

McCarthy Strategic Solutions

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Bullitt County Public Schools

Proposal for Government Relations Services

March 25, 2025



MCCARTHY
STRATEGIC SOLUTIONS

OUR MISSION

McCarthy Strategic Solutions collaboratively engages our strength of relationships and expertise to advocate for our clients with integrity, efficiency, and respect to achieve the desired results and return on investment within a standard of excellence.

OVERVIEW

THANK YOU for the opportunity to submit the following proposal for your consideration. Founded in 2005, McCarthy Strategic Solutions' team members share over 150 years of experience in government affairs and political campaigns. Over these years, our diverse group has cultivated strong professional and personal bonds with key decision-makers across the Commonwealth which allows us to create the best possible strategy for our clients to achieve their goals. Using our expertise and expansive network, we specialize in the development, implementation, and execution of a strategic plan to achieve positive results for you.

Being a bipartisan firm is an important piece of our value and at McCarthy Strategic Solutions our team includes former top political aides under Democrat and Republican Governors and legislative bodies. Consequently, we understand what and more importantly who motivates policy makers, how they go about making their decisions, and what is the best and most effective way to position your needs before them. We know the importance of having support from both sides of the aisle and we pride ourselves on the fact that we have access to the areas our client's need to ensure your voice is heard when decisions are being made that affect the way you do business and provide services in Kentucky.

Our commitment to unique relationship development, understanding political motivations, and credibility on policy allows us to develop strategic plans that maximize our client's time and return value on their investment. We are excited to have the opportunity to work with Bullitt County Public Schools. Our experience and relationships with key legislators who play a large role in developing the state's budget will be of great value to you.

Thank you for this opportunity and we look forward to working with the Bullitt County Public Schools team to achieve your goals.

Included in this proposal:

- Meet the Team
- Our Approach & Scope of Services
- Pricing & Terms of Proposal

MEET THE TEAM



John T. McCarthy, III, Founder/Managing Partner: John has more than thirty years of experience in political campaigns, corporate government relations and managing a private lobbying firm. He served as Chairman of the Republican Party of Kentucky, Special Assistant to Governor Ernie Fletcher for Personnel and is a key political ally for Republican leaders throughout the Commonwealth. Leader McConnell called Him “the ultimate political insider”. McCarthy’s experience as a campaign manager at the federal, state and local level gives our clients the ability to use all forms of communication to effectively deliver a message. His most valuable asset is his strategic thinking and knowing when to use the tools that are in place and how to successfully manage the outcome and the image of a campaign. He provides guidance to good causes as a board member of One West, Operations Open Arms, and Saint Xavier High School in Louisville, Kentucky. McCarthy graduated from Centre College with a B.A. in economics and government.

Amy Wickliffe, Partner: Amy brings twenty years of political and lobbying experience to the MSS team. She has been lobbying the Kentucky General Assembly since 2005 and previously served as Chief of Staff to First Lady Glenna Fletcher, Statewide Finance Director for Governor Ernie Fletcher and played key roles in various other political campaigns throughout her career. Amy’s most valued asset is her ability to keep organizations focused, develop a message and manage coalitions. With this expertise, she has been successful in leading some of the state’s most well-known issue campaigns including the passage of HB 2, the state’s largest workers’ compensation reform since the 90’s, and a constitutional amendment securing rights for victims of crime known as Marsy’s Law. Amy previously served as Finance Chair for the Republican Party of Kentucky and currently serves on the Children’s Advocacy Centers of Kentucky Board. She holds a B.A. in Psychology from Transylvania University and a M.B.A. from Midway University.

