



Frequently Asked Questions

What is the legal name for Atlanta Public Schools (APS)?

Atlanta Independent School System (AISS) is the legal name for APS. Any legal documents, agreements, MOU or contracts must reference the legal name of the organization at least once.

How does my business or organization become a partner?

All partnerships must be registered with the APS Office of External Affairs and the Atlanta Partners for Education (APFE), a joint 501c3 entity between Atlanta Public Schools and the Metro Atlanta Chamber, in order to be recognized as official partnerships. Businesses are not required to become members of the Chamber. Partnerships operate at the discretion of the district, the Office of External Affairs and the principals. Partnerships must be approved by Mariama Tyler Jenkins, director of External Affairs and the school principal. Partners may register by visiting www.atlantapartnersforeducation.org.

Are there dates and times my partnership cannot operate?

As a district, the primary concern for APS is always to preserve the academic, physical and mental wellbeing of our students. Just like many industry sectors, in education there are certain times of the year in which students, schools and administrative staff members are particularly focused on the core business—of educating students and preparing them to be academically successful. To that end, APS may restrict partnership activities at schools during certain times of the year including: the first 40 days of school, end-of-year closeout and most especially during academic testing (End of Course Testing (EOCT) and in April/May). A copy of the [district's school and testing calendars](#) is available online.

The district or individual principals may enforce additional “black-out dates,” during which partnership activities are restricted. Limited partnership activities are initiated during the summer, but it is a great time to plan for the upcoming school year or to have special activities for students in summer school or year-round schools.

The Office of External Affairs will work with potential partners and schools to coordinate and suggest partnerships with approved education value, and help partners to determine the best time for partnership activities that will maximize student/school participation and engagement.

Our program is largely funded by private or public sources, but we ask that schools, students or districts contribute a portion of the funds to facilitate student participation in our activities or programs. Will APS pay fees or a portion of the costs for us to offer this program to APS students?

No. APS will not pay for partnership programs. Only organizations that donate their resources to the district are eligible for partnership. Organizations and individuals who serve as partners do so because they see value in preserving public education and in donating their services to our students.

Organizations that wish to receive compensation for their services are considered potential vendors. All vendors and potential vendors must follow a public procurement process. Organizations may visit the district website to view [procurement guidelines](#) for [how to become a registered](#) APS vendor and do business with APS.

Our program has a nominal fee for participation and/or material; are we eligible for a partnership?

No. Partnerships must be offered at no cost to students, their families and the district. Partners may seek sponsorships from third-party sources to facilitate partnerships in APS. The district will not seek funding for your program. Only programs that are fully funded and are at no cost to the district, students or their families are eligible for partnership in Atlanta Public Schools.

I would like to serve as a motivational or guest speaker in the classroom however, we do charge a speakers' fee or honoraria. Will APS pay for guest speakers or outside programs?

No. APS welcomes guest speakers that support K-12 curriculum standards and promote student achievement. However, APS is not able to honor requests to provide honorarium or speaker fees. If a partner wishes to charge a fee, they may choose to seek sponsorship from a third-party organization such as outside funders or the parent/teacher organizations or other membership groups. Partners may also [click here](#) to visit our district website <http://www.atlanta.k12.ga.us/page/220> to view procurement guidelines for how to become a registered APS vendor.

We have a great partnership program. Can we come into the classroom or take students off campus during the instructional day?

APS strives to minimize disruption to core learning during the instructional day. Partnership activities that are aligned to state and common core standards and that foster student achievement in one or more impact area (literacy, social science, STEM, college and career readiness, and attendance) are given priority consideration but must be approved by the principal.

Partnership opportunities are offered at the discretion of schools and the district and typically occur outside of the instructional day. In addition, while we acknowledge that there are many valuable partnership opportunities, APS may respectfully decline to participate at a given time, due to limited educational value, transportation constraints, capacity, scheduling or other issues. If you wish to discuss your partnership program please contact Mariama Tyler Jenkins, director of external affairs, at mtjenkins@atlantapublicschools.us or via phone at 404-802-2814

We have a great partnership program. Will APS pay for buses for students to attend our partnership event or program?

APS is subject to a constitutional restriction on how general funds can be used. Per Georgia law, APS is prohibited from spending public funds to transport children to partnership activities, unless those funds and any additional insurance costs are reimbursed by private or public funds other than public school funds (reference O.C.G.A. §10-2-2075 (2012)).

In order to facilitate off-campus partnership activities, partners will be asked to cover transportation expenses for students and chaperone staff. In most cases, students must be returned to campus in time for their regular transportation home. APS cannot legally use general funds to pay for buses for non-instructional use. Partners or third-party sponsors who wish to subsidize the transportation of students to partnership event must do so on APS buses or via approved APS contracted motor coach. Cost for transportation to partnership events or activities will be incurred by the partner at cost. (Currently \$40/hr. with a two hour minimum.)

I would like to advertise my event to APS students or staff. How can I make the district, staff or students aware of my organization, event or program?

The Atlanta Board of Education (ABE) prohibits outside organizations or individuals from advertising or otherwise distributing literature in APS facilities, schools, events, meetings, etc. except as shall be authorized by, and consistent with, administrative regulations set forth by the superintendent and policies approved by the Board. Cross-reference with policies: [KJ](#), [DJEIA](#), [KDC](#), [KEB](#)

My organization has received a grant and we want to....

