance, security updates/patches	
Includes AWS hosting fees*	
Includes Google Maps API and MapBox hosting fees*	
Includes Mailchimp/Mandrill hosting fees for email notifications*	
Includes SNS fees for SMS notifications*	

*\*fees cover expected traffic loads and volumes commensurate with current CSDE RSCO volume and may adjust if traffic/volume goes up over time.*

**Total Annual Cost                      \$150,500**

### One-Time Implementation Fee

On-boarding and Training Fee	\$50,000
Discovery, Solutions Architecture, Business Requirements Documentation	\$25,000
Customizations & Integrations	\$100,000
- includes interface with American Community Survey Data	
- includes integration with Public School Information System (PSIS)	
- does not include integration with PowerSchools or other SIS systems	

**Total Setup Cost                      \$175,000**

**Total 3 Year Cost                      \$626,500**

## E. Organizational information

Financial stability: Provide any documentation that supports the organizations past, present, and future financial stability. This may include any financial support up to and including audited financial statements.

### **Financial Stability**

Blenderbox, is a privately held certified Women Business Enterprise or WBE, and as such does not prepare certified financial statements. Ms. Jeffries serves as the Organization's long-standing President and runs the strategic arm of the Company. Mr. Jeffries manages the internal workings of the business and complements his wife on the technology side. Mark's Paneth LLP have been their accountants & advisors for the past 15 years and can attest to their financial solvency if required. Throughout this time and prior to it, Blenderbox has seen continual growth, both in financial terms and in the Application Design & Development Industry as a leader and premier provider of the highest quality of service & unwavering commitment to its clients.

Since the Company's formation in 2000, Blenderbox has received numerous awards and accolades through exemplifying this continued excellence in the same first-rate fashion to numerous well-known organizations across many business sectors, geographic and economic areas. The Company's annual sales totals continue to climb and have comfortably exceeded the \$4 million threshold for several years now.

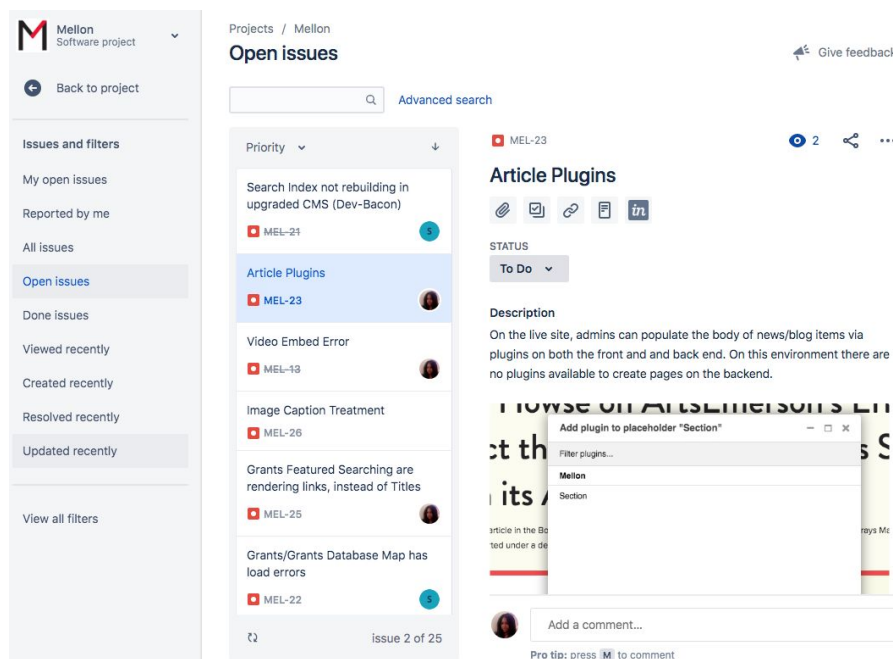
Blenderbox is solvent and prudently managed, and has been since its inception. The Company has established long standing, superior relationships with its vendors, employees and, of course, with its clients. It has a proven track record of continual growth and successfully meeting high demands for almost a generation.

## Quality Assurance



We use a tool called Jira to track “user stories” and monitor the progress of our team as we move through an incremental approach to building your solution. From a very early stage, you will have access to a build environment that demonstrates the latest features and functionality and, eventually, will allow us to collaborate on training, testing and user acceptance testing.

As we translate business and functional requirements to epics and stories, we also establish user acceptance criteria and test plans that map to stories which we then use for testing and quality assurance.



*Screenshot of Jira ticket for one of our clients, The Mellon Foundation*

During discovery and planning we will be creating a usability acceptance plan, an accessibility acceptance plan, and a vulnerability acceptance plan. For the latter, we have a subscription to a tool that can perform vulnerability scans. We are also quite familiar with government APPSEC requirements, and can work with whatever penetration and vulnerability scanning tools your IT department may be using.

We are committed to continuous improvement and have established a Quality Management System which provides a framework for measuring and improving our performance throughout each of our project engagements.

We have the following systems and procedures in place to support us in our aim of partner satisfaction and continuous improvement throughout our business:

- regular gathering and monitoring of feedback
- an intake process for any issues
- selection and performance monitoring of web systems
- training and development for our employees
- regular audit of our internal processes
- measurable quality objectives which reflect our business aims
- management reviews of audit results and partner feedback

## Credibility

We cite our success with New York City as the best exemplar of our credibility with other multidistrict school choice systems. The New York City Department Of Education is the largest school district in the United States. Our SchoolChoice solution, branded “MySchools,” is in its second year of a five year contract under which we have delivered tremendous success that has been tremendously well-received by the citizens of New York City. This system places more than 400,000 students per year into more than 3,000 schools and programs all around the city.

By far, the value proposition we bring to Connecticut is our experience servicing New York City. What differentiates our product from our competitors is our devotion to human-centric design, accessibility, equity and diversity which is woven into the very fabric of our highly customizable solution.

In order to serve New York City, we needed to build a highly flexible engine that can rise to meet the ever-changing policy initiatives in a dynamic system like New York. Now Connecticut can benefit from this solution. As you implement Phase IV of Sheff v. O’Neill, you can rest assured that the solid framework behind our cloud-based service will deliver a platform you can grow with.

On behalf of our team, we’d be honored to add Connecticut to our esteemed roster of clients and assure that you will be in good hands with a tried and true School Choice solution delivering more transparency and ease of use for the families and students of Hartford and its environs.

## Relevant Case Study

### New York City Department of Education

New York, NY

Length of Relationship: August 2017 - Present

## *Next Generation Registration*

The New York City Department of Education is the largest school system in the United States, with over 1.2 million students in more than 1,700 separate schools.

We designed and built MySchools.nyc, the official online platform for NYC families to search for and apply to public schools, from 3-K to high school.

#### **Objective:**

The NYC DOE engaged us to replace an antiquated, paper-based workflow with a single suite of online applications for families, schools, and DOE admins. Internationalization and accessibility were key requirements of the experience design.

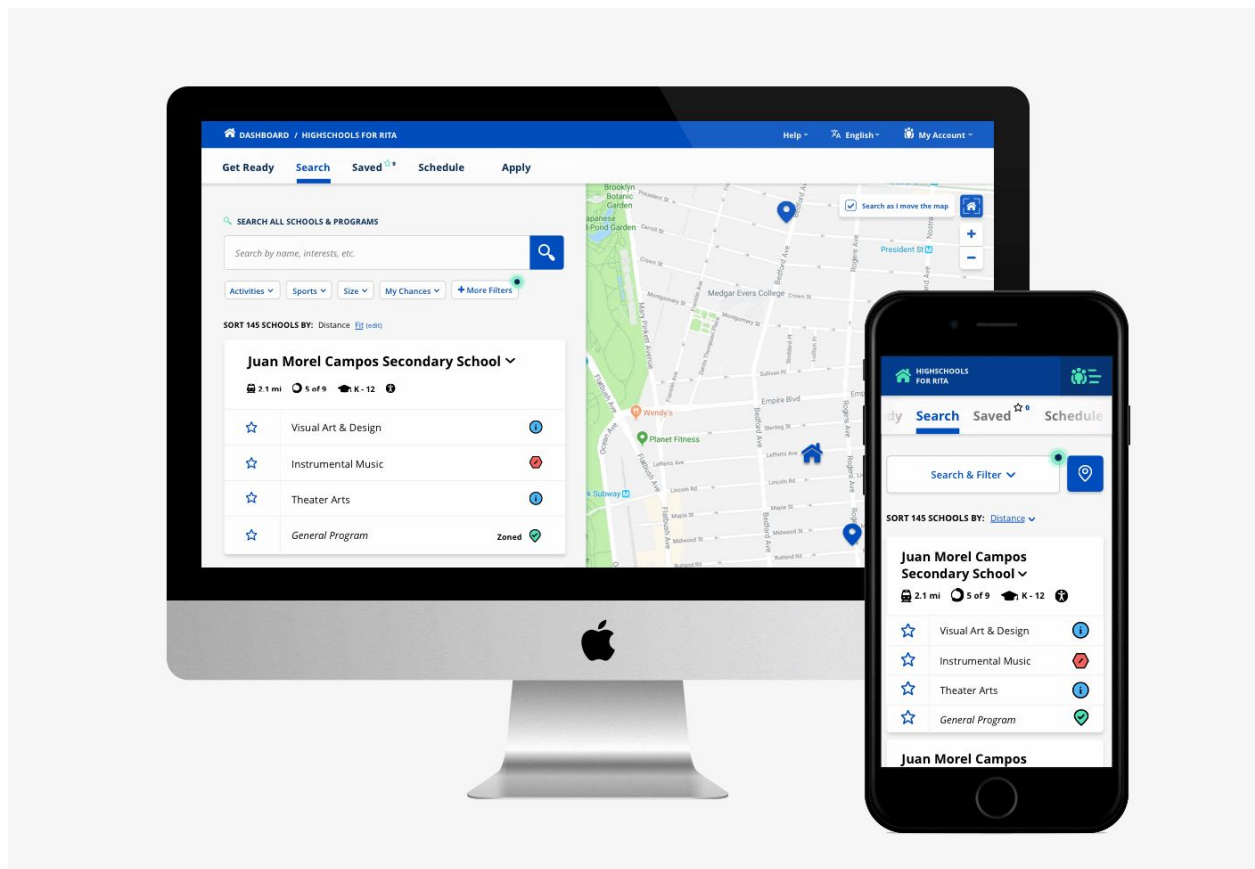
#### **Results:**

We delivered the first-ever fully online system for all NYC public school admissions. It's multi-language, mobile-optimized, and WCAG AA+ compliant. The system was fully tested and passed with flying color

### **Three Applications, One Experience**

We were tasked with creating three user-facing web applications: one for parents and guardians, one for school administrators, and one for the NYC Department of Education's Office of Student Enrollment. Each app has a different set of goals, use cases, and individual challenges.

The parent/guardian experience was designed to make finding and applying to schools a simple, transparent, and equitable process. The school admin portal was designed for school staff to manage enrollment of both their current and prospective students. The Office of Student Enrollment's portal had a different set of requirements, as they needed to oversee all functionality, users, and processes—including the most important aspect of all: the matching algorithm that employs a logic-based system (based on the Gale Shapley Deferred Acceptance Matching Algorithm) for matching students to their school choices and returning a single offer.

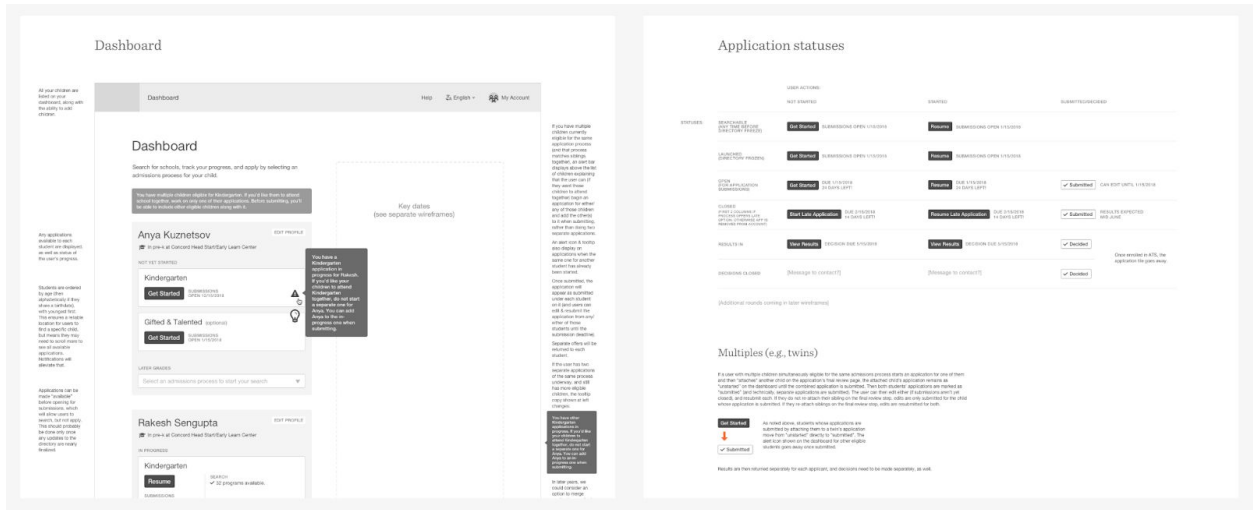


## Bringing Clarity to Complexity

The NYC Public School system is one of the most complex, diverse systems in the world. Because of the many moving pieces and rule-exceptions (such as a school that belongs to two districts in two different boroughs), we had to map out and plan for every variable, big or small.

