

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Department for Exceptional Children Instructional and Non-instructional Services Staff for
Gaston County School System SY 2026-2029



Issue Date: February 18, 2026

All questions must be submitted via email no later than 5:00 pm March 10, 2026

to Renee' Chapman, yrchapman@gaston.k12.nc.us,

Exceptional Children Program Consultant

Answers to written questions will be available by March 12, 2026

Applications (an original paper application and 8 copies, 9 total) Due: March 16, 2026

(Proposals will not be accepted after 5:00 p.m. on this date).

Gaston County School System
ATTN: Chris Mills, Executive Director
Department for Exceptional Children
215 West Third Avenue
Gastonia, NC 28052

Providers submitting an RFP must be in "Good Standing" with all applicable city, county, state and/or federal business license or permit requirements.

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BACKGROUND

The **GASTON COUNTY SCHOOLS (GCS) in GASTON COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA** is currently requesting proposals from appropriately licensed and certified agencies for the provision of Special Education Instructional and Non-instructional Service Staff who desire to provide services within Gaston County Schools during the school years of 2026-2029.

The Gaston County Schools system has 56 schools and a student population of approximately 31,000. Approved applicant/vendor will be eligible to provide services for (3) academic calendar years; specific dates will be provided to the selected vendor after the completion of the selection process and, if requested, interview process.

Gaston County Schools requests proposals from eligible vendor agencies to provide the following comprehensive services:

Fully Certified/Licensed Direct Instructional and Non-instructional Service Providers for grades PK-12 to include:

- Special Education Teachers
- Special Education Assistants (Paraprofessionals)
- Teachers of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- Teachers of the Blind and Visually Impaired
- Speech Language Pathologists
- Speech Language Pathology Assistants
- Physical Therapists
- Physical Therapy Assistants
- Occupational Therapists
- Occupational Therapy Assistants
- School Psychologists
- School Audiologists
- Orientation and Mobility Specialists
- Sign Language Interpreters
- Spoken Language Facilitators
- Board Certified Behavioral Analysts
- Registered Behavior Therapists
- Student Specific Support Assistants
- Licensed Music Therapists
- Skilled Nursing (RN, LPN, CNA 1, CNA 2, Hab Tech)
- Other positions as needed

The selected agency/vendor will be expected to enter into a **“Program and Facility Use Agreement”** with Gaston County Schools outlining the terms and conditions under which Gaston County Schools will allow the agency to access Gaston County Schools student data and property to provide services.

A. Goals for the School Based Special Education Instructional and Non-instructional Staff

- To ensure compliance with all applicable federal, state, local statutes and regulations, State Board of Education (North Carolina Department of Public Instruction) with respect to special education direct instructional and non-instructional support services
- To provide appropriately licensed direct instructional staff (EC Adaptive, EC General, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Teachers, Visually Impaired Teachers, Speech Language Pathologists)
- To provide appropriate highly qualified related service providers (PT, OT, Speech, School Psychologists, School Audiologists, Related Service Provider Assistants, Sign Language Interpreters, Spoken Language Facilitators, and Music Therapists)
- To provide instructional and behavioral support/paraprofessional staff for special education students
- To provide appropriately licensed Behavior Analyst and Technicians for special education students
- To provide appropriately licensed skilled nursing providers to meet direct and indirect medical needs of special education students

B. Scope of Services

Services provided to Gaston County Schools Exceptional Children Department should be based on the following principles and guidelines:

Direct Instructional Staff (General, Adaptive Curriculum, Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Blind and Visually Impaired, Speech Language Pathology)

- Provide direct and indirect instructional support for PK-12 grade special education students based on 180 day Gaston County Schools Calendar
- Develop and implement Individualized Education Plans (IEP) for students grades PK-12
- Participate in IEP meetings
- Perform case management duties
- Provide research based interventions within specific area of need
- Conduct ongoing progress monitoring
- Provide direct instruction in one or more core content areas (reading, math, and writing)
- Use required or recommended Direct Instructional Programs
- Participate in appropriate professional development as requested by the district
- Keep adequate records including but not limited to service delivery logs, progress monitoring data, progress reports
- Monitor instruction and services provided by assigned paraprofessional staff
- Demonstrate organizational and management skills in the classroom

