

**Request for Proposals
Education and Career Readiness Consultant**

Proposal Submittal Requirements

Issue Date: August 18, 2025

Submittal Deadline: September 10, 2025, prior to 4:00 PM EST

Submittal Location: By Mail:
Greater Hagerstown Committee, Inc.
5 Public Square, Suite 601
Hagerstown, MD 21740

Electronic:
GHCAAdmin@greaterhagerstown.org

Submittal Contact: James F. Kercheval, Executive Director
The Greater Hagerstown Committee, Inc.
Phone: (301) 733-8811
E-mail: GHCAAdmin@greaterhagerstown.org

Question Deadline: 3:00 PM EST on September 8, 2025

Question Contact: Questions must be submitted in writing or e-mailed to:

The Greater Hagerstown Committee, Inc.
Attn: James Kercheval
5 Public Square, Suite 601
Hagerstown, MD 21740 or
jkercheval@greaterhagerstown.org
Cc: GHCAAdmin@greaterhagerstown.org

Tentative Finalists Interviews (if necessary) Week of September 22, 2025

Tentative Award Date: September 30, 2025

SECTION I – INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Introduction

The Greater Hagerstown Committee, Inc., (GHC) in partnership with education, business, and community stakeholders, is seeking proposals from qualified consultants to research and analyze career readiness data for our community, present a comprehensive report on targeted community education metrics, and facilitate an Education Summit with a variety of local education stakeholders impacting career readiness. The intent of this project is to provide data-driven insights that will inform a shared vision for educational and career readiness success across Washington County. These insights will serve as a centerpiece presentation for an upcoming Education Summit and strategic planning event planned for February 2026.

This RFP outlines the scope of work, deliverables, and evaluation criteria to guide the selection of a consultant who can effectively support the development of this foundational report and facilitate a stakeholder summit and a post-summit report. The consultant will be expected to work closely with GHC staff, and a small planning committee comprised of representatives from local education institutions, workforce organizations, and community groups impacting a child’s development from cradle to career.

Background

For over 35 years, the GHC’s Education Forum (a subcommittee of GHC) has convened education leaders throughout the county on a bi-monthly basis to explore key challenges and opportunities to strengthen the local educational landscape. In 2015, GHC’s Education Forum hosted an education summit with various stakeholder groups in an effort to build support for improving our community’s educational attainment levels. The summit included data on our community’s current status as well as national data on the educational levels needed by our workforce to be successful in tomorrow’s jobs. The summit also provided an overview of Strive Together’s cradle-to-career collective impact model used successfully in other parts of the country to improve college and career readiness. A call to action was made to the stakeholders in attendance to create a similar collective impact model for our community. The summit spurred a large amount of support for this type of partner collaboration and eventually “OnTrack Washington County” was formed as a separate non-profit organization based on the Strive Together collective impact model. OnTrack operated independently for about 5 years improving collaboration among local stakeholders and helping to build a unified data-driven approach to career readiness in Washington County, MD. Unfortunately, due to funding, staffing, and other political challenges the organization went dormant in 2022.

While GHC’s Education Forum does not want to resurrect the OnTrack organization, we valued the regular engagement of over 40 stakeholder groups that improved local collaboration and positively impacted a child’s cradle-to-career development. We also felt that the community benefitted from tracking targeted data metrics that showed our progress across a variety of targeted goals. Therefore, we would like to revive a portion of OnTrack Washington County’s work and facilitate an annual education summit and strategic planning event that will bring together educators, business leaders, nonprofit organizations, and public officials.

A central component of the Summit will be a presentation of current and emerging career readiness data and trends. These metrics may include academic performance, early childhood development, workforce alignment, postsecondary attainment, equity gaps, and other indicators to be finalized in partnership with the selected consultant.

This project is not only intended to provide a snapshot of the current state of career readiness in our community but also to catalyze strategic conversations that result in collaborative, measurable improvements. The resulting report and presentation will be used beyond the Summit to support ongoing engagement, grant applications, program development, and policy initiatives. It is the hope of GHC’s Education Forum that we can repeat this project over at least 3 consecutive years to properly evaluate its return on investment. If deemed worthy, we will then work to develop a long-term plan to sustain this annual community event and a collective impact approach to career readiness in our community.