Sherman Brown, Partner: Sherman brings over two decades of political experience to the firm. He began his career with US Congressman Ken Lucas’ successful re-election in 2002. He held senior roles in

campaigns ranging from local municipal elections to statewide gubernatorial and US Senate campaigns. After serving as Deputy Campaign Manager for Governor Steve Beshear's re-election, Brown joined MSS in 2011. Brown's long-time participation in Democrat politics and work at the KY Democrat Party allows him a unique relationship with Democrat legislators in the Senate and the House. Brown's connection with Governor Andy Beshear and key Administration officials is a tremendous strength for our clients working with the Executive Branch. He graduated from Xavier University with a B.A. in Communications and earned his M.P.A. from Western Kentucky University.

Jeff Busick, Partner: Jeff brings almost 20 years of experience working in politics. After graduating law school in May 2004, he was hired to serve as Deputy General Counsel to the Kentucky Senate President and Republican members of the Senate Majority Caucus. Throughout his entire service in the Senate, Busick was assigned as the principal staffer to the Chairman of the Senate Appropriations and Revenue Committee, where he was instrumental in the development and passage of every executive, legislative, judicial, and transportation budget bills. Busick's work in the Senate has earned him the respect and professional regard in both chambers of the General Assembly, as well as numerous Executive Branch officials. Because of this experience, he has been successful during his 8 years at MSS securing tax incentives and funding in the Budget for numerous clients. Jeff graduated from the University of Notre Dame with a B.B.A in Management Information Systems and a B.A. in Government. He holds his law degree from Northern Kentucky University's Salmon P. Chase College of Law.

Jeff Harper, Principal: Jeff joined McCarthy Strategic Solutions after more than a decade as the director of the Public Affairs Division for the Kentucky Farm Bureau Federation. In this role, he spearheaded Farm Bureau's public affairs initiatives, including state and national lobbying, policy development, political education and local affairs. He previously served as the Commodity Director and Assistant Director of Public Affairs for the organization, where he managed the commodity programs and served as a liaison between Kentucky's agricultural producers and industry associations. Harper also has extensive experience working in state government, having served as the coordinator for the National Tobacco Growers Settlement Trust within the Governor's Office of Agriculture Policy. He also served as an executive staff advisor at the Kentucky Revenue Cabinet for 12 years. Harper graduated from the University of Kentucky.

Scott Jones, Principal: Scott joined McCarthy Strategic Solutions in December 2019. Prior to joining the McCarthy team, Jones completed a twenty-seven-year career in Kentucky State Government in 2018, having served in various roles with both the executive and legislative branches. For over a decade, Jones served as Chief of Staff in the Office of the House Speaker Pro Tempore, then State Rep. Larry Clark. He subsequently served as staff counsel to former Rep. Rocky Adkins in the Office of the House Majority Leader and later completed his public service as Chief of Staff to the House Democratic Minority Leadership office. Jones brings a close familiarity with the legislative process and a deep knowledge of state government structure and functions. Born and raised in Louisville, Jones graduated from Saint Xavier High School and earned undergraduate and law degrees from the University of Louisville.

Sara Massey, Strategic Partner: Sara joined McCarthy Strategic Solutions in January 2024 with two decades of strategic local and state government relations experience and executive leadership. Sara has served as Executive Director for the Kentucky Beverages Association since June 2020, leading operations

to provide governance and strategic direction for KBA legislative and regulatory priorities. Previously, Sara served as the Executive Director for the Kentucky Engineering Center, a business and professional trade association for the Kentucky Professional Engineers. Massey oversaw the representation of nearly 1,000 professional engineers, 85 engineering firms, and more than 2,500 Kentucky employees. Sara also served as Director of Intergovernmental Affairs for Louisville-Jefferson County Metro Government for nearly a decade under Mayor Greg Fischer where she directed the coordination of the Intergovernmental Affairs team and the development of the mayor's legislative agendas and transportation funding requests. Originally from Owensboro, Massey is a graduate of the University of Alabama, holding a degree in political science.

Libby Milligan, Principal: Libby worked in the government sector for over a decade working in both the federal and state government. She served as Special Assistant to the Governor for Administration and Legislation under Governor Ernie Fletcher and as a member of his Senior Policy Committee. She has extensive experience in critical reading and analysis of legislation and regulations. Libby focuses her time serving numerous healthcare related clients and associations managing their legislative and regulatory needs. Milligan graduated from the University of Kentucky with a B.A. in political science.