In light of these complexities, we were dedicated to simplifying and demystifying the process, easing the burden on families. Now guardians simply add their children in order to see applications available to them – rather than having to first select an application. Next time they need to apply, the system will already have an application waiting for them. Interactive checklists and app walkthroughs explain the process. Dynamic information tailors schools' acceptance criteria to the student. Filters allow guardians to find schools that suit their child—and their own schedule. Favoriting and drag-and-drop list building assist the decision-making process. It's a one-stop shop for understanding, tracking, and making important choices for your future.





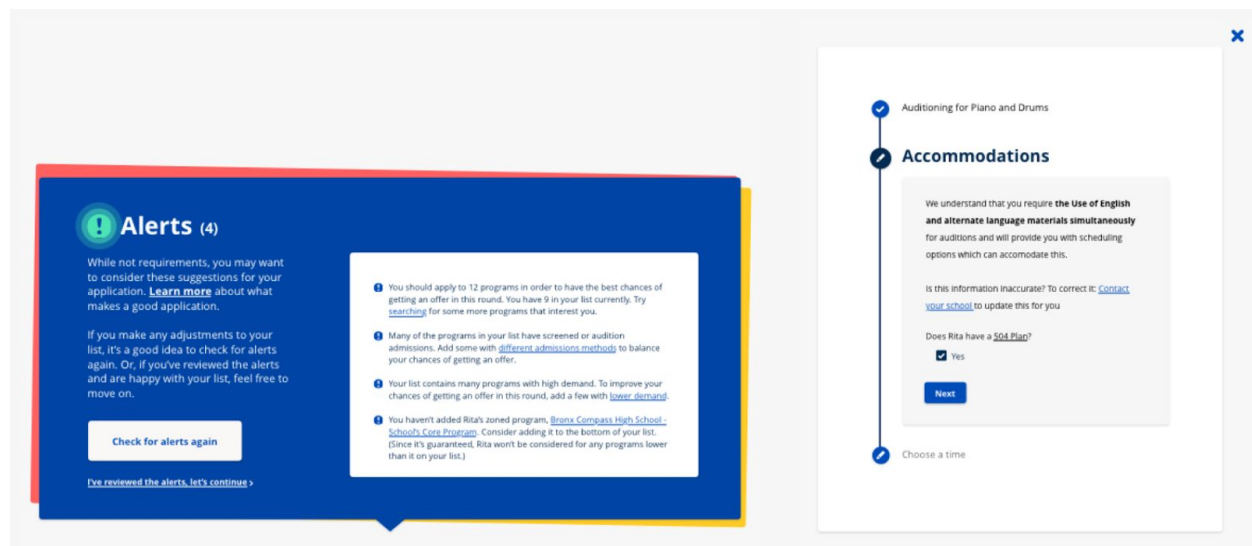
## Accessible for All

We built this experience to be fully WCAG 2.1 AA+ compliant, taking into account the many ways a user could interact with the application. We designed for 10 very different languages, including right-to-left languages like Arabic. Buttons, cards, tooltips, and microcopy had to be handled with care so they could scale properly with dramatic shifts in length and character sizes when translated into another language. The intricacies of each school card had to allow for proper keyboard tabbing, while also making hierarchical sense when interacted with via screen reader. And all of this works flawlessly at every screen size, ensuring that families without a home computer can still breeze through the application process on their smartphones.



## Delight in the Details

The scope and flexibility of options makes applying to NYC Public Schools an involved undertaking. There are a lot of factors for families to consider, from program demand to specialized auditions, so we put a lot of thought into crafting a friendly, informative, and stress-free application process. Reassuring notices and fun interactions as you hover and ‘favorite’ a program enhance the user interface, while “You know you did it right when you see the confetti” has become a common phrase used between advisors and parents.



## Built for Admin Diversity, too

To make sure the back-end tools will support admissions long-term, we architected database models that allow staff to easily switch admin views between school years and grade levels in order to manage student, admissions, and school data. An auto-completing search field enables admins to rapidly retrieve any student’s record in order to assist them.

Robust permissioning ensures different roles can only access what they need. For example, support staff who work directly with families can adjust their applications, but aren’t able to make system-level changes.

Then there's the rule-making, where a select set of admins can go in and refine the parameters surrounding things like due dates, manual placements, specialized school admissions, and even how “multiples” are handled (such as twins or same-age adopted/foster children). This unique

feature-set ensures that DOE admins have a flexible tool that matches the wide-ranging and ever-evolving population of New York City.

## **Impact**

The New York City Department of Education now has modern means to engage parents and caregivers and help them make educated choices for their students. Guidance counselors can now spend more time counseling and less time entering data. The Office of Student Enrollment has better reporting and customization capabilities than they have ever had before.

**Thank you!**

**blenderbox**

26 Dobbin Street, 3rd Floor

Brooklyn, NY 11222

718.963.4594

[info@blenderbox.com](mailto:info@blenderbox.com)

**State of Connecticut  
Purchase Order**

**State Dept of Education**

**Supplier:** 0000188927  
THE CONSULTANTS CONSORTIUM INC  
1022 E 52ND ST  
INDIANAPOLIS IN 46205

**Dispatch via Print**

<b>Purchase Order</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Revision</b>	<b>Page</b>
SDEM1-0000139053	06/18/2020		1
<b>Payment Terms</b>	<b>Freight Terms</b>	<b>Ship Via</b>	
Due Now	FOB Destination, Frt Prepaid	Common	
<b>Buyer</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Currency</b>	
SDE-Asberry Danette	860/525-2010	USD	

**Ship To:** SDE 450 Columbus Boulevard  
450 Columbus Boulevard  
4th Floor Suite 404  
Hartford CT 06103  
Attn: Robin Colombo Ceere

**Bill To:** Accounts Payable  
450 Columbus Blvd  
Hartford CT 06103

**Tax Exempt?** Y **Tax Exempt ID:** 066000798SDE

**Replenishment Option:** Standard

Lin-Schd	Original Quantity	Change Quantity	Total Quantity	UOM	Original Price	Price Change	New Price	Extended Amount
----------	----------------------	--------------------	-------------------	-----	----------------	--------------	-----------	--------------------

1- 1	1	0	1	EA	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.01
<b>Vndr#</b>		<b>Mfg#</b>		<b>Description</b>	Web Based School Choice Application Due Date 06/19/2020 and Student Assignment System			

Contract ID: 18PSX0210AE Version 1 Contract Line: 0 Category Line: 0 Release: 9

**Item Total** 0.01

2- 1	1	0	1	EA	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.01
<b>Vndr#</b>		<b>Mfg#</b>		<b>Description</b>	Annual Licensing and Maintenance Fee Due Date 06/19/2020			

Contract ID: 18PSX0210AE Version 1 Contract Line: 0 Category Line: 0 Release: 10

**Item Total** 0.01

3- 1	1	0	1	EA	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.01
<b>Vndr#</b>		<b>Mfg#</b>		<b>Description</b>	5% Reseller Fee Due Date 06/19/2020			

Contract ID: 18PSX0210AE Version 1 Contract Line: 0 Category Line: 0 Release: 11

**Item Total** 0.01

**Total PO Amount** 0.03

**The Total Obligation** 657,825.00

For time period 06/18/2020 to 07/01/2022

The State purchasing entity is issuing this purchase order pursuant and subject to a certain contract, between the vendor and the State of Connecticut, specifically for the goods, services or both itemized above. The contract is currently in effect, as it has not expired or been cancelled or terminated. To the extent that the contract has not already been accepted by the vendor, and without indicating or acknowledging a need to reaffirm such acceptance by means of this or any subsequent purchase order, any act of partial or full performance by the vendor after receipt of this purchase order shall be deemed to be, without more, an acceptance of this purchase order and an acceptance of all of the terms and conditions of the contract. This order is exempt from Federal Excise taxes under registration number 06-730435K, and from Connecticut Sales Tax. Send invoices to the State agency issuing this order.

The State Comptroller certifies that this order has been approved, recorded, and available funds have been reserved.

**Final Approver: DAS-Johnson, Bernard J.**

MILO SHEFF, et al.	:	
	:	SUPERIOR COURT
<i>Plaintiffs</i>	:	
	:	
v.	:	JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF HARTFORD
	:	AT HARTFORD
WILLIAM A. O'NEILL, et al.	:	
	:	
<i>Defendants</i>	:	January 10, 2020

**REVISED STIPULATION AND ORDER**  
**CORRECTING TYPOGRAPHICAL ERRORS**

WHEREAS, the above entitled action was initially filed by the Plaintiffs in 1989 against the named Defendants and various state officials; and

WHEREAS, the Connecticut Supreme Court on July 9, 1996, held that public school students in the City of Hartford attended schools that were racially, ethnically, and economically isolated in violation of the Connecticut Constitution, and urged the State to take prompt steps to seek to remedy the violation; and

WHEREAS, the Plaintiffs and Defendants entered into a Stipulation and Order dated January 22, 2003 (the "Phase I Stipulation"), which was approved by the General Assembly and became an Order of this Court as of March 12, 2003, and which set forth a program for voluntary interdistrict programs to lessen racial, ethnic, and economic isolation, and which expired by its terms on June 30, 2007; and

WHEREAS, the City of Hartford intervened in this action on January 4, 2007; and

WHEREAS, the Plaintiffs and Defendants entered into a Stipulation and Order dated April 4, 2008 ("Phase II Stipulation"), which was approved by the General Assembly and became an Order of this Court on June 11, 2008, and which set forth a continued plan to lessen racial, ethnic, and economic isolation through voluntary interdistrict programs; and

WHEREAS, the parties executed a one-year extension agreement, dated April 30, 2013, to continue the Phase II Stipulation, as amended, through June 30, 2014 ("Phase II Stipulation Extension") to achieve the compliance standards of the Phase II Stipulation for the 2013-14 school year; and

WHEREAS, the Plaintiffs and Defendants entered into a Stipulation dated December 13, 2013 ("Phase III Stipulation"), which the Court approved on the same day, and which set forth a one-year plan for reasonable progress in reducing racial, ethnic, and economic isolation for Hartford-resident minority students through June 30, 2015; and

WHEREAS, the parties executed a one-year extension agreement, dated February 23, 2015, to continue the Phase III Stipulation through June 30, 2016 ("Phase III Stipulation Extension"), and

a second one-year extension, dated June 10, 2016, to continue the Phase III Stipulation through June 30, 2017 (“Phase III Stipulation Second Extension”), to continue the progress achieved in the Phase III Stipulation for two additional one-year periods; and

WHEREAS, the Court entered a further order on August 7, 2017 directing the parties to adhere to certain portions of the Phase III Stipulation; and

WHEREAS, Defendants have committed substantial operating and capital resources to reducing the racial, ethnic and economic isolation of Hartford-resident minority students; and

WHEREAS, the parties have made progress in reducing the racial, ethnic and economic isolation of Hartford-resident minority students as a result of their financial and programmatic commitments; and

WHEREAS, the City of Hartford and Hartford Public Schools (“HPS”) have also committed substantial resources to reducing the racial, ethnic, and economic isolation of Hartford-resident students and their ongoing commitment has significantly contributed to the progress in reducing said isolation; and

WHEREAS, Plaintiffs’ advocacy on behalf of Hartford-resident minority students continues to advance opportunities on behalf of such students and further efforts to create a sustainable education system in reduced isolation settings; and

WHEREAS, the parties are cognizant that their efforts will need to continue to further reduce racial, ethnic, and economic isolation for Hartford-resident minority students; and

WHEREAS, the parties have a mutual interest in reducing the racial, ethnic, and economic isolation of Hartford-resident minority students; and

WHEREAS, the parties agree that such reduction of racial, ethnic and economic isolation may be accomplished through various high quality school programs, including interdistrict magnet school opportunities, the Open Choice program, state technical high schools and vocational agriculture programs, and other new and progressive initiatives; and

WHEREAS, this agreement represents reasonable measures to reduce racial, ethnic, and economic isolation for Hartford-resident minority students; and

WHEREAS, the parties agree to move towards a final agreement in compliance with the Supreme Court's 1996 decision and the State and Federal Constitutions and addressing the goals noted herein in Section XIII, that will result in the conclusion of court jurisdiction over this matter; and

WHEREAS, the parties do hereby knowingly and voluntarily enter into this Stipulation and agree to be bound thereby; and

NOW THEREFORE, the parties hereby stipulate and agree as follows:

**I. Term:** The terms and conditions set forth in this Phase IV Stipulation shall apply for the period

from the date of execution of this Agreement through June 30, 2022, as the first phase of the new agreement between the parties unless otherwise specified herein.