- Other duties as assigned

Non-instructional Services Staff (School Psychologists, Physical Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Speech Therapist, Music Therapists, Sign Language Interpreters, Spoken Language Facilitators, Orientation and Mobility Specialists, School Audiologists)

- Provide direct and indirect instructional support for PK-12 grade special education students based on 180 day Gaston County Schools Calendar
- Develop and/or implement Individualized Education Plans (IEP) for students, grades PK-12
- Participate in IEP meetings
- Complete formal and informal assessments and written reports associated with credentialed / speciality area
- Assist with case management duties as warranted
- Provide research based interventions within specific area of need
- Conduct ongoing progress monitoring
- Participate in appropriate professional development as requested by the district
- Keep adequate records including but not limited to service delivery logs, progress monitoring data, progress reports
- Monitor instruction and services provided by assigned therapy assistants
- Increase educational and functional accessibility allowing students to receive full benefit of a free and appropriate public education (FAPE).
- Provide consultation for teachers and other school staff on student specific needs.
- Provide direct and indirect interventions as specified in student specific IEPs and Plans of Care
- Demonstrate organizational and management skills
- Other duties as assigned

Instructional and Behavioral Paraprofessional Staff (EC Teacher Assistants, Therapy Assistants, Student Specific Support Assistants)

- Provide direct and indirect instructional support for PK-12 grade special education student based on 180 day Gaston County Schools Calendar under the direction/supervision of Licensed Special Education Teacher or Department for Exceptional Children Administrative Staff
- Participate in appropriate professional development as requested by the district
- Assist with adequate records including student performance data and service delivery logs
- Other duties as assigned by the supervising teacher or administrator

Board Certified Behavior Analyst/Registered Behavior Technician

- Provide behavior supports for special education students
- Assist with FBAs and BIPs
- Keep adequate records for progress monitoring
- Participate in appropriate professional development as requested by the district
- Provide ongoing collaboration and consultation with special education staff and administrators
- Other duties as assigned

Skilled Nursing Services(RN, LPN, CNA 1, CNA 2-with behavioral experience, Hab Tech))

- Increase the accessibility of the educational environment for students who would otherwise be unable to attend school due to their medical issues
- Provide consultation for teachers and other school staff on student specific health needs
- Provide direct and indirect skilled medical interventions as specified on a physician directed medical plan of care.

C. Service agency providers must meet the following minimum qualifications:

1. Agency providers must have the capacity to provide appropriately NC Certified Exceptional Children Staff. Must include all applicable NCDPI and State Licensure requirements.
2. The agency must be able to ensure all medically related contract providers and assistants (PT, OT, SLP, School Psychologist, School Audiologist, RN, LPN) obtain and hold a NPI (National Provider Identifier) and enroll in NC Tracks for provision of Medicaid Reimbursement on behalf of Gaston County Schools.
3. Agency Providers must have capacity to staff multiple special education positions
4. Agency Providers must have capacity to staff multiple support staff positions
5. Providers must be responsible for invoicing, and submitting all required documentation for the provision of services.

II. THE SELECTION PROCESS

A. Timetable

Advertisement of the Request for Proposals (RFP): February 18, 2026-March 12, 2026
Deadline for Submission of Written Questions: 5:00 P.M. March 10 , 2026 (*see note)
Gaston County Schools will provide responses to questions by: March 12, 2026 (*see note)
Submission of Proposals Due by: 5:00 P.M. March 16, 2026 (NO EXCEPTIONS)
Contract Finalization/Contract Commencement: July 1, 2026

***Note: Agency/Provider must submit written questions regarding RFP to yrchapman@gaston.k12.nc.us by March 10, 2026. Responses will be shared by March 12, 2026**

B. Submission of Proposals

Interested agency/provider will submit proposals as described in Section IV below.

C. Proposal Evaluation

All proposals will be evaluated by a committee composed of Gaston County Schools representatives. The evaluation committee may at its sole discretion elect to conduct interviews with finalists to clarify information provided in the proposals. The evaluation committee may at its sole discretion

recommend one or more contractors to the Gaston County Schools Board of Education. Criteria considered by the evaluation committee may include, but shall not necessarily be limited to, the proposer's qualifications, references, reputation, experience, safety record, financial standing, labor supply, claims, and litigation history.