SECTION II – PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goal of this project is to develop a comprehensive, accessible report that captures key education-related data and community trends within Washington County, Maryland. This report will serve as a foundational resource for the 2025 Education Summit and will be used to drive informed discussions, community collaboration, and future strategic planning.

1. Primary Goals:

- Illuminate Current Conditions of our Community’s cradle to career network of support of workforce readiness: Provide a clear, accurate picture of the state of early childhood development, our education system, and workforce readiness in Washington County - spanning early childhood through adult career pathways. Highlight strengths and opportunities for improvement across a range of key indicators impacting learners from cradle to career.
- Promote Data-Informed Decision Making: Equip stakeholders—including educators, employers, elected officials, and community organizations—with objective data to guide collaborative solutions.
- Elevate Public Engagement: Present findings in a manner that is accessible, visually engaging, and usable for both professional and public audiences.
- Catalyze Collaborative Action: Use the report and its presentation at the Education Summit to inspire partnerships, align efforts, and establish shared priorities.

2. Key Objectives:

- Identify and analyze metrics relevant to early childhood development, educational outcomes, workforce preparedness, equity, access, and community needs (to be finalized in collaboration with the project steering committee).
- Gather and synthesize data from a range of local, regional, and state-level sources, including school systems, higher education institutions, government agencies, and community partners.
- Highlight gaps, trends, and areas of disparity by demographic or geographic factors where appropriate.
- Provide documentation of sources, methodology, and recommendations for maintaining or updating the data over time.
- Produce a written report and visual presentation that can be delivered at the Summit and distributed as a standalone resource.
- Facilitate a half-day educational summit for approximately 100 participants to share results. Approximately half the time for presentation. Half for strategic discussion on priority areas and improvement strategies
- Produce a post-summit report summarizing stakeholder discussion, highlighting priority areas for improvement, and next steps for continued community collaboration on strategic priorities identified at the summit.

3. Key Career Readiness Metrics *The following data metrics are based on past Annual Reports provided by OnTrack Washington County from 2017 to 2020. They are provided in the RFP to be a guide. Metrics are subject to change based on planning discussions between the consultant and steering committee regarding the goals of this initiative. All metrics should come from reputable public sources such as the Maryland Report Card and be provided in formats that will be easily discerned by the general public. The report should also provide disaggregated data, comparison data, and historical data for specific metrics in order for the community to measure and track progress and show achievement gaps for various subgroups such as race, gender, school, special education students, English learners, and economically disadvantaged. Washington County Public Schools and other local education institutions are part of the GHC Education Forum and stand ready to support the data collection needed for this initiative.*

Community Snapshot

- Population
 - Overall
 - By Gender
 - By Race
 - By Age Group
 - Poverty Level
- Educational Attainment Levels (*reflecting college and trades data*)
 - Associate's degree or higher by race
 - Bachelor's degree or higher by race
 - Trade School Graduates
- Median Earnings by Education Levels

Early Childhood Metrics

1. Kindergarten Readiness (KRA – Kindergarten Readiness Assessment)
 - Overall readiness
 - Readiness by prior Pre-K attendance
 - Readiness disparities (economically disadvantaged, English learners, students with disabilities)
2. Pre-K Attendance
 - Percentage of children attending publicly funded Pre-K (currently about 78%)
3. Domain-Specific KRA Scores (may change with new MD assessment in 2025)
 - Social foundations
 - Language & literacy
 - Mathematics
 - Physical well-being & motor development

School-Aged Youth Metrics

4. Reading Proficiency by End of 3rd Grade
 - Measured by MCAP (English Language Arts)
5. Math Proficiency
 - MCAP Math Scores (Grades 3–8)
6. College Readiness in Math and English
 - % of high school seniors not needing remedial courses in college
7. Enrollment in College-Level Courses in High School
 - % of juniors/seniors taking dual enrollment courses
 - WCPS 4-year cohort graduation rate
8. Chronic Absenteeism (Overall Elem/Middle/High and by school)