## II. Controlling Goals of this Phase IV Stipulation

- A. The parties are committed to addressing the Connecticut Supreme Court's decision in the *Sheff v. O'Neill* case, which held that students in the Hartford public schools were racially, ethnically and economically isolated in violation of the state Constitution. The fundamental goal of this Stipulation is to advance the state's compelling state interest in the racial, ethnic, and economic desegregation of schools in the *Sheff* Region, as measured after the completion of the student assignment and enrollment process, and in compliance with the State and Federal Constitutions. The parties to this Stipulation explicitly acknowledge the following:
1. One means for furthering these goals is to offer Hartford-resident minority students the opportunity to attend *Sheff* Interdistrict Magnet Schools and *Sheff* Connecticut Technical Education and Career System Schools ("CTECS") (specifically including A.I. Prince Technical High School, E.C. Goodwin Technical High School and Howell Cheney Technical High School) wherein the student populations meet the "reduced isolation standard" or, hereinafter, the desegregation goal established in the August 7, 2017 Superior Court ruling in the *Sheff v. O'Neill* case, and the parties agree to continue to seek to achieve and maintain that goal, along with the other goals described herein, through the methods and approaches described herein, without ever considering the race or ethnicity of any individual student in making any student assignment decisions;
  2. The parties agree to a goal of enrolling 47.5 percent Hartford-resident minority students attending *Sheff* Voluntary Interdistrict Program schools that meet the desegregation goal in Number 1 above, an interdistrict cooperative program, or an Open Choice school for the 2021–22 school year; and
  3. Notwithstanding Numbers 1 and 2 above, nothing in this Stipulation calls for, provides for, or intends to impose or establish any racial quota or negative consequences for any school, school operator, or the State Department of Education ("SDE") for failure to meet the desegregation and enrollment goals in Numbers 1 and 2 above. The prior sentence is not intended to limit the court's ability to enforce the *Sheff v. O'Neill* Supreme Court decision or the terms of this Stipulation in a manner consistent with the Federal and State Constitutions.

## III. Definitions

- A. **Socioeconomic Diversity Goal:** Using the Socioeconomic Status ("SES") tiers set out below (i.e., Tier A, Tier B, and Tier C) based on multiple socioeconomic factors, the goal of the Student Assignment Plan and lottery protocols set forth in this Agreement shall be to enroll applicants to *Sheff* Interdistrict Magnet Schools and the *Sheff* CTECS schools to maximize SES diversity, up to a maximum of 60% from Tier A and a minimum of 30% from Tier C for incoming enrollments for each school during the term of the Stipulation.

1. **Tier A:** Tier A shall be established based on the factors sets forth in Section XII



herein as a low socioeconomic designation for purposes of the Student Assignment Plan.

2. **Tier B:** Tier B shall be established based on the factors set forth in Section XII herein as a medium socioeconomic designation for purposes of the Student Assignment Plan.
  3. **Tier C:** Tier C shall be established based on the factors set forth in Section XII herein as a high socioeconomic designation for purposes of the Student Assignment Plan.
- B. *Sheff* Voluntary Interdistrict Programs are the instruments employed under this Stipulation to maximize racial, ethnic, and economic diversity, including, but not limited to, Interdistrict Magnet Schools, CTECS Schools, the Regional Agricultural Science and Technology Education Centers, and Open Choice.
- C. Interdistrict Magnet Schools refer to Hartford Host Magnet Schools, Suburban Host Magnet Schools, and Regional Magnet Schools.
1. Hartford Host Magnet Schools are those Interdistrict Magnet Schools that are governed and operated by the Hartford Public School (“HPS”) System.
  2. Suburban Host Magnet Schools are those Interdistrict Magnet Schools that are governed and operated by a school district within the *Sheff* Region other than Hartford, alone or with a third party.
  3. Regional Magnet Schools are those host and regional Interdistrict Magnet Schools that may be operated by a third party or a consortium of school districts.
  4. Existing Magnet Schools are those Interdistrict Magnet Schools that are in operation during the 2019-20 school year as set forth in Appendix A, attached hereto.
- D. CTECS Schools refers to certain regional vocational-technical schools that are established and maintained by the State in accordance with Conn. Gen. Stat. §10-95, and such programs in such schools as designated by the SDE or CTECS.
- E. Regional Agricultural Science and Technology Center refers to certain regional agricultural science and technology schools that are established and maintained by local or regional boards of education in accordance with Conn. Gen. Stat. §10-64.
- F. Open Choice is a voluntary interdistrict transfer program that allows students to transfer between Hartford and the suburban school districts when such transfers contribute to maximizing racial, ethnic, and economic diversity.
- G. Interdistrict Cooperative Programs are those multi-district cooperative part-time programs established in accordance with Conn. Gen. Stat. §10-74d that provide a diverse educational experience for Connecticut students. Such programs should entail at least 45 hours in duration, of which at least 30 hours should be face-to-face contact time. Time spent

transporting students shall not be counted in the duration. For purposes of the goal in Section II.A.2, one percentage point shall be added to for every 500 Hartford-resident minority students who participate in Interdistrict Cooperative Programs, up to a total of three percentage points. A student who participates in a program of at least 90 hours in duration, of which at least 60 hours is face-to-face contact time, shall be counted as 1.5 students for the purpose of such goal.

- H. *Sheff* Region: As defined in the original complaint, the *Sheff* Region includes the school districts of Avon, Bloomfield, Canton, East Granby, East Hartford, East Windsor, Ellington, Farmington, Glastonbury, Granby, Hartford, Manchester, Newington, Rocky Hill, Simsbury, South Windsor, Suffield, Vernon, West Hartford, Wethersfield, Windsor, and Windsor Locks. Hartford-resident minority students attending Open Choice schools within the region or in other municipalities shall be deemed to be attending schools that meet the goals of Section II.A above.
- I. For purposes of *Sheff* Voluntary Interdistrict Program schools whose funding is subject to Conn. Gen. Stat. §10-264I or related statutes, “reduced isolation setting” is defined as a school or program with an incoming enrollment that satisfies the Socioeconomic Diversity Goal for Tier A, as set forth in Section III.A above.
- J. “Reduced isolation student” for purposes of this Stipulation is defined pursuant to the August 7, 2017 Superior Court decision in *Sheff v. O’Neill*.
- K. Plaintiffs’ Representative: The Regional School Choice Office (“RSCO”) shall continue to allow a Plaintiffs’ Representative to participate in the planning and implementation by RSCO of the activities authorized by this Stipulation. The Plaintiffs’ Representative shall not have any decision-making authority or veto power over decisions made by SDE. The Plaintiffs’ Representative shall have administrative access to the ongoing applicant pool data, by school, and other RSCO Management Reports, through the RSCO application database during the period of this Stipulation, subject to SDE suppression policies and confidentiality requirements under state and federal laws. The SDE shall issue a payment to the NAACP Legal Defense & Education Fund, Inc. (“LDF”) in an amount equal to \$40,000 in full and final payment of Defendants’ obligations for all services performed by the Plaintiffs’ Representative.
- L. Monitoring and Informational Meeting: The parties agree to meet once in May or June of 2020 to assess progress in the implementation of the terms of this Stipulation including, to the extent available, lottery recruitment and marketing, the preliminary results of the Student Assignment Plan, and other relevant information. The parties shall make all reasonable efforts to work together at that meeting to address any concerns and adopt any mutually agreed upon recommendations regarding the implementation of this Stipulation in a manner that is consistent with the goals of this Stipulation, the *Sheff v. O’Neill* decisions, and the Federal and State Constitutions.
- M. To the extent that Open Choice seats remain unfilled after the waitlist for Hartford Open Choice applicants is exhausted, Hartford-resident applicants currently on magnet school waitlists may, at the discretion of the SDE, be offered placement in an available Open Choice seat in the grade to which they applied, provided the applicant has not received a magnet placement offer prior to the date of the Open Choice offer.

#### **IV. Administration of the Regional School Choice Office**

- A. The SDE will continue to operate RSCO to coordinate all *Sheff*-related school choice options, serve as a single information portal for families seeking a school choice opportunity, and to support and coordinate marketing, recruitment, transportation and information services across interdistrict programs. Among other goals, RSCO shall also consider efforts to: (i) reduce the disparities between Hartford neighborhood schools and the *Sheff* Interdistrict Magnet schools in the numbers of students in English Learner programs and the number of students requiring special education services; and (ii) provide recognition for families that participate in RSCO lotteries over several years without obtaining an offer.
- B. SDE will continue its efforts to move the Parent Information Center (PIC) to a more accessible, permanent location, including, but not limited to, the following:
  1. During the period the PIC remains located at 450 Columbus Boulevard in Hartford, the Hartford Public Library, which is open 12 months per year, will serve as a primary parent information center to support the central PIC, and will be funded and staffed at least half-time (including on evenings and weekends) by personnel knowledgeable in the RSCO application process.
  2. SDE will review, develop a plan, and deploy representatives from the PIC to Hartford Public Schools Welcome Center, the satellite offices, and the Hartford Public Library at designated, publicized times, on a regular basis to provide additional access to RSCO support during the period the PIC remains located at 450 Columbus Boulevard.
  3. SDE will continue to coordinate with the Hartford Board of Education on relocating the PIC to available space in Bulkeley High School as soon as practicable, with an estimated opening in 2022-23.
  4. For visitors to the PIC at 450 Columbus Boulevard, SDE will continue take reasonable steps to remove barriers to access for visitors, including, but not limited to efforts to secure two to three visitor parking spots. SDE will add approved signage to highlight the location of the PIC at 450 Columbus Boulevard and the satellite location at the Hartford Public Library as soon as practicable after execution of this agreement, with an estimated completion date for signage plans on or around January 31, 2020.
  5. SDE will continue its efforts to restock all of the satellite offices and applicable Welcome Centers with a supply of current RSCO explanatory materials on a regular basis as needed. RSCO will seek to maintain its affiliation with the satellite offices, as appropriate, to support its outreach to families in the Hartford Region and shall provide training to such satellites for these purposes.
  6. SDE will designate a marketing contact to manage the outreach initiatives set forth in this Section IV and serve as a point of contact regarding marketing opportunities

and materials.

**V. Data Transparency and Reporting Related to Hartford Student Performance and Growth, and Diversity at *Sheff* Voluntary Interdistrict Programs:**

- A. Any data provided related to this Stipulation to any party, workgroup, or committee shall be subject to SDE suppression rules, and any other applicable federal or state law related to student data and privacy.
- B. On or before January 10<sup>th</sup> of each year, SDE shall make public and provide Plaintiffs and Hartford with (1) academic achievement and growth (performance) reports for each *Sheff* Interdistrict Magnet School and Open Choice School with non-personally identifiable data that is disaggregated to show Hartford student performance based on quantifiable and available data; and (2) the racial demographics of educators at each choice school. Beginning in November of 2021, the SDE shall also make public and provide Plaintiffs and Hartford annual reports disaggregating Hartford resident students on such measures as enrollments, attendance, graduation rates of students, and discipline rates and all measures provided will be disaggregated by race and ethnicity, SES, English Learner status, and special education eligibility.
- C. SDE shall make the academic achievement and growth (performance) monitoring reports for *Sheff* Interdistrict Magnet Schools and Open Choice programs publicly available to inform families.
- D. On or before November 1 of each school year, each operator of a *Sheff* Interdistrict Magnet School, participating *Sheff* CTECS Schools (A.I. Prince Technical High School, Howell Cheney Technical High School and E.C. Goodwin Technical High School), Vinal Technical High School, participating Regional Agricultural Science and Technology Education Centers, or Open Choice Schools enrolling non-resident students, shall calculate the percentage of reduced isolation students enrolled in the school based on the October 1 enrollment data for that school year and report the information by school to the RSCO Office. The RSCO Office will verify the data provided by the operators and report the same, along with the socioeconomic diversity of the incoming enrollments for each such school, to Plaintiffs, the City of Hartford (“Hartford”), and the Advisory Committee, as defined herein, on or before December 1 of each school year. For each Interdistrict Magnet School and *Sheff* CTECS School, the data shall include the numbers and percentage of Hartford-resident students enrolled in the school, the numbers and percentage of enrolled students by socioeconomic grouping for the incoming enrollments for each school, and the numbers and percentage of reduced isolation students enrolled in the school.

**VI. Restructuring and Supports for the *Sheff* Interdistrict Magnet Schools**

- A. No later than January 31, 2020, the SDE will solicit applications from magnet operators to be awarded access to a total of \$1,100,000 of funding for fiscal year 2020 to support the Operators’ action plans for reformulation of specific Interdistrict Magnet Schools through a grant application process. Grants shall be awarded on or before March 30, 2020.

- 1. Reformulation options may include, but are not limited to, replicating high demand

themes and instructional models, partnering with other educational entities/businesses, modifying curriculum/educational programming, technical support, and other appropriate measures.