All grants must be registered with the Grants Management Office. Please consult with APS and receive prior authorization to include APS in grants for which your organization intends to apply. Many organizations receive grant funding to research or provide funding for projects they wish to conduct in our schools. APS reserves the right to decide whether it chooses to participate in grant-funded opportunities for which the district has not expressed a need. For more information about grants please contact Mr. Dale Butler, grants manager, at 404-802-2796 or via email at dbutler@atlanta.k12.ga.us.

My organization wants to volunteer services and service hours to the school system, could the district host our volunteers for lunch and feed our volunteers during our service day?

No. While APS would be happy to discuss hosting a service event in one of our schools, the district cannot use public funds to provide food or beverages for APS partners or volunteers. The Georgia Constitution provides that local school funds may be spent “only for the support and maintenance of public schools public education and activities necessary or incidental thereto.” Ga. Const. Art. VIII, Sec. VI, Par. I(b)

We would like to conduct a pilot program and will offer our services and material free of charge for a period of time, after which the district would be free to decide whether or not to purchase our goods or services. How would we go about conducting such a pilot?

APS does not accept “free” pilot programs with strings attached or when there is an expectation that we might purchase goods or services in exchange for partnership. Individuals or companies interested in pursuing vendor relationship instead of a partnership should visit the district website for more information on [how to become a registered APS vendor](#). Partnership status has no impact on vendor status (cross-reference with policy [DJEIA](#)).

Will my partnership require a memorandum of understanding (MOU)?

You will be informed by the Office of External Affairs if your proposed partnership requires an MOU. Certain partnership arrangements and activities may necessitate a formal memorandum of understanding (MOU) between or among partners and Atlanta Public Schools. MOUs help to outline the responsibilities of each party and establish parameters for the types of partnership activities that the district will permit to occur on APS property or with APS students. All partnership activities require approval from the office of External Affairs but, most do not require an MOU.

My proposed partnership requires a Memorandum of Understanding, how do I write one?

Certain partnership relationships and activities may necessitate a formal memorandum of understanding (MOU) between or among partners and Atlanta Public Schools. If your proposed partnership requires an MOU, your business or organization will be asked to draft the agreement and submit it for departmental and legal review prior to superintendent signature. Please see the Guidelines for Writing a Memorandum of Understanding.

Can my organization use an APS facility to host an event?

Approved APS partnerships may operate at the discretion of the district and building principals during regular business hours at no cost unless security or additional personnel are needed.

Approved partners may be permitted to use classrooms, gymnasiums, athletic fields and other facilities in order to facilitate their free-partnership programs. Auto and liability insurance requirements may exist.

APS facilities are available for rent for approved uses by the facilities department and the building principal. Permit and usage fees for access to the building, APS security and/or janitorial personnel, proof of insurance, and permit and use agreements may be required. Access to APS facilities after-hours and on weekends may require additional expense for security personnel, staff time or overtime. To obtain permission to rent an APS facility, please contact Carla Pennyman at 404-802-3733 or via e-mail at cpennyman@atlanta.k12.ga.us.

What kind of insurance requirements does APS require?

If insurance is required for your partnership activity, partners are required to carry a minimum of \$1M in general liability and \$1M in auto insurance per occurrence. Atlanta Public Schools must also be listed as an insured on the certificate of insurance. If you have questions about insurance requirements, please contact the APS Office of Risk Management at 404-802-2327.

I would like to get student data on the students in our program. How can I get school or student level data?

APS will not release student data which violates student or family rights to privacy. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or legal guardian in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to certain parties, to comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena or under the conditions outlined in (34 CFR § 99.31).

How would I go about getting a data sharing agreement with Atlanta Public Schools?

APS may release certain non-identifiable information as long as it does not violate The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and under certain conditions to individuals conducting research at educational institutions and others. To see whether your request for data would necessitate a data sharing agreement, contact the department of Research and Evaluation for Student Improvement at 404-802-2711.

I am an APS parent do I still need to go through a background check?

Yes. For the safety of all students and staff, all school volunteers must follow the same background check policy and procedures. Payment for the background check is payable via money order. The district does not accept personal checks or cash.

My company conducts background checks on all its employees do I still have to have or pay for an APS background check?

Yes. Atlanta Board of Education policy requires that an APS background checks be conducted on volunteers. Organizations can conduct various types of background checks, and may look for different types of offenses. In order to protect our students, APS conducts a thorough GBI and FBI background check along with biometric fingerprinting. APS makes available the district's fingerprinting and background check services at actual cost to partners and volunteers. Payment for the background check is payable via money order. The district does not accept personal checks or cash.

My company or organization would like to offer a service to APS however, we require our partners to sign an indemnification agreement. Will APS indemnify partners against liability for loss, injury or death?

No. For the protection of students, staff, parents and public assets, Atlanta Public schools will not sign indemnification agreements with partners, volunteers etc. who wish to be held harmless for incidents that may occur under their partnership.

The constitutional provision prohibits state governmental entities from providing gratuities to any entity or person. A gratuity is defined as "something given freely or without recompense; a gift." The case law and legal interpretations have ruled that providing indemnification or otherwise holding an individual or entity harmless is a gratuity because the state receives no substantial benefit in exchange. Therefore, providing indemnification or holding an entity harmless or paying its attorney's fees, violates the constitutional prohibition against providing gratuities. Atlanta Public schools will not sign indemnification agreements with partners, volunteers or donors.

Where can I find out about APS policies and regulations?

Current policies of the Atlanta Board of Education are available in the [Online Policy Manual](#).

I have a partnership question not covered here, who should I contact?

Please contact Mariama Tyler Jenkins, director of external affairs at mtjenkins@atlantapublicschools.us or via phone at 404-802-2814.