Career & Postsecondary Metrics

9. Completion and Assessment of CTE Programs
 - % of high school graduates completing Career Technology Education programs
 - % passing industry recognized credentials (CTE assessments)
10. College Enrollment Rate
 - % of high school students enrolling in college after graduation
 - Participation in magnet, STEMM, AVID, AP, and IB programs
(*STEMM – Technology, Engineering, Mathematics, **Medicine** – We have a new Medical School Opening this year*)
11. Postsecondary Attainment
 - Retention rate of students in post-secondary education
 - % of population aged 25+ with an associate degree or higher
 - Data on % of population with post-secondary credentials (trades) if available

Additional Indicators & Context

12. Community and Workforce Alignment
 - Educational attainment in relation to workforce readiness and employer needs

SECTION III – SCOPE OF WORK

1. Overview

It is the intent of GHC's Education Forum to solicit proposals from qualified firms or individuals to research, compile, analyze, and present a comprehensive report on community education metrics. The final deliverable will be presented at the upcoming Education Summit hosted by the GHC Education Forum, in collaboration with local education stakeholders. The Summit will include a presentation on the findings in the report as well as time for strategic discussion and breakout groups to provide feedback on the presentation and possible areas for collaboration to improve career readiness in our community.

The selected consultant will support the planning committee by:

- Identifying relevant community education indicators to research (exact metrics to be finalized in collaboration with the planning group).
- Collecting and synthesizing data from a variety of local, regional, and state sources.
- Analyzing trends, strengths, disparities, and opportunities for improvement.
- Creating a compelling, visual, and accessible final report and presentation suitable for a wide audience.
- Present findings and engage stakeholders at the summit in strategic discussions to improve the cradle to career network of support our community provides for career readiness.
- Assist in identifying actionable next steps in a post summit report: Based on data findings and stakeholder feedback gathered during the summit, help the planning committee outline a set of recommended next steps or strategic priorities for continued community collaboration. The consultant is not expected to implement these actions but should provide guidance on logical progressions and possible frameworks for future work.

2. Project Goals

- Establish a shared understanding of current education performance and equity metrics across the community.
- Provide actionable insights for stakeholders to drive collaboration and improvement.
- Deliver a data-informed foundation to support discussions at the Education Summit.

3. Education Summit *(logistics handled by GHC Education Forum)*

- Half-day morning event estimated to run between 8 a.m. and Noon.
- Estimated attendance: 75-100 people representing 40+ organizations and educational institutions.
- Draft Agenda (Final agenda to be decided in consultation with consultant and planning committee):
 - First half of event will be for presentation by consultant, second half for strategic discussion with stakeholder groups and a report out of their findings.
 - Breakout groups may be divided by ages impacted by stakeholders including: Early Childhood Development, School-age Youth, and Workforce Readiness *(similar to data in OnTrack Annual Reports)*
- Venue will be well suited for an interactive discussion with room for breakout groups and quality a/v infrastructure (computer, laptop hookup, large screen(s), wireless microphones, etc.).
- Catering will include breakfast, drinks, snacks throughout the event (lunch will not be provided).

4. Deliverables *(all deliverables will be considered property of the GHC Education Forum for services paid)*

- Written report in digital format summarizing findings, including charts, infographics, and a narrative analysis.
- PowerPoint presentation tailored for the Education Summit audience.
- Data set and methodology documentation.
- Facilitation and presentation support during the Summit.
- Post-summit report in digital format summarizing the feedback and identified action items from the stakeholders.

4. Consultant Responsibilities

- Initial Discovery & Planning
 - Participate in a planning meeting(s) to finalize key metrics and reporting focus as well as goals and agenda of summit.
 - Collaborate with stakeholders to confirm relevant data sources and collect pertinent data.
- Data Collection and Analysis
 - Source and analyze quantitative and qualitative data.
 - Highlight disparities by demographic, economic, or geographic segments.
 - Show historical data and benchmark comparisons for community to track and measure progress.
- Communication and Engagement
 - Attend periodic check-ins with the planning team.
 - Provide draft deliverables for review and feedback.
- Reporting
 - Prepare a finalized visual report and presentation for the Summit in digital format.
 - Provide a public-facing summary suitable for website/public release.
 - Provide a post-summit report on findings from the breakout groups and strategic planning work.
This report should be suitable for distribution to stakeholders attending the event as a summary of their feedback, priority areas for improvement, and possible strategies our community can collaborate on.