2. Grant applications, in a form determined by RSCO, must be submitted by a date specified by RSCO and RSCO will consider recommendations from the *Sheff* Magnet Working Group in making its selections. Priority will be given to the following schools: Classical Magnet School; Capitol Preparatory Magnet School; Betances STEM Magnet School; R.J. Kinsella Magnet School of the Performing Arts; Hartford Magnet Trinity College; Webster Micro Society Magnet School; Breakthrough Magnet, South; Civic Leadership High School; Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts Magnet Middle; Metropolitan Learning Center for Global & International Studies; Two Rivers Magnet School; Riverside Magnet School; Global Experience Magnet School; and/or Connecticut River Academy.
- B. In the 2019-2020 lottery, and within available appropriations thereafter, and phased in during the terms of this Stipulation, the SDE will support *Sheff* Interdistrict Magnet School operators filling available seats up to the aggregate fiscal caps as quickly as possible, where such seats may be filled compliant with the SES parameters identified herein. SDE shall provide guidance to operators to balance various practical considerations, including but not limited to number of teaching staff and building capacity, to allow those additional seats within fiscal caps to be phased in. This will provide the opportunity for an estimated 350 additional Hartford-resident students and up to an additional 350 suburban students to consider *Sheff* Interdistrict Magnet schools. SDE will include the anticipated magnet grant funding required to maintain the current aggregate fiscal caps in its biannual budget submission covering fiscal year 2022 and fiscal year 2023. Any appropriations required to support this will be subject to approval by the General Assembly.
- C. RSCO confirms and continues its goal of enabling students in *Sheff* Voluntary Interdistrict Programs to remain enrolled in *Sheff* Voluntary Interdistrict Programs throughout their K-12 education to the extent students choose to do so and meet the eligibility requirements for each transition grade, including, for example, eligibility based on residency and grade level.
- D. The SDE shall authorize the Capitol Region Education Council (CREC) to increase the enrollment at the Academy of Aerospace and Engineering (Aerospace) as detailed below, in response to their request for increased seat capacity at that location. Prior to implementing this expansion, CREC will provide SDE with an updated operations plan, which shall include all relevant details for implementing this increased enrollment.
1. For school year 2020-2021, Aerospace may add up to 40 students to its Pre-K program, of which 50% of the seats will be allocated for Hartford resident students. These seats will be dispersed to Pre-K3 and Pre-K4 to allow for controlled expansion by no more than a single classroom per grade as the new students move up through the program.
  2. For school year 2021-2022, Aerospace may add up to 22 students to its Pre-K program, of which 50% of the seats will be allocated for Hartford resident students.
  3. SDE will include the anticipated magnet grant funding required to make payment

of the per-pupil increased enrollment in this section in its biannual budget submission covering fiscal year 2022 and fiscal year 2023. The submission will anticipate, where determined by the SDE to be consistent with educational policy, an increase in the Pre-K class by 22 students for each year of that budget submission. Any appropriations required to support this expansion will be subject to approval of the Connecticut General Assembly.

E. The SDE shall authorize LEARN and Goodwin University to increase the enrollment at Riverside Magnet School (Riverside) as detailed below, in response to their request to add grades six, seven and eight to that program. Prior to implementing this expansion, LEARN will provide SDE with an updated operations plan, which shall include all relevant details for implementing this increased enrollment.

1. For school year 2020-2021, Riverside may offer all of its currently enrolled 5<sup>th</sup> grade students the opportunity to remain enrolled at Riverside for 6<sup>th</sup> grade. If fewer than 50 of the existing Riverside students elect to transition to the 6<sup>th</sup> grade, Riverside may fill seats in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade up to a maximum of 50 seats, of which 50% shall be allocated for Hartford resident students.
2. For school year 2021-2022, Riverside may continue enrolling its currently enrolled students up from 5<sup>th</sup> grade into 6<sup>th</sup> grade, and from 6<sup>th</sup> grade into 7<sup>th</sup> grade. If fewer than 50 of the existing Riverside middle grade students in each grade elect to transition to the next grade level at Riverside, Riverside may fill seats in the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grades up to a maximum of 50 seats per grade, of which 50% shall be allocated for Hartford resident students.
3. SDE will include the anticipated magnet grant funding required to make payment of the per-pupil increased enrollment in this section in its biannual budget submission covering fiscal year 2022 and fiscal year 2023. The submission will anticipate, where determined by SDE to be consistent with educational policy, an expansion to complete the pathway between Riverside and the Connecticut River Academy, up to a maximum of 150 students for 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grades through fiscal year 2023. Any appropriations required to support this expansion will be subject to the approval of the Connecticut General Assembly.

F. The SDE shall authorize Hartford Public Schools (HPS) to increase and maintain the enrollment at the Hartford Pre-K Magnet Program as detailed below, in response to their request. Prior to implementing this expansion, HPS will provide SDE with an updated operations plan, which shall include all relevant details for implementing this increased enrollment.

1. In school year 2020-2021, HPS may add seats for up to 20 students to its Hartford Pre-K Magnet Program, of which 50% of the seats will be allocated for Hartford resident students.
2. SDE will include the anticipated magnet grant funding required to make payment of the per-pupil enrollment in this section in its biannual budget submission covering fiscal year 2022 and fiscal year 2023 in order to maintain the added seats from 2020-21. The submission will anticipate, where determined by the SDE to be

consistent with educational policy, to maintain the Pre-K class of up to 20 students. Any appropriations required to support this expansion will be subject to approval of the Connecticut General Assembly.

- G. The SDE shall commit up to \$30,000 for the HPS to engage in planning and a collaborative process to support the successful planned co-location of schools for the 2020-2021 school year. Such funding will be subject to HPS providing a detailed plan for the use of such funding to achieve this outcome.
- H. The SDE intends, for the term of the Stipulation, to provide funding sufficient to maintain the current number of *Sheff* Interdistrict Magnet Schools and *Sheff CTECS* schools and the current enrollments at such schools, and the expansion as set forth in this Agreement. SDE will include the anticipated magnet grant funding required to make payment of the per-pupil increased enrollment referenced in this section in its biannual budget submission covering fiscal year 2022 and fiscal year 2023. Any appropriations required to support this section will be subject to the approval of the Connecticut General Assembly.
- I. No later than June 1, 2020, the SDE shall solicit and consider reasonable written proposals from all magnet operators to create and expand pathways that further the goals of this Stipulation, including but not limited to plans for pathways that: link schools that may require increased diversity in their applicant pools, create consistent thematic paths across operators, link magnet schools with Open Choice participation, or provide opportunities for co-location and will consider recommendations of any relevant advisory group. The SDE shall authorize the CREC to implement its requested pathway between the Metropolitan Learning Center (“MLC”) and International Magnet School for Global Citizenship (“IMS”).

## **VII. Open Choice Support and Participation**

- A. No later than January 31, 2020, the SDE will solicit applications from Open Choice Districts to be awarded access to a total of \$190,000 of funding for fiscal year 2020 to support the District’s action plans to provide full support services and welcoming and culturally responsive environments for their Open Choice students through a competitive grant application process.
- B. Action plan options may include, but are not limited to, the following considerations: (1) diversity, equity and inclusion training for educators and staff; (2) social-emotional and behavioral services for Open Choice Students; (3) recruitment of minority educators and staff; and (4) other appropriate measures designed to support academic, social and emotional achievement of Open Choice students in the district, including summer school and afterschool opportunities.
- C. Grant applications, in a form determined by RSCO, must be submitted by a date specified by RSCO and will consider recommendations from the *Sheff* Open Choice Working Group. SDE will give priority to districts that have higher percentages of Open Choice students currently enrolled in the district.
- D. SDE will commit up to \$300,000 during fiscal year 2020, to increase the per pupil funding to Open Choice districts that declare an increase of seats that represents at least 20% more Open

Choice seats than declared by that district in the prior application year. This funding will be divided equally among such participating districts on a per pupil basis based on the number of additional students participating in the program over fiscal year 2019, to a maximum of \$3,000 per student.

- E. During fiscal year 2020 and fiscal year 2021, SDE will provide \$400,000 to CREC per year for the purpose of supporting educational advocates who will provide academic and social support to Open Choice students.
- F. One goal of this Stipulation is to incentivize districts to increase Open Choice seat capacity for the 2020-21 and 2021-22 school years beyond the total number of Open Choice seats in 2019-20.

### **VIII. *Sheff* Voluntary Interdistrict Programs Advisory Committee**

- A. Beginning within 2 weeks of the parties mutually agreeing upon and securing the representative of the educational community referenced herein, SDE shall convene an Advisory Committee at least three times per year, to review the *Sheff* system and make non-binding recommendations, as agreed to by a majority of the Advisory Committee members, regarding expansion opportunities at successful schools/programs and changes to *Sheff* Voluntary Interdistrict Programs to meet the goals of this Stipulation as defined in Sections II.A and Section III.A above and further opportunities for Hartford-resident students. At least one of these meetings shall allow for parents, students, experts, and other members of the public to make statements and/or present recommendations to the Committee.
  - 1. The Advisory Committee shall consist of six experienced educators, except that the current Plaintiffs' representative may serve as the non-voting representative of the Plaintiffs listed in this Section VIII.A.1.6: (1) the Commissioner of Education, or designee; (2) the Hartford Public Schools ("HPS") Superintendent, or designee; (3) a representative of the magnet operators, who is mutually selected by the Plaintiffs and SDE, to the extent such operators choose to participate, and which may be a rotating designee at the mutual agreement of the Plaintiffs and SDE; (4) a pro bono representative of the educational community who is mutually selected by the Plaintiffs and SDE and who brings a fresh perspective to the work of the Advisory Committee; (5) a non-voting representative from RSCO, and (6) a non-voting representative of the Plaintiffs. The Commissioner of Education, or designee, shall be the Chairperson of the Advisory Committee. All members of the Advisory Committee shall have equal voting power, except as otherwise specified in this Section VIII.A.1, and the same access to information and resources.
  - 2. Upon written request from the Advisory Committee at least 8 weeks prior to each meeting, the SDE shall provide at least 2 weeks prior to the meeting the requested relevant and available data, including annual compliance reports and Corrective Action Plans, as described herein.
- B. The Advisory Committee will review recruitment, operations and educational programming at *Sheff* Interdistrict Magnet Schools and *Sheff* CTECS schools that fail to achieve the Socioeconomic Diversity Goal set forth in Section III.A, or schools that do not meet the goals



of Section II.A of this Stipulation, which may be measured on October 1 of each year only after the student assignment and enrollment processes are completed for each school year and in a manner that complies with the Federal and State Constitutions. The Advisory Committee shall make non-binding recommendations to the SDE, RSCO, and operators to advance the goals of this Stipulation in areas such as replicating high-demand themes and instructional models, modeling successful programs, addressing school climate, and other measures as determined by the Committee. The Advisory Committee will issue annual written reports to the SDE and Governor's Office, setting forth its recommendations, including recommendations for schools to increase diversity, on or before November 1 of each year during the term of the Stipulation. An interim May 1 report may be issued at the discretion of the Advisory Committee to serve as an interim report with preliminary goals, objectives and recommendations for further elaboration and detail in the November 1 report.

1. The Advisory Committee shall develop and recommend a timetable and strategic planning process to maximize racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic diversity in *Sheff* Voluntary Interdistrict Programs in a manner consistent with the Socioeconomic Diversity Standard set forth in Section III.A and the goals in Section II.A of this Stipulation, as measured on October 1 of each school year only after the student assignment and enrollment processes for each school year are complete, and in compliance with the State and Federal Constitutions. The final content of the annual report shall be determined by majority vote of the Advisory Committee. Any member of the Advisory Committee who disagrees with the majority vote may include a brief dissenting statement in any annual report.
  2. The SDE shall encourage the operators to implement the Advisory Committee recommendations to the extent the SDE supports such recommendations.
  3. Any newly created Interdistrict Magnet School and/or *Sheff* CTECS School, shall develop an Initial Equity Action Plan ("IEAP") as part of its initial operation plan outlining its proposal to ensure substantially equal educational opportunities, and shall submit such plan to the Advisory Committee for its comment. In each of the first three years of its operation, a new school shall update the Advisory Committee on the implementation of its IEAP, including any alterations or additions made to the plan. As part of its review of any IEAP, the Advisory Committee may provide any recommendations it believes would improve the IEAP. At any point during the first three years of its operation, a new school may request the consultation of the Advisory Committee before revising its IEAP.
  4. The recommendations of the Advisory Committee shall be advisory and shall not be admissible as evidence in a judicial proceeding. The Advisory Committee's failure to recommend a specific action shall not be deemed a concession or waiver by the Plaintiffs of their right to seek such relief in any judicial proceeding. To the extent relevant and admissible, a member of the Advisory Committee may be called as a witness at a hearing to testify regarding their own personal views only on a matter.
- C. The SDE shall not object to CREC's decision to convene a Working Group of the Hartford Superintendent or her designee, and suburban school districts participating in the Open Choice program through which, over the course of the 2019-2020 school year, superintendents, principals, and other suburban school district leaders, educators, staff, and

parents shall receive training and support services focused on, including but not limited, issues of cultural responsiveness. The Working Group may also share effective practices focused on the above training and support services. The SDE shall provide assistance to CREC by encouraging district participation in said group.

- D. An SDE staff member, or SDE contractor, shall be designated to collaborate with relevant stakeholders, including but not limited to district, school, student/parent, operator and other related state agency representatives, to submit draft recommendations to the Advisory Committee as defined below. Such draft documents will be submitted to the Advisory Committee by August 1, 2020:
1. A “Statement of Principles or Charter” to reflect the mission and commitment of the districts related to Open Choice. Plaintiffs shall have the opportunity to review the Statement and provide comment at least 2 weeks prior to August 1, 2020.
  2. Communication protocols for (1) sharing information about student and family satisfaction in ways that are timely; (2) alerting individuals in the receiving and sending districts and/or schools who are in a position to respond effectively; (3) facilitating problem-solving collaboration among the relevant receiving and sending districts, schools, operators, RSCO, and the state; and (4) protecting student and family privacy and confidentiality. SDE shall make available up to \$10,000 during fiscal year 2020 for the purposes of supporting data collection to inform the development of communication protocols.
  3. With the goal of reducing the number of applicant families who decline after receiving a lottery offer or who are “administratively declined” for failure to respond to an offer, SDE will collaborate with a local college or university for the purposes of research into reasons why sub-groups decline and/or fail to respond to choice offers or fail to stay at a choice school. In the event no local college or university is available to complete this pursuant to this timetable, SDE shall secure the services of a private marketing or public opinion/survey research firm. A report detailing the outcome of the research analysis shall be completed no later than October 1, 2020, and such deadline will be met whether the services are completed by a college or university or private entity.