Megan Arnold, Assistant Principal: Megan began her political career as a legislative session staffer for the House Majority Leadership Office during the 2020 Regular Session. She later returned in 2021 where she worked as a communications specialist and subsequently as a policy analyst within the Office of the Speaker in the Kentucky House of Representatives. Throughout her time in the Speaker's Office, Megan played an essential role in conducting research, and writing and interpreting policy with a focus on healthcare, child welfare, and public assistance. Megan also served as Regional Political Director for Congressman Andy Barr's 2020 reelection campaign where she managed grassroots efforts for seven counties.

Jane Corder, Office Manager: As Office Manager, Jane assists the entire MSS team with the day-to-day operations of the firm. Providing executive-level support to the lobbyists as well as the clients, Jane brings over fifty years of experience including her previous work at the Cabinet for Health and Family Services during the Patton and Fletcher administrations. Jane is a graduate of Sullivan University with an associate degree in business management/accounting.

Lora Hawkins, Client Services Manager: Lora joined MSS in 2016 bringing with her 28 years of Kentucky state government experience, including the Shelby County Commonwealth's Attorney's office, Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, Kentucky Attorney General's Office, Kentucky Labor Cabinet, Council on Postsecondary Education, and the Kentucky Legislature. During her 18 years with the Kentucky General Assembly, Lora worked very close with both legislators and legislative staff. She served as staff for the Education Committee and then served in the Speaker Pro Tempore's office as a Legislative Aide. While in the Speaker Pro Tem's Office, Lora provided support on a variety of legislative issues and projects which included constituent services, redistricting, and serving as the primary staff to assist House Leadership with the assignment of legislators to the various House committees. She also assisted legislative members with the state transportation budget, constituent services, and the legislative process. After eight years of handling ethics compliance and reporting for clients, scheduling, and more, Lora handles solely ethics and registration.

Shellee Hayden, Administrative Assistant: Shellee joined McCarthy Strategic Solutions in January 2024 with 6 years of state government and legislative support experience. As an experienced administrative assistant, she has held a variety of positions that honed her skills of multitasking and being a resourceful liaison for legislators and co-workers. Most recently, Shellee worked at the Legislative Research Commission where she served as a nonpartisan Legislative Assistant and was then hired in the House Minority Leadership office. She expanded her role of Assistant and Policy Advisor to help the entire Democratic Caucus by scheduling, coordinating correspondences, offering constituent services, and designing infographics for the House Democrats' social media. Shellee is a graduate of Morehead State University.

Cady Stribling, Assistant Communications Director: Cady joined McCarthy Strategic Solutions as an intern in January 2023 and advanced into doing communications over the next several months, focusing on client communications, public relations, legislative activity, and administrative support. Most recently, she worked at Campus Evolution Villages providing administrative and residential support. Cady is a graduate of Murray State University with degrees in English and Journalism. She gained journalism experience for three years at The Murray State News as editor for multiple sections and at The Springfield Sun. During this time, she won three 1st place Kentucky Press Association awards for best breaking news coverage, general news story, and business/agribusiness story, as well as 2nd place for best editorial writer.

Addison White, Director of Operations: Addison White brings several years of federal government and legislative experience to the McCarthy Strategic Solutions team, having worked with prominent United States Congressmen since 2023 in many capacities. Most recently, Addison served as a Legislative Assistant to U.S. Representative James Comer where she recommended legislative strategies and developed policy in priority areas of agriculture, financial services, small business, tax, telecommunications and trade. Addison also served in the Office of U.S. Senator Ted Cruz as a Staff Assistant, coordinating public services, drafting correspondences, and giving legislative and administrative support. Addison began her time on Capitol Hill in Senator Mitch McConnell's Leadership Office. She is a graduate of Oklahoma State University.

