

**Division of Financial Management  
Department of Procurement  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
45 W. Gude Drive, Suite 3100  
Rockville, Maryland 20850**

**July 16,2026**

**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

**The following are questions and responses regarding**

**RFP No 4291.5 Sign Language Interpreting Services/Cued Language Transliteration for  
Deaf/Hard of Hearing Individuals.**

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| Question 1 | Section 3.1.2 requires a “criminal background check” as part of each interpreter’s profile submitted with the proposal. Please clarify the specific scope of this check and how it differs from the fingerprint-based background check described in Section 20.0. |
| Answer 1   | <b>Both the criminal background check and the fingerprint-based background check are conducted by MCPS. It is a limited background check for criminal past only. For example, it doesn’t go into credit history or other personal data.</b>                       |
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| Question 2 | Given the compressed timeline between proposal submission and anticipated award, can the criminal background check required in Section 3.1.2 be submitted post-award but prior to contract execution, rather than with the initial proposal?                      |
| Answer 2   | <b>No. All Interpreters and Cued Speech Translitterators must be cleared to work for students in the K-12 setting.</b>                                                                                                                                            |
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| Question 3 | Section 11.0 requests “three (3) references” but also references “two (2) current customers” in the same section — please confirm the exact number and type of references required.                                                                               |
| Answer 3   | <b>Three references should be with regard to the interpreter. Two references should be with regards to the agency representing the Interpreter.</b>                                                                                                               |
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| Question 4 | Section 18.0 lists six evaluation criteria without stated weights. Are these factors weighted, and if so, can MCPS share the relative weighting or point values?                                                                                                  |
| Answer 4   | <b>To be determined</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

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| Question 5      | Section 1.0 states MCPS intends to prequalify multiple Contractors. Approximately how many Contractors does MCPS anticipate prequalifying under this RFP?                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Answer 5</b> | <b>There is no pre-determined number as this will depend on the number of responsive and responsible offerors received.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
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| Question 6      | Can MCPS provide an estimate of anticipated annual service volume (hours or assignment counts) by client category to support staffing and pricing projections?                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Answer 6</b> | <b>Finance question (see projections from FY2025-26)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
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| Question 7      | Section 3.1.1 requires the CLTNCE credential and equivalent national certifications for ADA/employee assignments. Is a non-certified transliterator or interpreter permissible for student assignments under the non-certified pricing tier referenced in Section 12.0, or is certification expected across all client categories?"                                |
| <b>Answer 7</b> | <b>Yes. All noncertified interpreters may be qualified to work at MCPS; however, following the state of MD requirements. MCPS expects all contracted interpreters to be in line with state requirements as of July 1, 2028.</b>                                                                                                                                    |
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| Question 8      | First, we have almost exclusively provided services to MCPS via the previous RFP that my agency, Visual Language Associates (VLA) was awarded. That said, I can likely secure references from 2 other service providers. Can I list the Coordinator of MCPS interpreting services as the 3rd reference?                                                            |
| <b>Answer 8</b> | <b>The Coordinator of Interpreting position has been closed. Since the Team Leader of Related Services processes invoices, to avoid a conflict of interest, it would be best to use references from past or current work that is not directly involved with MCPS.</b>                                                                                              |
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| Question 9      | Most of our service providers have worked exclusively through an incumbent vendor providing services to MCPS and have not worked with another interpreting agency. As a result, I am concerned about the RFP requirement that service providers must provide 2 references.<br>b) can our staff provide references from non-interpreting jobs they might have held? |
| <b>Answer 9</b> | <b>Agencies can use as references, former CST's that have experience with MCPS. This would be sufficient.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
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| Question 10 | All of our staff have active criminal background checks and are MCPS badged. Do I need to submit documentation or simply indicate that MCPS has the relevant records?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Answer 10   | <b>Staff that worked last year are carried over by MCPS the following year after the Team Leader of Related Services has checked the list. Those vendors are still required to do the module training required by all sign language interpreters and cued speech transliterators.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Question 11 | We are a small business owners. Given that we are small and do not store cyber vulnerable data, is it possible to obtain a waiver of this specific requirement for interpreting/transliteration providers whose work does not involve processing or storage of electronic Confidential Information. The cost is prohibitive for an agency of our size and scope. Please advise (Of course, we would maintain the auto, general liability, and workers compensation insurance)                                                            |
| Answer 11   | <b>This request will be determined by the evaluation team in conjunction with legal and the requirements of our terms and conditions.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
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| Question 12 | Section 6.0 addresses billing for weather-related closures but does not address delayed openings or early dismissals, where schools remain open on a modified schedule.<br>Question: For a delayed opening or early dismissal, will MCPS bill for the originally scheduled hours falling outside the modified schedule, or only for hours actually in session?                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Answer 12   | <b>In these cases, the interpreters are paid for the scheduled hours regardless of delayed openings or early dismissals. The scheduler may cancel services due to an early dismissal but that must be within the required timeline of cancelation. If it is not within the timeframe of cancelation the vendor will be paid for the scheduled assignment hours. However, this does not pertain to school closings due to snow shutdowns. Two days worth of pay is pay out for extended snow days when MCPS is closed due to weather.</b> |
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| Question 13 | The General Contract Articles Appendix A document, Article 23, Insurance, lists minimum coverage requirements for a variety of insurance types. We noted that the minimum for Item 5, Cyber/Privacy Liability and Data Breach Insurance, is set at \$5,000,000, which exceeds typical industry standards for this coverage type.<br>Would MCPS consider lowering this minimum to better align with industry standards?                                                                                                                   |
| Answer 13   | <b>See response to question 11</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
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| Question 14 | What is the current highest approved hourly rate being paid to incumbent interpreting service providers under the existing MCPS contract?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