## **IX. Comprehensive School Choice Plan**

- A. By June 1, 2021, the SDE shall create a comprehensive school choice plan (“CCP”), to establish a long-term plan for the stability, sustainability, and predictable and efficient operation of the *Sheff* integration process. In developing the CCP to address the strategies articulated in the Section immediately below, the SDE shall take into account the various considerations set forth in Section XIII.B, giving these considerations the weight and priority that SDE determines.
- B. The CCP shall include strategies to: (1) meet “Demand,” as such term is defined by mutual agreement of the parties through negotiations of the Phase V Stipulation and maximize opportunities for Hartford-resident minority students to attend integrated schools; (2) align HPS’s school consolidation efforts with *Sheff* choice options and support stability and quality initiatives in Hartford neighborhood schools that are consistent with maximizing racial,

ethnic and socioeconomic diversity, including but not limited to consideration of various reform models such as the re-design and establishment of Community Schools, pairing of schools, additional co-location efforts, dual language, advanced learning and other themed schools with an emphasis on potential pathways for students from K-12; (3) maximize transportation efficiencies; (4) develop a fiscal support plan for the *Sheff* Voluntary Interdistrict Programs; (5) develop and implement operational efficiencies between the RSCO and HPS and operators; (6) identify and recommend incentives and strategies to increase participation in Open Choice opportunities; (7) develop preliminary models to measure demand for an integrated setting by Hartford-resident minority students, to the extent a definition of Demand has not been negotiated by the parties; (8) maximize racial, ethnic and socioeconomic diversity at *Sheff* Interdistrict Magnet Schools and *Sheff* CTECS Schools without considering race or ethnicity of any individual student in the student assignment and enrollment processes and in a manner that complies with the Federal and State Constitutions; and (9) coordinate a cohesive and uniform marketing plan for *Sheff* Voluntary Interdistrict Program options. SDE shall retain final decision-making authority relative to all changes to RSCO policies and processes and any redesigns to the choice system. Plaintiffs reserve the right to seek court intervention in the event that such changes or omissions violate the state or federal Constitutions.

- C. The Parties recognize that HPS continues to enroll significant numbers of students in neighborhood schools after October 1 of each year. In 2017-18 an additional 427 students enrolled and in 2018-19 another 225 students were enrolled after October 1. Some of these new students require special education services and/or English Learner (“EL”) services, creating additional need for resources, and have enrolled after the student assignment and enrollment processes for *Sheff* magnet schools have been completed. Accordingly, the Parties agree that SDE shall undertake a review of this issue as SDE develops the CCP, with the goal of addressing it in the CCP.

## **X. Corrective Action Plans**

- A. By December 1 of each year during the term of this Stipulation, any *Sheff*-related Voluntary Interdistrict Program with (1) a lack of socioeconomic diversity in the applicant pool, or (2) a percentage enrollment of incoming students designated as Tier A that exceeds 58% of the incoming student enrollment, or (3) a percentage enrollment of incoming students designated as Tier C that does not meet the 30% minimum of the incoming student enrollment, must be operating pursuant to a Corrective Action Plan (“CAP”) that demonstrates reasonable efforts to meet the socioeconomic diversity goals of the Stipulation within an agreed upon compliance period. The CAPs submitted pursuant to this Stipulation shall be updated on an annual basis and subject to review and approval by the RSCO Director. Prior to approval by the RSCO Director, RSCO shall provide copies of CAPs to the Advisory Committee for its comment.
  - 1. The CAPs shall include quantitative and qualitative assessments of the school’s efforts to (a) increase racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic diversity consistent with the goals of Section II.A and Section III.A above, as measured after the student assignment and enrollment process without considering race or ethnicity of any individual student in the school admissions processes, and in a manner that complies with the Federal and State Constitutions, and (b) implement best practices

for educational equity. The plan should consider entering students as well as the extent to which student attrition may also be affecting such diversity.

2. The SDE shall be responsible for overseeing the development, implementation, and effectiveness of each CAP.
3. The SDE shall require operators to include the recommendations of the Advisory Committee in the CAP to the extent that such goals are supported by the SDE and within available appropriations.
4. For schools required to operate pursuant to a CAP as enumerated in this Section for one year, operators may include specific actions in the CAP that may require additional financial resources for consideration by the SDE. The school shall be required to submit a detailed report, explaining how the funds will be spent and the specific objectives targeted. The SDE, in its sole discretion, may fund specific planning initiatives within available appropriations.
5. For schools required to operate pursuant to a CAP as enumerated in this Section for two consecutive years, school representatives (operator, school leaders, family representatives) shall meet with the SDE to review data (applicant pool, who accepts offers, who enrolls, attrition), identify specific challenges impeding compliance, and develop an agreed-upon set of actions. The SDE shall monitor the operator's progress in implementing the plan and review application data as it becomes available. The SDE will provide appropriate support and direction to assist the operator in increasing acceptances to offers made through the lottery process.

## **XI. Marketing Initiatives and RSCO Application Materials**

- A. During the term of this Stipulation and beginning in the 2019-20 school year, SDE will collaborate with the operators of the *Sheff* Interdistrict Magnet Schools, *Sheff* CTECS Schools, the administrator of the Open Choice Program, and a Plaintiff marketing representative, on developing and implementing effective marketing strategies within the application period to facilitate achieving the goals of the Phase IV Stipulation.
  1. SDE will collaborate with CTECS on the creation of recruitment videos for certain *Sheff* magnet schools and complete them on or before November 1, 2021, with an initial focus on completing videos for the five magnet schools that require most assistance with compliance and/or recruitment support on or before November 1, 2020. In the event CTECS is not available to produce such videos, SDE will budget up to \$50,000 to secure another partner to create such videos for the five magnet schools that require most assistance with compliance and/or recruitment support.
  2. SDE will coordinate marketing efforts to underrepresented populations and other strategic markets based on available grade configuration and target populations. On or before January 31, 2020, and October 1, 2020, SDE will share with Plaintiffs a list of the events it schedules pursuant to such efforts for Plaintiffs' comment. As part of the campaign to reach underrepresented populations:

- a. SDE will deploy representatives from the PIC to satellite offices at designated, publicized times (including evenings and weekends), from November 1 through March 1 of each school year with a specific focus on reaching families in underserved zip codes.
  - b. SDE will coordinate with all operators to schedule evening sessions during the final week of the application period with volunteer assistance to help families complete the online applications.
  - c. RSCO will provide annual training to satellite locations on the application and lottery process, application materials, available RSCO services, choice options, applicable deadlines, and other relevant information to ensure consistent messaging and informed support of prospective applicants and their families.
  - d. RSCO will analyze Hartford block group data and application trends from prior years to identify underserved populations for targeted recruiting both before and during the lottery application period.
3. RSCO will manage and coordinate at least 2 school choice fairs each application cycle at locations in Hartford or near Hartford, which are selected pursuant to the goal of reaching the greatest number of applicants. SDE shall encourage all *Sheff* Magnet Schools, *Sheff* CTECS Schools, and participating Open Choice districts to attend the fairs.
- B. RSCO will develop and implement a revised application process and timeline with the intent to simplify the application process for families and increase the rate of application and acceptance through user-friendly platforms and earlier notification. The revised process will include acquisition of application and lottery software with mobile application capability that will provide more transparency to families and operators, for implementation in the 2021-22 school year.
1. In August of 2019, RSCO issued a Request for Information to inform a Request for Proposal, to be issued by January 30, 2020, for acquisition of multi-platform application and lottery software. SDE shall make available up to \$150,000 to secure this new application and lottery software and to study and implement the new lottery protocols. RSCO will acquire the required software for implementation in 2020-21 for application to *Sheff* school choice schools/programs for the 2021-22 school year. RSCO will make transparency related to available seats and real-time access to number of applications for seats (likelihood of admission) a priority in its assessment and determination of the successful software provider.
  2. Beginning in July of 2019, SDE has collaborated with its marketing consultant to redesign the catalog, website and application, and conducted parent-based focus groups to collect parent feedback to inform the revisions. SDE shared the redesigned catalogue and the results of the parent-based focus groups with Plaintiffs' Representative and Hartford for comment and feedback prior to November 1, 2019. SDE will continue during the term of this stipulation implementing revised parent-friendly marketing materials and continue to solicit

feedback from parent groups and Plaintiffs' representatives.

3. Beginning in 2020 for the 2020-21 school year, RSCO will give parents the option of receiving reminders and status updates related to pending applications via text-message.
4. RSCO will continue to solicit race/ethnicity data in its application materials but will not use such data in the Student Assignment Plan for selection and placement of applicants to the Voluntary Interdistrict Programs covered by the Agreement.
5. Beginning in the 2019-20 lottery application cycle for 2020-21, RSCO will include data from prior application years in application materials to assist families in making informed choices regarding their school and program selections and increase transparency in the lottery process. Such data shall include, for example, declared seats and total applications by school from prior lottery years, and the special preferences that may impact the student's chance of being accepted in the lottery. Beginning in 2020-21 for the 2021-22 school year, RSCO will add data regarding the number of Open Choice students at a particular school and school district, within suppression policies, to the application materials.

## **XII. Student Assignment Plan**

- A. All *Sheff* school choice operators will use the common application and Student Assignment Plan as the sole tools for application, selection and placement of applicants to *Sheff* Interdistrict Magnet Schools, Open Choice opportunities, and the *Sheff* CTECS Schools in accordance with the preferences and policies adopted and approved by the RSCO. *Sheff* school choice operators will not be eligible for and will not receive the per pupil grants authorized pursuant to Sections 10-264i and/or 10-266aa of the Connecticut General Statutes for any student enrolled outside of the RSCO lottery process as set forth herein during the student's entire period of enrollment, unless special circumstances exist as determined by the SDE.
  1. During the 2019-20 application cycle for the 2020-21 school year, RSCO will conduct a single lottery for all applicants to *Sheff* Interdistrict Magnet Schools, Open Choice, and the three *Sheff* CTECS Schools using the common application and uniform placement process.
  2. Beginning in the 2020-21 application cycle for the 2021-22 school year, RSCO will conduct one application cycle, but will divide the lottery into two separate lotteries, conducted within the same timeframe, to separately accommodate placement of applicants in entry/non-entry grades and placement of transfer students from an existing school/program to a school choice option in a non-entry grade. Entry grades shall include pre-kindergarten, 6<sup>th</sup> grade, and 9<sup>th</sup> grade, and kindergarten at schools and programs with kindergarten as the entry grade to the school/program. Both lotteries, hereinafter referred to as "Placement Lottery" and "Transfer Lottery," respectively, shall proceed in accordance with the Student Assignment Plan described herein to best accommodate the respective applicant groups. RSCO will design, coordinate, implement and market the lotteries for *Sheff* choice options

through a common application on the same time schedule for selection and placement of students in *Sheff* Voluntary Interdistrict Programs to avoid confusion for families. Offers will be communicated on the same time schedule.

- B. Each year, Interdistrict Magnet Operators, *Sheff* CTECS Schools, and Open Choice districts shall provide RSCO with available seat declarations for the RSCO Lottery, by school and grade, based on a time schedule determined by RSCO in order to communicate offers of enrollment for the first round of the Student Assignment Plan on or before April 1 of each school year. RSCO shall review and approve the applicable seat declarations prior to implementing the lottery.
1. Beginning in 2020-21 for the 2021-22 school year, RSCO shall direct Interdistrict Magnet Operators, *Sheff* CTECS Schools and Open Choice districts to provide available seat declarations, by school and grade, pursuant to this Section separately for entry grades and non-entry grades based on a time schedule determined by RSCO in order to communicate offers of enrollment for the first round of the Student Assignment Plan on or before April 1 of each year for both the Placement Lottery and the Transfer Lottery.
  2. *Sheff* full-time Interdistrict Magnet Schools shall manage their capacity to maximize enrollment within the funding appropriated by the General Assembly **and** seek to enroll Hartford-resident students during the term of the Stipulation as follows:
    - a. Hartford Host Magnet Schools and RESC Magnet Schools shall seek to enroll at least 50% Hartford-resident students among incoming students in each school year, with the goal of achieving a minimum of 50% Hartford-resident student enrollment out of the total school enrollment by the 2022-23 school year. This would provide the opportunity to an estimated 120 additional Hartford resident students to be placed in choice schools. A waiver of this 50% Hartford resident student requirement may be considered, in the sole discretion of SDE, on a school by school basis by RSCO if the total SES of a school would exceed 60% Tier A SES students.
    - b. Suburban Host Magnet Schools shall seek to enroll at least 30% Hartford-resident students among incoming students in each school year, with the goal of achieving a minimum of 30% Hartford-resident student enrollment out of the total school enrollment by the 2022-23 school year.
    - c. “Incoming students” shall include students enrolled through the RSCO Lottery in any grade served by the school or, beginning in the 2020-21 application cycle for the 2021-22 school year, through the Placement Lottery and Transfer Lottery, collectively. Town of residence for purposes of this Section shall be determined at the time the applicant accepts the placement through the applicable lottery.