5. GHC Education Forum Responsibilities

- Establish a planning committee to assist consultant in identifying data metrics, developing an agenda for the Education Summit, and providing feedback on presentations and reports.
- Secure venue and catering for Education Summit.
- Develop list of stakeholders, create and send out invitations to summit, and track attendance.
- Print any materials needed for summit or overall project.
- Post information on websites and social media.
- Set up of a Microsoft Teams infrastructure for communication and collaboration of planning committee and consultant.
- GHC office has conference room space that can be used by consultant if needed.

6. Timeline

- Consultant Selection: September 2025
- Project kickoff: October 1, 2025 (*subject to consultant availability*)
- Draft report: November 2025
- Final report: January 2026 - Minimum 3 weeks before the Summit
- Final presentation: Minimum 2 weeks before the Summit
- Education Summit: February 2026 (final date/times to be determined in consultation with consultant)
- Post-summit report on findings: Within **10 business days** after Education Summit

SECTION IV – EVALUATION CRITERIA

1. Transmittal Letter

A signed cover letter should summarize the consultant’s qualifications, understanding of the scope of the project, and commitment to the timeline.

2. Evaluation

A planning committee established by the GHC Education Forum will be evaluating proposals based on:

a. Project Understanding & Approach

Describe your proposed approach to fulfilling the scope of work, including methodology, tools, and stakeholder engagement.

b. Relevant Experience

Provide an overview of previous similar work, including experience with education data, a cradle-to-career collective impact model, presenting to diverse audiences, and facilitating break out groups.

c. Project Team

List team members who will work on the project and their relevant credentials.

d. Sample Work

Include one or more examples of similar reports or presentations.

e. Timeline and Availability

Propose a high-level schedule and confirm availability for project duration.

f. References

Include at least three references for similar work.

g. Price Proposal *(Include estimated hours and total cost for each item based on hourly rate(s))*

- Hourly rate(s)
- Cost to collect and analyze data
 - *Note: Washington County Public Schools and other local education institutions are part of the GHC Education Forum and stand ready to support the data collection needed for this initiative.*
- Cost to prepare report and presentation for Education Summit *(digital formats only)*
- Cost to manage and facilitate Education Summit
- Cost to prepare post-summit report *(digital format only)*
- **Total Estimated Cost for Services Rendered** *(sum of previous 4 items)*

3. Contract Renewals

The GHC Education Forum would like to make this project and Education Summit an annual event for at least three consecutive years to bring stakeholders together to review similar data, track our progress, identify our success and areas for improvement, and collaborate on strategic action for the coming year. Depending on the work of the consultant, attendance of stakeholders, cost of the services, and overall success of the project, it would be the hope of the Education Forum to be able to negotiate and renew the contract for up to two more consecutive years without going out for bid. If future projects and summits are deemed worthy in 2028, we will then work to develop a long-term plan to sustain this annual community event and a collective impact approach to career readiness in our community.

SECTION V – Point of Contact

1. Primary Contact:

Jim Kercheval, Executive Director
Greater Hagerstown Committee
5 Public Square, Suite 601
Hagerstown, MD 21740
301.733.8811 (office)
301.992.7515 (mobile)
jkercheval@greaterhagerstown.org

2. Secondary (*accounts payable/event planning*)

Erin Griemsmann, Executive Assistant
Greater Hagerstown Committee
5 Public Square, Suite 601
Hagerstown, MD 21740
301.733.8811 (office)
301.991.1491 (mobile)
ghcadmin@greaterhagerstown.org

You can find more information on the Greater Hagerstown Committee at: www.GreaterHagerstown.org

Dropbox Folder with past OnTrack Washington County Annual Reports and other historical resources:

https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/xdlo2ab0fnec7zu55rbcu/AJhsZQRY35FR_BUpt4LkqIs?rlkey=tzt4lqr2nutr82ra6sdbzwwl3&st=29ntnrjd&dl=0

Links to other resources you may find helpful:

- **Strive Together:** <https://www.strivetgether.org/>