The evaluation committee shall not be required to recommend the contractor with the lowest proposed compensation; nor shall the committee have any obligation to explain its decision to recommend or not to recommend any particular contractor or to invite or exclude any particular contractor from consideration at any stage of the process. Instead of recommending that contracts be awarded to one or more contractors who presented proposals, the evaluation committee may at its sole discretion recommend to Gaston County Schools leadership that the proposals be rejected and the process repeated, that Gaston County Schools enter into direct contract negotiations with one or more contractors (possibly including contractors who have not previously submitted proposals) or that Gaston County Schools leadership take any other action the committee deems advisable under all the circumstances.

The decision of the evaluation committee to accept or reject any proposals and to award contract(s) to any one or more contractor(s) shall be final and not subject to further review.

III. REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL PROCEDURES

A. Point of Contact

Questions concerning this RFP and the procedures for responding to the RFP should be directed to Renee Chapman, Department for Exceptional Children Program Consultant/RFP Manager, yrchapman@gaston.k12.nc.us. All responses will be compiled in a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) document and communicated to all proposers.

B. Submission of Proposals

Service provider should submit an original and eight (8) additional copies of their complete proposal by 5:00 p.m. on March 16, 2026 in a sealed envelope clearly marked "School-Based Special Education Services RFP", at the following address:

c/o Chris Mills, Executive Director
Department for Exceptional Children
215 West Third Avenue
Gastonia, NC 28052

***LATE SUBMISSION WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED**

C. Proprietary Information

If a proposal includes any proprietary data or information that the contractor deems confidential, such data or information must be specifically identified and stamped "CONFIDENTIAL." Data or information so identified will be used by Gaston County Schools and its consultants solely for the purposes of evaluating proposals and/or conducting contract negotiations and will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by North Carolina's Public Records Law. Confidentiality of this material cannot be guaranteed.

D. Modification or Withdrawal of Proposal

Any response may be withdrawn or modified without penalty by written request of the contractor only if such request is received by Gaston County Schools at the above address prior to the date and time set for receipt of proposals.

E. Right to Reject

Gaston County Schools reserves the right to accept any proposal, to reject any and all proposals, and to waive any irregularities or informalities. This contract for services is not required to be bid under North Carolina law, and none of the statutory requirements regarding public bidding apply to this contract or this RFP. Gaston County Schools has chosen to issue an RFP because it anticipates that a competitive process will facilitate the selection of the best qualified service providers. Gaston County Schools reserves the right not only to accept or reject any specific proposal, but also to reject all proposals and either repeat the process or enter into direct contract negotiations with any one or more contractors, including contractors who have not previously submitted proposals. Gaston County Schools further reserves the right to initiate contract negotiations with any individual contractors at any time before, during, or after the proposal process. Gaston County Schools further reserves the right to restrict the invitation to submit proposals to any predetermined group of contractors, or to exclude any individual contractors from the proposal process. Any and all decisions by Gaston County Schools to accept or reject proposals, repeat the process, enter into direct negotiations with one or more individual contractors, restrict the invitation to submit proposals to a predetermined group of contractors, and/or exclude one or more individual contractors from the proposal process shall be final and not subject to further review.

IV. PROPOSAL FORMAT AND CONTENTS

Proposals must be submitted in the format outlined in this section, with each of the described forms and sections completed in full (except those sections described as optional). Each proposal will be reviewed to determine if it is complete prior to actual evaluation. Gaston County Schools reserves the

right to eliminate from consideration any proposal it deems, in its sole discretion, to be unresponsive to this RFP.

Each of the forms and sections described below should begin on a separate page, and each page should clearly state the name of the Agency.

A. Identifying Information: Please include the following on COVER SHEET

- Agency name
- Official mailing address
- Agency telephone number
- Agency email address
- Agency webpage
- Name of primary contact
- Applicable agency licenses, permits, certifications

B. Personnel (Section 1)

List all staff and supervisors (by name, if known, and position) that will be involved in the delivery of services. For those individuals who have been identified, please include a brief curriculum vitae that indicates the length of employment with the applicant's agency and the specific type of experience in providing the requested services.