- C. For the Open Choice programs, RSCO will assign students to available seats using placement protocols that assign applicants to available Open Choice opportunities based on applicant priorities<sup>1</sup> and the randomized placement number of each applicant.
- D. Beginning in the 2019-20 application cycle for enrollments in the 2020-21 school year, RSCO will implement a Student Assignment Plan for selection and placement of students in *Sheff* Interdistrict Magnets Schools and the *Sheff* CTECS schools through the applicable lottery based on multiple socioeconomic factors in order to achieve the Socioeconomic Diversity Goal set forth in Section III.A above. Before implementing the lottery and Student Assignment Plan described in this Agreement, the SDE shall provide operators with consistent messaging to respond to inquiries about the application and placement process. The SDE shall invite all PIC staff and any interested operator representatives to the annual training on the application and lottery process enumerated above in Section XI.A.2.c. The SDE shall publicly communicate the goal of maximizing socioeconomic diversity and the use of socioeconomic factors in the student assignment plan to promote transparency and avoid confusion.
  - 1. For purposes of the Student Assignment Plan, RSCO will assign each applicant a SES designation.
    - a. SES shall be defined as a measurement of the socioeconomic standing of applicants to the RSCO Lottery, or, beginning in the 2020-21 application cycle, to the Placement and Transfer Lottery, whether determined by family self-reporting, census data based on the census block group within which an applicant resides, or otherwise.
    - b. Beginning in the 2019-20 application cycle, RSCO may solicit basic SES data on the RSCO application, including but not limited to the highest educational attainment of adults in the home, home ownership, number of minor children and/or adults residing in the household, use of English as the primary language spoken in the household, and/or single-parent home status. The SDE may solicit income data directly from applicant families via the RSCO application only after providing Plaintiffs and Hartford with at least three weeks advance notice and affording Plaintiffs and Hartford an opportunity to comment and object. Before soliciting income data for individual households on the RSCO application, RSCO shall make every reasonable effort to obtain the same or equivalent SES data from other sources (e.g., U.S. Census data, American Community Survey data, state, local or school databases, etc.).
    - c. The SES designation of applicants will be determined based on multiple socioeconomic factors, including but not limited to, household income and

---

<sup>1</sup> Throughout this document, references to applicant priorities and the associated weights of the same are intended to mean the priorities determined through a collaboration between RSCO, the Open Choice administrator, respective receiving districts, magnet operators, and/or CTECS operators, as applicable, with the goal of maximizing educational opportunities for families and facilitating transportation efficiencies. Final decision-making authority regarding the applicable priorities and their respective weights, by school, in each year of the RSCO Lottery shall rest with the SDE.



highest educational attainment of adults in the home. The SDE shall confirm the factors that are being utilized with the Plaintiffs and Hartford for the 2019-20 and 2020-21 lottery years at least three weeks prior to conducting the lottery for comments and objections.

- d. For the lottery run in 2019-20 for school year 2020-21, the socioeconomic factors identified in this Section c above shall be determined using census data from the most recent five year American Community Survey for each socioeconomic factor in the algorithm based on the census block group within which an applicant resides. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the SDE may determine, based on comparisons of lottery data simulations, that self-reported data and/or individualized data from other available data sources, alone or in combination with census data, may maximize socioeconomic diversity over results achieved from census data alone. In such circumstances, the SDE may elect to use such other data sources, alone or in combination with available census data, for determining the SES standing of applicants; provided, however, the state shall provide Plaintiffs and Hartford with at least three weeks advance notice of its intent to use such other data sources for their comments and objections.
  - e. Assignment of a SES designation will be based on (1) the respective value of the SES factor from the census data or other data source, or (2) if a single value is not available, the highest share of the relevant population in the block group or the weighted average of the SES factor for the block group, or (3) some other valuation that the state determines maximizes socioeconomic diversity based on a comparison of data simulations. The state will confirm the factors being utilized with the Plaintiffs and Hartford at least three weeks prior to conducting the lottery for their comments and objections.
    - i. Using the median household income for the Metropolitan Statistical Area for Hartford-West Hartford-East Hartford (“Hartford MSA”), based on the most recent U.S. Census’ American Community Survey data. SDE will classify the SES income values for the Student Assignment Plan in each year of the lottery within the following income distributions of them to maximize socioeconomic diversity: (1) Not more than 60-90% of the median household income for low (Tier A); (2) 70% to 140% of the median household income for medium (Tier B); and (3) at least 115% of the median household income for high (Tier C).
  - f. The socioeconomic standing of applicants to the RSCO lotteries shall be determined based on the applicable SES factors for each applicant to the lottery, whether based on census demographics or individual data, or some combination thereof. SDE shall determine the applicable SES factors for the Student Assignment Plan in any given year with the goal of maximizing socioeconomic diversity in the schools and complying with the requirements of the State and Federal Constitutions.
2. The Student Assignment Plan shall place students in magnet and technical school

choice opportunities using the approved seat declarations based on their preferences/priorities and the applicable socioeconomic factors set forth in Section XII.D.1 to maximize acceptance, and socioeconomic diversity.

- a. In furtherance of SES diversity, the Student Assignment Plan shall include various socioeconomic tiers, including, at a minimum, Tier A (low SES), Tier B (medium SES) and Tier C (high SES).
  - b. The Student Assignment Plan shall assign applicants to SES tiers based on the applicable SES factors, as determined by SDE, as informed by the input from both parties' experts in 2019, to achieve a distribution of applicants in each tier reflective of the SES distribution of the overall applicant pool.
  - c. Using the SES tiers, the Student Assignment Plan shall enroll applicants to Interdistrict Magnet Schools and the *Sheff* CTECS schools, as determined by the SDE, to meet the Socioeconomic Diversity Goal set forth in Section III.A.
  - d. Students will be assigned from the waitlist by school, as seats are available, based on the Student Assignment framework set forth in this Section and the goal of maximizing socioeconomic diversity in accordance with the maximum and minimums set forth in Section III.A.
  - e. Beginning in 2020-21 for the 2021-22 school year, SES distributions for the Placement Lottery and Transfer Lottery shall be determined separately based on the overall applicant pool to each lottery.
  - f. For both Hartford-resident and non-Hartford resident applicants, the Student Assignment Plan, including assignments from the waitlist, will assign Hartford-resident applicants to each Interdistrict Magnet School and *Sheff* CTECS school in accordance with the applicable seat declaration based on (a) applicant priorities, and (b) a percent distribution of applicants from each tier, in order of SES value starting with the highest, that maximizes economic diversity in the school and achieves an overall SES distribution for the incoming class as set forth in Section III.A or, for the Transfer Lottery, the given grade level to offset uneven attrition.
  - g. RSCO will seek to assign applicants to all available seats and extend offers for placement in accordance with applicants' school choice order.
3. RSCO will follow the Student Assignment Plan as described herein to place applicants to *Sheff* Interdistrict Magnet Schools, *Sheff* CTECS schools and Open Choice Programs through the RSCO lotteries in each school year, provided, however, the state may vary the SES factors or their valuation, the SES designations, the tier assignments, and any other element of the SES protocol if the state determines such variations maximize socioeconomic diversity based on a comparison of data simulations. In the event the state plans to implement such variations to the SES protocol, the state shall share data simulation comparisons with the Plaintiffs and Hartford at least three weeks prior to conducting the lottery for informational purposes.

- E. RSCO will seek to communicate offers of enrollment for the first round of the Student Assignment Plan on or before April 1 of each school year for selection and placement of students for the next school year with cooperation and participation by all program operators in the implementation of the lottery.
1. RSCO will follow the Student Assignment Plan to place on-time applicants in available seats in the *Sheff* Interdistrict Magnet Schools, *Sheff* CTECS schools and Open Choice Programs covered by the Stipulation in accordance with applicants' school choice order in the school year for which the respective lottery applies as follows: (a) October 1 for Interdistrict Magnet Schools, (b) December 1 for Open Choice programs; and (c) December 1 for *Sheff* CTECS Schools.
  2. RSCO will accept late applications through the RSCO application system for those schools identified with potential opportunities for late applicants as determined by the respective operators through the date designated by RSCO each school year. RSCO will follow the Student Assignment Plan described herein to place late applicants in available seats by school and grade in accordance with the schedule set forth in Section XII.E.1 after exhausting on-time applicants at the respective grade for the school or program.

**XIII. PLANNING FOR PHASE V OF THE STIPULATION:** All parties agree that they will confer to negotiate and formulate a Phase V Stipulation that, with the approval of the General Assembly and the Court, is intended to fully end court jurisdiction of this case through the following central goals: (1) establishing a comprehensive plan to measure and meet demand of Hartford-resident minority students for *Sheff* Voluntary Interdistrict Program access and to maximize racial, ethnic and socioeconomic diversity as measured after the assignment and enrollment process, without considering race or ethnicity of any individual student in the school admissions and enrollment processes, and in a manner that complies with the Federal and State Constitutions; and (2) establishing an effective operating framework for the sustainability of a demand-based goal as a sustainable permanent solution.

- A. In preparation for negotiating the Phase V Stipulation, the SDE will provide Plaintiffs and Hartford with:
1. The unique count of Hartford-resident minority students on RSCO waiting lists, as well as the administrative decline data and late application data, for 2019-20, 2018-2019, 2017-18, and 2016-17 school years, in addition to the application numbers for the 2020-21 lottery cycle. The SDE shall provide said data to Plaintiffs and Hartford on or before April 1, 2020.
  2. On or before January 1, 2021, the SDE will solicit from all operators specific proposals, within current physical capacity, that may allow for increased seat capacity for Hartford resident students, which may include but not be limited to proposals that enhance partnerships/pathways in specific themes/advanced manufacturing, add grades, move seats from other regions, and/or allow for cooperative arrangements with local colleges or universities with early college programs. Such proposals will be required to include sufficient detail and long-term planning projections to allow for SDE's meaningful consideration, including

but not limited to: (a) the steps for the operator to operationalize the change(s); (b) the potential fiscal impact; (c) the administrative impact on the operator and SDE; and (d) the impact on transportation costs and facilitation.

B. As considerations for developing a Phase V Stipulation, the SDE will review the reports already submitted by the Open Choice and Magnet School Working Groups and take into account the following considerations for purposes of discussions with Plaintiffs:

1. Impact of removing magnet enrollment caps so that magnet schools can be filled to capacity;
2. Impact and efficacy of expanding existing partnership agreements and developing new agreements;
3. Impact and efficacy of expanding regional pre-kindergarten centers in Hartford and suburban towns with themes that would attract students across the region;
4. Pairing and replicating high-demand themes and instructional models;
5. Supporting Hartford magnet and neighborhood schools through colocation opportunities, pairing options, and before and after school collaborations;
6. Identifying school facilities that are underutilized or slated to close in Hartford or *Sheff* region suburban districts to repurpose the facility or facilities as “regional Open Choice schools” or “regional Interdistrict magnet schools” or “regional *Sheff* CTECS schools”;
7. Impact of academic pathways that link existing and new *Sheff* Interdistrict magnet programs located on or near particular Hartford campuses to Open Choice seats in Hartford neighborhood schools located on or near the same campuses;
8. Impact and efficacy of the current funding formula for *Sheff* Voluntary Interdistrict Programs;
9. Opportunities to place Hartford resident students in *Sheff* Voluntary Interdistrict Programs after October 1 of each school year;
10. Opportunities to establish permanent locations for *Sheff* Interdistrict Magnet Schools that are not currently in permanent locations;
11. Opportunities to address racial disparities in educational outcomes, student graduation, retention and discipline rates;
12. Opportunities to increase racial diversity amongst educators in the *Sheff* Interdistrict Magnet, *Sheff* CTEC Schools, and Open Choice schools;
13. Opportunities to reduce the disparities between Hartford neighborhood schools and the *Sheff* Interdistrict Magnet schools in the numbers of students in English Learner programs and the number of students requiring special education services; and

14. Impact and efficacy of existing frameworks for funding special education costs in *Sheff* Interdistrict Magnet and Open Choice schools and processes for registration and residency verification for choice students.

- C. Plaintiffs shall submit their comments to the Defendants regarding any interim Advisory report set forth in Section VIII.B no later than September 1, 2020 and to the CCP no later than July 1, 2021. The parties shall meet and confer and make all reasonable efforts to resolve any conflicting positions relative to the CCP's contents on or before September 1, 2021.
- D. Negotiation of the Phase V Agreement may begin on or after April 1, 2021, upon written request by either party to begin scheduling negotiation sessions. The parties intend to negotiate in good faith for the Phase V Agreement to take effect at the conclusion of the term of this agreement, and for such terms to be resolved by way of tentative agreement and submitted to the Court on or before October 1, 2021. Upon agreement of the parties and full execution of the Phase V Agreement and approval of the terms by the Court, the Attorney General shall submit it to the General Assembly within ten (10) days of the commencement of the 2022 regular session pursuant to Conn. Gen. Stat. §3-125a, or within ten (10) days of its execution if the General Assembly is already in session. If the Phase V Stipulation and Proposed Order is approved or deemed approved by the General Assembly, the parties shall submit it to the Court for entry as a court order at the earliest possible time. In the event that there is no agreement, the parties reserve the right to seek judicial relief under existing law and judicial decisions.