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| <b>Answer 14</b> | <b>Each agency negotiates rates based on the terms of the RFP and what each agency can offer. Rates with other agencies are not shared with other competing agency.</b>                                                                                       |
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| Question 15      | Will MCPS prefer vendors to submit separate hourly rates for each service provider category, including certified interpreters, non-certified interpreters, Certified Deaf Interpreters, and Cued Language Translators?                                        |
| <b>Answer 15</b> | <b>TBD based on the requirements from the state on Educational Interpreters.</b>                                                                                                                                                                              |
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| Question 16      | Would MCPS prefer a Flat rate for all service providers?                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Answer 16</b> | <b>Historically MCPS has worked with one flat rate for educational interpreting. However, given that the state of MD is requiring Interpreters to be licensed and certified by July 1, 2028, MCPS can recognize a higher rate for certified interpreters.</b> |
| Question 17      | What is the estimated annual hours by service category, including full-time, part-time, on-call, weekend, student, community, and ADA/applicant-employee assignments?                                                                                         |
| <b>Answer 17</b> | <b>To be determined</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
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| Question 18      | Can you please provide an estimate of students who will need ongoing interpreter support?                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Answer 18</b> | <b>We cannot provide that information at this time,</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
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| Question 19      | Can you please provide an estimate of faculty members who will need ongoing (full-time or part-time support?                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Answer 19</b> | <b>As of 07/01/2026, 24 d/Deaf employees.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
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| Question 20      | Can you provide what is MCPS's most challenging need (assignments) to fill?                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Answer 20</b> | <b>Assignments that require voicing with quality and control.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                             |
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| Question 21      | What is the anticipated number of vendors MCPS intends to award under this RFP?                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Answer 21</b> | <b>That cannot be determined until we confirm the number of responsive and responsible submissions, we receive.</b>                                                                                                                                           |