- Job descriptions should be included for all positions that will be associated with the implementation of services.
- Provide a detailed description of how supervision and oversight of School-Based Instructional and Paraprofessional Staff will be provided.

Note: All contract staff hired to work with Gaston County Schools must undergo background check/clearances through Gaston County Schools human resource department. The cost of all background checks/clearances will be the responsibility of the agency provider.

C. Range of Services (Continuum of Services) (Section 2)

- Service providers should describe the proposed range of services.
- Describe your agency's commitment to comprehensively assist Gaston County Schools with all staffing needs.
- Please clearly indicate how the proposed services will benefit Gaston County Schools
- Describe the ability and experience of agency staff to successfully work with Gaston County Schools staff to complete all necessary requirements
- Describe the agency's commitment to obtaining relevant and required training.
- Describe your agency's evidence of success with providing services to other school districts within NC.

D. Program Evaluation and Client Satisfaction (Section 3)

- Describe how you will assess your agency's impact and success within the Gaston County School System.
- Explain how the agency will ensure ongoing internal monitoring and quality assurance within each staffing program. Also, describe how you plan to evaluate your agency's effectiveness and efficiency of services to Gaston County Schools.

E. Corporate Structure and Financial Condition (Section 4)

Section 4 shall include a description of the contractor's corporate form, the date the contractor was incorporated, and the names and official titles of all its corporate officers.

In addition, include authoritative documentation of the contractor's financial condition and stability. Such documentation shall include an audited 2024 financial report and any additional documentation on the contractor's financial condition and stability that the contractor wishes Gaston County Schools to consider.

F. Experience, Background & References (Section 5)

Section 5 of the proposal shall include a detailed summary of the contractor's experience and background in providing special education instructional and paraprofessional services with specific emphasis on services provided to NC School districts.

Section 5 of the proposal shall also include a minimum of two (2), but no more than four (4) written letters of references from NC districts with current firsthand knowledge of the contractor's background, experience, qualifications, and reliability, including the names and contact information for each such reference, as well as the length of time each reference has had direct knowledge of and experience with the contractor.

Section 5 should include a statement of compliance with criminal background procedures to be conducted by Gaston County Schools.

Section 5 may also list separately any other experience or background the contractor would like Gaston County Schools to consider (optional).

G. Litigation and Claims History (Section 6)

Section 6 of the proposal shall include a detailed summary of all claims filed, pending, or concluded by or against the contractor in any judicial or administrative forum in the last ten years and shall include, at a minimum:

- The date each such claim was filed;
- The judicial or administrative forum in which each such claim was filed;
- The names of any adverse parties;
- The file number or docket number of each such claim;
- Whether each such claim was initiated by or against the contractor;
- The nature and substance of each such claim, as well as any counter-claims filed in the action; and
- The ultimate resolution of each such claim, including any judicial or administrative findings of fault or liability, and the results of any appeals.

H. Official Statements by Contractor/Agency

Section 6 of the proposal must contain the following statement on official company letterhead and be signed by an individual authorized to bind the contractor.

- The contractor has read and agrees to the terms and conditions set forth in the RFP.

I. Outline of Proposal Contents

The following is an outline of the requirements for proposal contents described in this section:

Identifying Information

Personnel

Description of Range of Services (Continuum of Services)

Program Evaluation and Client Satisfaction

Corporate Structure and Financial Condition

Experience, Background, and References

Litigation and Claims History

Official Statement by Contractor/ Agency

Use as COVER SHEET when submitting your RFP

AGENCY: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP: _____

TELEPHONE NUMBER: _____

WEBPAGE: _____

CURRENT AGE LEVEL/RANGE FOR SERVICES PROVIDED: _____

FEDERAL EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: _____

COMPLETED BY: _____ TITLE: _____ DATE: _____

_____ (Executive Director Signature)

_____ (Typed or printed name)

OFFICE USE ONLY

PROPOSAL RECEIVED ON THIS DATE: _____

PROPOSAL NUMBER: _____

(GASTON COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM)

BY: _____ TITLE: _____

The GASTON COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM reserves the right to reject any or all proposals for any or no reason, and to waive informalities.

It is the School District's policy not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age in its educational programs, activities or employment policies.