**XIV. Material Breach and Enforcement:** The parties agree that the Student Assignment Plan set forth herein and the terms of this Stipulation represent good faith efforts by Defendants, Plaintiffs and Hartford to collaborate on a short-term agreement for purposes of transitioning to an SES-based lottery selection system while reformulating *Sheff* Voluntary Interdistrict Programs and models for sustainability and engaging long-term planning initiatives to inform a Phase V to this Stipulation. In the interest of facilitating the transition, reformulation initiatives, and implementing Corrective Action Plans, the parties agree that a material breach of this agreement shall be limited to the following circumstances:

- A. All standards set forth in these Sections XIV and XV, except as specifically provided in Section XV.B.1.a, are contingent upon such percentage variance being the equivalent of at least 5 students at a school. Any alleged failure to meet goals or percentages of students that constitutes less than 5 students shall be considered *de minimis*.
- B. It shall be a material breach of this agreement if SDE fails to convene the Advisory Committee as indicated in Section VIII.A herein and engage the same at least three times per year within the time period specified in Section VIII.A, subject to a 30 day cure period upon written notice of noncompliance by the Plaintiffs.
- C. Beginning in the 2020-21 RSCO lottery cycle, after a waiting period in 2019-20 to implement the Student Assignment Plan, it shall be a material breach of this agreement if more than 20% of the *Sheff* Interdistrict Magnet Schools student enrollment for incoming students does not meet the Socioeconomic Diversity Goal for Tier A as set forth in Section III.A, unless any such school is in the process of increasing Hartford-resident enrollment to

ensure they address past under-enrollments of Hartford-resident students, including and specifically limited to, Academy of Aerospace & Engineering Elementary School, International Magnet School for Global Citizenship, Glastonbury East Hartford Magnet School, Reggio Magnet School, Discovery Academy, and Hartford Prekindergarten Magnet School. The schools listed in the previous sentence shall not count toward the 20% minimum from this Section XIV.C as long as any such school does not enroll an incoming class that exceeds 63.5% of students from Tier A.

- D. It shall be a material breach of this agreement if, by December 1 of each year during the term of this Stipulation, any *Sheff*-related Voluntary Interdistrict Program with (1) significant capacity due to a lack of SES diversity in the applicant pool, or (2) a percentage of incoming enrolled students designated as Tier A that exceeds 60% of the total incoming school enrollments or Tier C that is lower than 30% of total incoming school enrollments is not operating pursuant to a Corrective Action Plan, subject to a 30 day cure period upon written notice of noncompliance by the Plaintiffs.
- E. It shall be a material breach of this agreement if SDE fails to develop a CCP, as referenced in Section IX.A, on or before July 1, 2021.

## **XV. Other Enforcement**

- A. In the event the Connecticut General Assembly does not approve the currently anticipated *Sheff*-related funding, or there is a rescission of funding as needed to implement the provisions set forth herein for the school years covered by this agreement, and SDE cannot make up the shortfall with other funding, such that in SDE's reasonable judgment it will substantially impair SDE's ability to comply with the remainder of the Phase IV stipulation, which information shall be promptly communicated to Plaintiffs, Plaintiffs reserve the right to seek an order from the Court upon receipt of such information. This provision only applies to the funding noted herein that is not qualified by the phrase "within available appropriations," except as to Section VI.B.
- B. In the event the Student Assignment Plan set forth herein results in a substantial negative impact as defined below for the 2020-21 school year based on the October 1, 2020 enrollments, the Advisory Group's November 1, 2020 report will address the results and make recommendations to the respective operators and SDE for furthering progress toward increasing diversity. For each year during the term of this Stipulation based on the October 1 enrollments, the parties shall meet and confer by October 15 to discuss the preliminary results of the Student Assignment Plan and other enrollment data, and shall make all reasonable efforts to work together to revise the applicable protocols for the subsequent school year in order to address any substantial negative impact in a manner consistent with the goals of this Stipulation, the *Sheff v. O'Neill* decisions, and the Federal and State Constitutions.
  - 1. A "Substantial Negative Impact" as a result of the Student Assignment Plan set forth in this Stipulation occurs if:
    - a. Based on the October 1 enrollments in any year during the Stipulation, the incoming student enrollment at 20% or more of the *Sheff* Interdistrict Magnet Schools does not meet the Socioeconomic Diversity Goal for Tier A as set

forth in Section III.A, unless any such school is in the process of increasing Hartford-resident enrollment to ensure they address past under-enrollments of Hartford-resident students, including and specifically limited to, Academy of Aerospace & Engineering Elementary School, International Magnet School for Global Citizenship, Glastonbury East Hartford Magnet School, Reggio Magnet School, Discovery Academy, and Hartford Prekindergarten Magnet School. The schools listed in the previous sentence shall not count toward the 20% minimum from this Section XV.B.1.a as long as any such school does not enroll an incoming class that exceeds 63.5% of students from Tier A. Any alleged failure to meet goals or percentages of students pursuant to this Section XV.B.1.a based on 5 or fewer students at a school whose incoming class is 80 or more students, or 4 students at a school whose incoming class is between 45 and 79 students, or 3 students at a school whose incoming class is fewer than 45 students shall be considered *de minimis* and shall not constitute a Substantial Negative Impact for purposes of this Section XV.B.1.a; or

- b. Beginning on October 1, 2021, the total number of reduced isolation students enrolled at 20% or more of the *Sheff* Interdistrict Magnet Schools:
  - i. declines by 10% or more compared to that school's percentage on October 1, 2019 (e.g., a decline from 100 students to 90 students) at the schools specifically listed in Section XV.B.2 below, or
  - ii. declines by 15% or more as compared to that school's percentage on October 1, 2019 (e.g., a decline from 100 students to 85 students) at the remaining *Sheff* Interdistrict Magnet Schools.
2. For purposes of Section XV.B.1.b.i, the referenced list of *Sheff* Interdistrict Magnet Schools shall include: Capital Preparatory Magnet School, Classical Magnet School, Betances STEM Magnet School, Breakthrough South Magnet School, Great Path Academy, Hartford Magnet Trinity College Academy, Pathways Academy of Technology and Design, R.J. Kinsella Magnet School of the Performing Arts, Ana Grace Academy of the Arts Elementary School, Civic Leadership High School, Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts Middle, Metropolitan Learning Center for Global & International Studies, Two Rivers Magnet Middle School, Connecticut River Academy at Goodwin University, and Global Experience Magnet School.
3. If the parties are unable to mutually agree to a method of addressing a Substantial Negative Impact directly resulting from the Student Assignment Plan within 45 days of the any meet and confer pursuant to Section XV.B above, any party may petition the Court on or after November 15, 2021 to resolve that dispute.

**PLAINTIFFS**  
**MILO SHEFF, ET AL.**

By: Martha Stone Date: 1/10/20

Martha Stone  
Center for Children's Advocacy  
University of Connecticut School of Law  
65 Elizabeth Street, Hartford, CT 06105

Daniel Ross Date: 1/10/20

Daniel Ross  
Cara McClellan  
NAACP Legal Defense & Educational Fund, Inc.  
40 Rector Street, Fifth Floor, New York, NY 10006

Dennis D. Parker Date: 1/10/20

Dennis D. Parker  
National Center for Law and Economic Justice  
275 7<sup>th</sup> Ave., New York, NY 10001

Sarah Hinger Date: 1/10/20

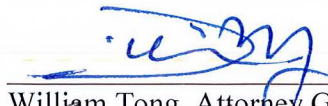
Sarah Hinger  
American Civil Liberties Union  
125 Broad Street, New York, NY 10004

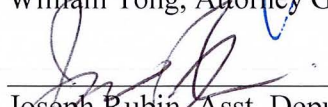
Wesley W. Horton Scott Garosshen Date: 1/10/2020

Wesley W. Horton  
Scott Garosshen  
Horton, Dowd, Bartschi & Levesque, P.C.  
90 Gillett Street, Hartford, CT 06105




**DEFENDANTS**  
**WILLIAM A. O'NEILL, ET AL.**

By:  Date: 1/10/20  
William Tong, Attorney General

By:  Date: 1/10/20  
Joseph Rubin, Asst. Deputy Attorney General

Erik T. Lohr, Associate Attorney General  
Ralph E. Urban, Assistant Attorney General  
Darren P. Cunningham, Assistant Attorney General  
Office of the Attorney General  
165 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT 06106

**INTERVENORS**  
**CITY OF HARTFORD**

By:  Date: 1/10/20  
Howard Rifkin, Corporation Counsel  
City of Hartford  
550 Main Street, Room 210  
Hartford, CT 06103

***APPROVED and SO ORDERED:***

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Superior Court Judge*

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix A**

The following schools constitute Existing Magnet Schools for purposes of Section III.C.4 of the Stipulation:

Academy of Aerospace & Engineering  
Academy of Aerospace & Engineering Elementary  
Academy of Science & Innovation  
Ana Grace Academy of the Arts Elementary School  
Betances Early Reading Lab Magnet School  
Betances STEM Magnet School  
Breakthrough Magnet School, North Campus  
Breakthrough Magnet School South Campus  
Capital Preparatory Magnet School  
Classical Magnet School  
Connecticut IB Academy  
Connecticut River Academy at Goodwin College  
Discovery Academy  
Environmental Sciences Magnet School at Mary M. Hooker  
Glastonbury-East Hartford Magnet School  
Global Experience Magnet School  
Great Path Academy at Manchester Community College  
Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts (GHAA) High  
Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts (GHAA) Middle  
Hartford Magnet Trinity College Academy  
Hartford PreKindergarten Magnet School  
International Magnet School for Global Citizenship  
Metropolitan Learning Center for Global & International Studies  
Montessori Magnet at Batchelder  
Montessori Magnet School (CREC)  
Montessori Magnet School at Annie Fisher  
Museum Academy  
Noah Webster MicroSociety Magnet School  
Pathways Academy of Technology & Design  
Civic Leadership High School  
R.J. Kinsella Magnet School of the Performing Arts  
Reggio Magnet School of the Arts  
Riverside Magnet School at Goodwin College  
Sport and Medical Sciences Academy  
STEM Magnet School at Annie Fisher  
Two Rivers Magnet Middle School  
University High School of Science and Engineering  
University of Hartford Magnet School  
Wintonbury Early Childhood Magnet School

<b>Stip. Agreement Section</b>	<b>Question</b>	<b>Response</b>
<b>II. Controlling Goals of this Phase IV Stipulations</b>	How will this (Section II) determine the order of placement?	<p>Section II does not address the issue of placement related to enrollment or admissions for a specific pool of applicants. Placement will be made using the SES protocol, and in a manner consistent with the stipulated agreement.</p> <p>Related to the controlling goals in Section II, operators and schools are intended to make significant efforts to increase school diversity outside of the assignment and enrollment process, including but not limited to, via recruitment, marketing, outreach and consideration of themes, pathways and curriculum.</p>
	Will registration and enrollment documents request the same SES information to allow for this reporting in PSIS?	This will be determined in the near future.
<b>III. Definitions:</b>	Does III M apply only when applicants who chose "All Districts" have been offered seats or does it apply once the OC waitlist for that district/grade is exhausted? Recommend that it applies after two offers have been made and All Districts option has been exhausted.	<p>Section III.M does not apply only to applicants who chose "All Districts." As stated in the language of that section, once the OC waitlist has been exhausted, SDE may, at its discretion, offer placements in available OC seats to students on any magnet school waitlist.</p> <p>This is consistent with historical practice to maximize enrollment in OC seats that have been made available.</p>
<b>IV. Administration of RSCO</b>	Based on IV.A.ii - will RSCO provide a placement priority to Hartford resident students who have applied multiple years and have remained on the waitlist? How does that fall within the SES placement?	At this time, it is not the intent to provide a placement priority to Hartford resident students who have applied for multiple years. Of note, this same language has been in previously stipulations and this consideration is not new, rather an ongoing consideration of this issue.
	Who is responsible for the restocking and delivery of materials to the Welcome Centers? (Section IV, B5. p.6)	<p>RSCO will be responsible for delivering RSCO materials.</p> <p>This Section does not change the responsibility of the operators to provide the satellites and welcome centers with their operator-specific materials.</p>

<b>Stip. Agreement Section</b>	<b>Question</b>	<b>Response</b>
<b>IV. Administration of RSCO (cont.)</b>	For staffing at the library, is it intended to be within the existing staff at the PIC or will additional staff be hired?	This will be addressed by the contracts with CREC and HPS.
	Will there be a full-time marketing person at SDE who will support the partners regarding marketing?	This has yet to be determined, however, it is also the expectation that as part of the current funding operators receive that they will continue to take substantial responsibility for focused marketing for their schools.
<b>V. Data Transparency &amp; Reporting</b>	Will CREC receive the achievement and growth performance, attendance and graduation data, reports for students enrolled in Open Choice districts prior to the data becoming public? Who is developing the reports?	Reports are being developed by CSDE RSCO/IT staff.  SDE will be happy to share the reports with the operators, as it has been agreed they will be made public.
	When you show Hartford student performance, will it be in relation to suburban student performance, and what will this look like? Request that the data show the whole picture, so data for all schools should be included. Can a sample report be provided? (Section V, B. p.7)	At this time, the data reporting agreed to will show only the disaggregated data for Hartford residents. The report is public and can be shared with the partners.
	Per this language operators are to calculate the percentage of RI students enrolled based on Oct 1 data, and "...the data shall include the numbers and percentage of enrolled students by socioeconomic grouping..." Who is responsible for the calculation of the SES and will RSCO be providing us with a tool to do the calculation? (Section V, D. p.7)	The October 1 SES calculation is based on incoming enrollments rather than whole school data. Operators will have SES data available to them through the placement process (SDE will provide SES tier assignment data to the operators for students who receive offers). Operators will be expected to use those tier assignments to provide the initial SES calculations of their enrolling students based on October 1 data regarding new enrollments for that school year.
	What resources and tools are being provided to ensure the data is captured?	SDE will work with operators and provide appropriate data sets as needed to inform the reporting requirements in Section V.D of the Stipulation.
	In section C - is this only for Hartford resident students or all students?	School-level data relative to total enrollments are available on EdSight.