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| Question 22 | Will incumbent vendor performance, current service history, responsiveness, and continuity of service be considered during the evaluation process? If not then how will the vendor service be rated?        |
| Answer 22   | <b>Yes, however, for new vendors references will be considered carefully.</b>                                                                                                                               |
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| Question 23 | If MCPS reroutes an interpreter due to a student absence or assignment cancellation, will the vendor be paid for the original scheduled hours, the replacement assignment hours, or the greater of the two? |
| Answer 23   | <b>In the past MCPS would not allow billing of added work. The Interpreter was free to leave. However, if rerouting takes place MCPS shall pay for the additional assignment.</b>                           |
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| Question 24 | If payment exceeds the Net 30 payment period, is there a designated escalation process or payment-status timeline vendors should follow?                                                                    |
| Answer 24   | <b>The vendor can reach out to Accounts Payable directly if it is past Net 30. However, checking with the Team Leader first even with past due payments is always encouraged.</b>                           |
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| Question 25 | Can the Vendor charge MCPS if the Net payment period has passed without payment?                                                                                                                            |
| Answer 25   | <b>There is no late fee within the RFP. However, MCPS should pay within 30 net days.</b>                                                                                                                    |
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| Question 26 | Who is the designated contact for invoice follow-up when invoices remain unpaid beyond Net 30?                                                                                                              |
| Answer 26   | <b>Selma Patillo-Simms, Team Leader for Related Services. The second step would be with Accounts Payable directly.</b>                                                                                      |
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| Question 27 | Can the Vendor charge MCPS if the Net payment period has passed without payment?                                                                                                                            |
| Answer 27   | <b>It is not in the RFP for late payments.</b>                                                                                                                                                              |
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| Question 28 | Who is the designated contact for invoice follow-up when invoices remain unpaid beyond Net 30?                                                                                                              |
| Answer 28   | <b>Accounts Payable at <a href="mailto:accountpayable@mcpsmd.org">accountpayable@mcpsmd.org</a>.</b>                                                                                                        |
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| Question 29      | Will MCPS allow vendors to submit a monthly aging report for unpaid invoices and receive a written status update?                                                 |
| <b>Answer 29</b> | <b>Yes</b>                                                                                                                                                        |
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| Question 30      | Will MCPS require vendors to hold interpreter availability before an assignment is officially confirmed?                                                          |
| <b>Answer 30</b> | <b>No. If interpreters are not available</b>                                                                                                                      |
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| Question 31      | Can a vendor charge MCPS for holding availability for an assignment without receiving communication from MCPS for more than 24 hours?                             |
| <b>Answer 31</b> | <b>Untimely cancelations will remain billable by MCPS.</b>                                                                                                        |
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| Question 32      | What is the required response time for vendors to confirm coverage after receiving an assignment request?                                                         |
| <b>Answer 32</b> | <b>Assignments are filled on a first come first serve basis as the request are sent out through the Usked system at the same time.</b>                            |
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| Question 33      | What is the required response time for MCPS to confirm a vendor once the assignment is requested and a service provider is confirmed?                             |
| <b>Answer 33</b> | <b>Based on the urgency jobs should be filled as soon as possible. However, jobs that are a week or two out can still be filled with a confirmed interpreter.</b> |
| Question 34      | Can a vendor charge MCPS for holding availability for an assignment without communication for more than 24 hours?                                                 |
| <b>Answer 34</b> | <b>No there is no language supporting this.</b>                                                                                                                   |
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| Question 35      | Is the EIPA score of 3.5 or above considered acceptable for working as "certified" in MCPS?                                                                       |
| <b>Answer 35</b> | <b>EIPA score of 4.0 is considered “certified” based on the requirements for Educational Interpreter from the state.</b>                                          |
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| Question 36      | What is considered “Certified”?                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Answer 36</b> | <b>Requirements for Educational Interpreter from the state of MD requirements.</b>                                                                                |
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| Question 37 | Section 1.0 states MCPS intends to prequalify service providers (plural) and to add contractors during the term. Section 13.0 references negotiating with “the one offeror who submits the best proposal or with two or more offerors.” Please confirm that this is a multiple-award prequalified pool with no fixed limit on the number of awardees. |
| Answer 37   | <b>Yes</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
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| Question 38 | To support appropriate staffing, please characterize the anticipated or historical volume of CLTNCE-credentialed cued language transliteration relative to ASL interpreting under this contract.                                                                                                                                                      |
| Answer 38   | <b>Needs are based on the master schedule of each school year and incoming and outgoing students.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
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| Question 39 | Can MCPS provide an estimate of what percent of services will be provided on-site and what percent will be / should be provided virtually?                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Answer 39   | <b>No. Request are based on needs that are scheduled and last-minute request. MCPS has no set number to the volume of work.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
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| Question 40 | For the Video Remote Interpreting scope (employee assignments, subject to DCI approval), please confirm whether VRI is expected to be delivered on an MCPS-approved platform or the contractor’s own, and whether the Article 18 data-residency and security provisions attach specifically to the VRI platform.                                      |
| Answer 40   | <b>DHOH does not use VRI.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
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| Question 41 | Page 4 states a criminal background check is due with the proposal submission. However, page 14 states “Once the contract is awarded, the contractor is responsible for implementing the background check process.” Are criminal background checks due to be submitted with the proposal or upon contract award?                                      |
| Answer 41   | <b>Agencies need to be sure of the interpreters they send to MCPS. MCPS must do a background check to ensure the interpreter can be with students and receive access to our online platforms for work.</b>                                                                                                                                            |
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| Question 42 | According to Appendix_A: Article 6. Subcontractors are only allowed with prior written approval. However, in the RFP it states they can be used as long as the hourly rate etc. are not being changed. Does this need to be approved prior? Or can we use subcontractor as long as we are staying within the contractual guidelines?                  |
| Answer 42   | <b>Sub-contractors need to be approved</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