OUR APPROACH & SCOPE OF SERVICES

McCarthy Strategic Solutions (MSS) is the most uniquely qualified and politically positioned government affairs partner to advance Bullitt County Public School's mission to deepen your impact in Kentucky by increasing opportunities to serve more communities and providing enhanced educational experiences for students. No other firms' partners have the individualized personal relationships with Governor Andy Beshear, Senate President Robert Stivers, House Speaker David Osborne, and other key legislators and elected officials like the MSS partners. This also includes other leaders within the administration, including Cabinet Secretaries, Commissioners and other Department personnel that are key to the day-to-day decision making and implementation of policy. Our team understands the value in becoming a key strategic partner with the legislature and the administration, so developing those relationships for Bullitt County Public Schools and educating targeted leaders about the need for increased funding for the Area Technology Center (ATC) in the community will be key to gain support for budgetary requests during the 2026 legislative session where the next biennial budget will be developed.

Achieving your goals will require a multi-prong approach working with key legislators and executive branch officials to ultimately have them arrive at the same decision – Bullitt County Public Schools is a key component in academic successes, job creation, and workforce development. MSS will first work with Bullitt County Public Schools to develop and understand your specific goals in Kentucky and tailor an action plan to meet your needs.

Initially our focus will be to:

- Lobbying the legislative and executive branch agencies on behalf of Bullitt County Public Schools to obtain funding for the ATC in Bullitt County;
- Monitoring legislation, regulatory actions or considerations of policy implementation that could have the intended or unintended consequences impacting Bullitt County Public Schools budgetary request;
- Scheduling meetings with key decision-makers in the legislative branch, specifically Sen. Michael Nemes, Rep. Emily Callaway, Rep. Thomas Huff, and Rep. Peyton Griffiee;
- Build upon Bullitt County School's existing relationships within the executive branch including the Governor's Office and Commissioner of Education Robbie Fletcher.
- Identifying and coordinating opportunities to develop third-party allies to advance identified government affairs goals;
- In collaboration with Bullitt County Public Schools, producing educational and advocacy materials to be shared with policymakers.

In addition to the development and implementation of the strategic action plan, MSS shall also supply to Bullitt County Public Schools a suite of government relations services that include the following:

- Summaries of legislative committee meetings addressing Bullitt County Public School's budgetary request;
- Summaries of executive branch agency meetings or hearings addressing Bullitt County Public School's budgetary request;

- Periodic updates addressing political matters within Kentucky that include election updates and opportunities to engage in the political environment;
- Host a regular conference call between MSS and Bullitt County Public Schools leadership to ensure proper steps are being taken to advance your goals;
- Provide a weekly newsletter that includes committee summaries, legislative schedule, political events, and other relevant news.
- Daily news clips addressing matters of interest to Bullitt County Public Schools;
- Filing of all required legislative and executive ethics reports to the extent these obligations are applicable to the scope of engagement between MSS and Bullitt County Public Schools.

To learn more about McCarthy Strategic Solutions, please visit our [website](#).

PRICING & TERMS OF PROPOSAL

For the services outlined in this proposal, MSS proposes a monthly retainer of **\$6,000 per month**, plus reasonable and related fees incurred in rendering the services of the contract plus a 6% sales tax on lobbying services as required by law. Any special expenses must be pre-approved by Bullitt County Public Schools. This fee does not include any fees associated with executive or legislative branch lobbyist registration which would be assumed by Bullitt County Public Schools.

The proposed period of the contract would be for twelve months beginning April 1, 2025 and concluding April 30, 2026. The contract may be renewed for an additional time period upon written approval by both parties. In the event that either party is not satisfied with the arrangement the contract can and will be declared null and void within 30 days of written notice.

Should the scope of services and terms of this proposal be acceptable, MSS will prepare a contract for signature by both parties. If you have any questions or prefer to discuss the proposal in detail, please contact John McCarthy (John@mssgov.com).