<b>Stip. Agreement Section</b>	<b>Question</b>	<b>Response</b>
<b>V. Data Transparency &amp; Reporting</b>	In section D - is SDE planning to provide additional financial support for districts and CREC to support districts in monitoring these new levels of SES and racial compliance?	CREC receives funding each year to operate the OC program, and it is anticipated that the expectations set forth in the stipulation fall within the current funding and associated deliverables.
<b>VI. Restructuring and Supports for Sheff Interdistrict Magnet Schools</b>	For the grant due January 31, 2020, what is the process to submit and what is the review process?	The RFPs have been released. RSCO will focus on reducing barriers related to the process, to encourage all operators participate.
	Has RSCO determined the grant form for the \$1.9/1.1 million and its deadline?	
	How will the \$1.1 million be allocated among applying school? Will it be allocated evenly based on the number of schools or is there a formula for distributing the funds? ( <i>Section VI, A. p.7</i> )	Allocations will be determined by RSCO, and will depend upon the reformulation plans articulated in the applications, cost, impact and other factors. The application provides information about the criteria that will be used to assess applications. There is no specific plan to allocate the funds evenly as rule. It is possible a very strong application with the potential to have significant impact on the school will require minimal funds, while another similarly strong creative restructuring idea will require more significant resources.
	When will the planning begin for operators to create pathways? What will the structure look like? ( <i>Section VI, I. p.10</i> )	This language anticipates that operators have, or will, develop their own proposals for pathways, and SDE will solicit and consider them.
	When will we receive the new Operations Plan template so that we can update Aerospace Elementary and other CREC schools?	The new OP template should be available by the end of the month.
<b>VII. Open Choice Support and Participation</b>	How and when will CSDE communicate changes to OC Supports to OC districts?	The RFPs have been released and issued to all participating OC districts.
	Is there flexibility for an Open Choice district to be represented on the Advisory Committee?	No, the stipulation defines the membership of the Advisory Committee. However, note, there are public meetings where outside input will be submitted, and any OC representative could provide input at those meetings.
	Does this funding also apply to HPS?	The agreement specifies "Open Choice Districts."
	Are grants for FY20? FY21? Two Year Grants?	The stipulated agreement indicates that the funding is for Fiscal Year 2020. These are only 1-year grants.

<b>Stip. Agreement Section</b>	<b>Question</b>	<b>Response</b>
<b>VII. Open Choice Support and Participation</b>	Will the Sheff Working Group participate in the development of the grant for the District action plans?	We will use the Working Group's written recommendations as input.
	How involved is the grant application process to access the funds?	RSCO will focus on reducing barriers related to the process, to encourage all districts to participate. However, we will expect very specific plans to operationalize any application concept, as often the implementation is pivotal to the success of the concept.
	Will SDE prioritize funding for districts that include action plans as outlined in section B? Who is monitoring these action plans?	The terms will be stated in the "RFP," including the reporting of deliverables.
<b>X. Corrective Action Plans (CAP)</b>	Is the CAP in addition to the current Compliance Plans, meaning does the CAP only speak to the SES standards and Compliance Plans would speak to not meeting the reduced isolation setting?	No. The Compliance Plans will be renamed the Corrective Action Plans, and modified to reflect changes in the stipulated agreement.
	Who from SDE is monitoring the operator's progress with the CAP? How will this person provide support and direction different from the current process?	SDE will communicate information about the CAP framework for 2020-21 at a later date based, in part, on implementation of various initiatives in the Stipulation.
	Why is 58% the threshold when the maximum is 60% based on the tiers? SDE has mentioned "flexibility" between Tiers B and C...where does it state that in the Stip? (Section X, A. p.14)	<p>CAPs support schools and operators in improving and planning to better address the goals of the <i>Sheff</i> stipulation, and accordingly the Stipulations set 58% as the threshold for the CAP requirement as a preventative measure prior to an issue with the 60% maximum.</p> <p>The "flexibility" comes from the fact that there is a maximum established (60%) and a minimum established (30%), but if either varies from those thresholds, it will impact the percentage of enrolling students in Tier B.</p>
	Please clarify "The CAPs shall include...assessments of the school's efforts to a) increase racial, ethnic and Socioeconomic diversity..." then it says "...as measured after the student assignment and enrollment process without considering race or ethnicity of any	The phrase related to "without considering race or ethnicity of any individual student" relates only to the assignment and enrollment process. Consequently, race and ethnicity data are not available until after October 1. Operators and schools are expected to make significant efforts to increase school diversity outside of the assignment and enrollment process, including but not limited to, via

<b>Stip. Agreement Section</b>	<b>Question</b>	<b>Response</b>
<b>X. Corrective Action Plans (CAP)</b>	individual student...". These seem to be conflicting statements. (Section X, A1. p.14)	recruitment, marketing, outreach and consideration of themes, pathways and curriculum.
	While there are no penalties for the 2020-2021 cycle, should this new model bring more schools to be non-compliant, how will SDE impose penalties in future years?	The agreement does not provide for financial penalties based on failure to meet SES goals although it may result in future court intervention.
	Who will develop the plan and who is expected to implement that targeted underserved applicants?	There is no "plan" referenced, but rather a coordinated effort to maximize strategies, which may include operator representatives attending marketing meetings currently held.
	Section B - Could the likelihood of admission be based on the town rather than just Hartford/Suburban? If so, how will the SES sort impact the likelihood of admission? Is the new application intended to be available by November 1, 2020?	This will be studied and decided prior to the beginning of the application process for the 2021-22 school year. In certain circumstances, a "neighborhood" preference and/or partner districts already establish admission preferences based upon town or address.
	For RSCO reports - will SDE recreate the current RSCO reports to accurately reflect the targets as outlined in the stipulated agreement?	Once developed, RSCO reports will accurately reflect the targets as outlined in the stipulated agreement.
<b>XII. Student Assignment Plan</b>	Understanding the new SES factors, will applicants still be ordered by participation rate and then SES or are applicants being grouped solely on SES factors? a) Will preferences be placed before the SES sort? b) Will preferences be limited based on the SES classification? c) Will applicants only receive a preference within their SES classification?	Preferences will be appropriately weighted as part of the SES protocol, in a manner similar to the historical approach used by RSCO but tailored to the current model.
	How do you define "low, medium and high" socioeconomic status in order to determine what tier a family falls in? For the 2019-20	This is being developed, and will be informed by the expert opinions of both the State's expert, Michael Alves, and the Plaintiff's expert, Dr. Erica Frankenberg. As defined in the stipulation, the minimum of

<b>Stip. Agreement Section</b>	<b>Question</b>	<b>Response</b>
<b>XII. Student Assignment Plan</b>	application cycle, will these tiers be solely based on the applicant address? In other words, how will RSCO assign each applicant's SES designation? ( <i>Section III A p.3</i> )	two factors will be considered, the educational attainment and income of a household. For the 2019-2020 application cycle, the income will be solely based upon the census data associated with the applicant's address and the educational attainment may be based with on either census or self-reported data.
	Does the definition of incoming students also include students part of our continuum schools? For example, are Aerospace 5th graders part of the incoming class to Aerospace 6th grade or are these considered part of the current enrollment?	There is no change from current practice.
	Will the seat declaration template for magnet school operators be changing or are we to continue to declare seats Hartford and suburban?	Operators will be asked to provide seat declarations with two numbers: the amount of seats they can accommodate based upon the physical and administrative capacity of the school, and the amount they intend to enroll. Operators will also work with SDE to consider the SES tiers of the applicants, historical information on their seat declarations and compliance, and other factors to allow the operators to determine final seat offerings. Seats will be declared separately for Hartford and suburban residents.
	How will magnet operators track and monitor reduced and non-reduced isolation applications to determine appropriate marketing strategies and ensure schools are on track to meet the compliance standard?	This will be done consistent with Section V.D. to be considered only after the enrollment and admissions have been completed (the prior year will inform the next recruitment cycle, but not contemporaneous with the application cycle.) Instead, operators may consider if they need to change strategies during the application cycle as related to SES.
	Do applicants with a higher educational degree have more of a chance than someone with who maybe did not graduate from high school?	No.
	Please provide more clarity on the seat declaration process (Operators v RSCO roles). Will RSCOTT include Tier A, B and C when seat decs are entered? ( <i>Section XII, B, p.18</i> )	Operators will be asked to provide seat declarations with two numbers: the amount of seats they can accommodate based upon the physical and administrative capacity of the school, and the amount they intend to enroll. Operators will also work with SDE to consider the SES tiers in of the applicants, historical information on their seat declarations and compliance, and other factors to allow the



Stip. Agreement Section	Question	Response
<b>XII. Student Assignment Plan</b>		operators to determine final seat offerings. Operators will declare seats separately for Hartford and suburban residents.
	When would operators request a waiver for the 50-50. Will a tool be provided? i.e Cap Prep, Classical ( <i>Section XII, B 2a, p.18</i> )	SDE expects that it will consider waivers from the 50-50 based on a collaboration with the operators prior to the first round of the lottery.
	Please clarify (b) "...a percent distribution of applicants from each tier, in order of SES value starting with the highest..." Does this mean the highest tier floats to the top? ( <i>Section XII, D2f, p.21</i> )	No.
	Please clarify. Example: If I'm tier C and I'm #1 on the Tier C waitlist but the school needs Tier A, will that person get pulled? ( <i>Section XII, D2g, p.21</i> )	We do not anticipate there being waitlist numbers. The filling of seats based upon attrition and/or declines may be determined by Tier assignment.
	Please confirm the deadline to fill seats in Magnets will remain October 1 and December 1 will now be the deadline for Open Choice and CTECS? ( <i>Section XII E1. P.22</i> )	Confirmed.
	In order to begin placements by April 1st, will SDE maintain a consistent app. deadline of Jan. 31st or are they hoping the new system/software will minimize "Clean-up" needed?	The SDE is considering extending the deadline 2 weeks to allow increased recruitment and marketing by operators and the State.
	E.1 - Based on the lottery schedule, will we still be able to run the enrolled sibling and OC only placements before the magnet placement process begins?	There is no expected change from current practice.
	E.1 - Does December 1st now replace the "October 1 report"?	It has always been the October 1 <sup>st</sup> data report, however, our agreement has been that we will release such data to the parties by December 1 <sup>st</sup> .
	Which specific SES factors is SDE using to sort families for placements?	Census block data which informs socioeconomic factors by geographic location, and educational attainment status.
	At what point will SDE determine if they use another valuation for SES? What is the determining factor?	SDE will review the data and as appropriate consult with its expert to determine if, in the future, additional variables will inform SES Tier assignments.

<b>Stip. Agreement Section</b>	<b>Question</b>	<b>Response</b>
<b>XII. Student Assignment Plan</b>	Will Hartford residents also be sorted by SES ABC tiers? If so, will SES apply to all Hartford residents or just those applying to magnet schools?	It will be applied to all Hartford resident-students who apply through RSCO to magnet schools.
<b>General Overall Questions</b>	Is there a need for partners to resubmit their protocols given the shift in thought?	Not at this time. Operators may need to adjust protocols as we run simulations.
	Does the stipulation impact the current timeline for the lottery closing?	The SDE is considering extending the deadline by 2 weeks to allow increased recruitment and marketing by operators and the state.
	Are there greater details pertaining to SES?	We are developing the specific details of the SES protocol and will communicate those details once we have completed that process.
	Is there a waiver for SES for schools?	Not at this time. Operators may need to adjust protocols as we run simulations.
	How does the settlement impact current compliance?	The new SES standards are being applied to the incoming class, and successive classes, only. We anticipate that the SES protocol will advance the goals set forth in the Stipulation. As stated in the Agreement, we will report racial and ethnicity data only after the enrollment and admissions have been completed. Operators may use town and SES information for purposes of recruitment and marketing strategies during the application cycle.
	Does the state anticipate having the application in multiple languages or adding a google translate option?	SDE has traditionally provided the application in Spanish, and will continue to do so.
	What training will be provided to PIC staff to address any issues identified in the data that is presented?	This is being developed.