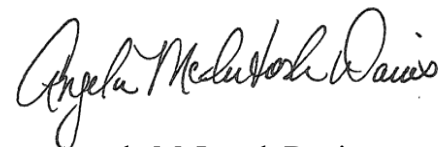
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| Question 43      | This cancellation window goes against industry standard for interpreters. 24 hour cancellation would be required regardless if it's for weather. This could cause interpreters to give back shifts in the event that inclement weather is 8forecasted. If they know they won't be able to bill for holding their time they'll seek hours elsewhere. Would MCPS be willing to modify this? |
| <b>Answer 43</b> | <b>Agencies are paid for 48 hours (2 days) of pay. After that if the school is shut down due to emergency snow days, the vendor is not paid.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
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| Question 44      | We understand MCPS is requesting 3 different references. Is it correct that we are supposed to provide two different points of contact (i.e., current customers) for each of the three references? Please confirm the number of references required for a responsive proposal.                                                                                                            |
| <b>Answer 44</b> | <b>Three references should be with regard to the interpreter. Two references should be with regards to the agency representing the Interpreter.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
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| Question 45      | The RFP contains a variety of sections that typically do not require an offeror response (e.g., Section 1.0 Intent; Section 8.0 Contract Term, etc.) Can MCPS confirm that the specific sections offerors should write to are PWS sections 3.0, 4.0, and 11.0, as well as the ideas / responses listed in Section 13.0 of the PWS?                                                        |
| <b>Answer 45</b> | <b>State. Understand and comply</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
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| Question 46      | MCPS does not provide a format for pricing. Are offerors free to use any format as long as it reflects the guidance in Section 12.0 of the PWS?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Answer 46</b> | <b>Yes</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
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| Question 47      | MCPS does not provide page limits for the required sections. Can MCPS confirm there is no page limit and that offerors should focus solely on thoroughly answering each requirement?                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Answer 47</b> | <b>Yes</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
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| Question 48      | MCPS does not provide formatting guidance for the response? Can offerors use text that is smaller than 12 pt for tables and figures?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Answer 48</b> | <b>12 is the standard</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
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| Question 49      | The proposal requires a current copy of form W-9. Can MCPS confirm this relates to the W-9 for the company as a whole and not individuals proposed to the contract?                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |



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| <b>Answer 49</b> | <b>Correct. It is related to the company that MCPS will be contracting with.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
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| Question 50      | In the redacted copy of the proposal, in addition to the “confidential” or “proprietary” stamp in the lower right-hand corner of the page, should offerors actually redact the specific information that is confidential?                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Answer 50</b> | <b>You can do either. You can write confidential or proprietary if that reflect the entire page, or you can redact only specific parts of a page that is specific to the information that is confidential.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
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| Question 51      | Does the “confidential” or “proprietary” stamp in the lower right-hand corner of the page apply to both copies (i.e., redacted and regular) of the proposal, or does it only apply to the redacted copy of the proposal? Should offerors label applicable pages on both the full and redacted copies? (The difference being that while both copies would be labeled, only one copy would actually be redacted.) |
| <b>Answer 51</b> | <b>You can label the original and only redact one copy.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
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| Question 52      | Background check and badging timeline: Please indicate the typical elapsed time from contract award to first billable assignment for the MCPS fingerprinting, child-abuse training, and badging process (Section 20.0 / Article 21), and whether interpreters previously badged by MCPS retain clearance or must complete the process again.                                                                    |
| <b>Answer 52</b> | <b>Fingerprinted and background check is based on House Bill 21. It can take up to 21 days to finish the checks but generally takes up to one month.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
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| Question 53      | Does the “one separate copy of the proposal” refer to a second copy of the original? So, would the submission consist of: 1 copy of the full proposal, a redacted copy, an electronic copy, and a second copy of the full proposal? Can MCPS provide clarification if requesting anything other than that approach                                                                                              |
| <b>Answer 53</b> | <b>Yes, as stated above.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
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| Question 54      | Is the physical address for delivery of proposals the same address for hand delivering them? For hand delivery, are there any additional instructions offerors need to be aware of to gain access to the building, where to drop off, etc.?                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Answer 54</b> | <b>Yes. 45 W. Gude Dr., Suite 3100, Rockville, Maryland 20850. Offerors will need to check in with security in the lobby. They may call us to us to come down, or, they may allow you up to our suite.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
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| Question 55      | Does the solicitation permit a prime contractor to deliver services through subcontracted, individually credentialed interpreters (RID-certified or equivalent), or does the qualifications/past performance section require the bidding entity itself to have direct interpreting service delivery experience?               |
| <b>Answer 55</b> | <b>The prime contractor can deliver services through subcontractors.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
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| Question 56      | The solicitation requires pricing for both sign language interpreting and Cued Language Transliteration. Given the specialized qualifications required of Cued Language Translitterators and the significantly smaller provider pool, may offerors propose a separate hourly rate for Cued Language Transliteration services? |
| <b>Answer 56</b> | <b>No. Cued Speech Transliteration</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
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| Question 57      | When MCPS requests a Certified Deaf Interpreter (CDI), or when a CDI/hearing interpreter team is determined to be the most appropriate accommodation, may offerors propose a separate hourly rate for CDI services?                                                                                                           |
| <b>Answer 57</b> | <b>CDI are considered interpreters, if it is outlined in the contract and is accepted by MCPS is acceptable. If it is not in the agreed contract, it cannot be honored.</b>                                                                                                                                                   |
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| Question 58      | The RFP requests résumés, references, and background documentation for interpreters assigned to the project. Is MCPS requesting this documentation for all interpreters who may perform work under the contract, or only for the initial proposed contract personnel?                                                         |
| <b>Answer 58</b> | <b>MCPS needs to make sure interpreters are accepted to work with and around students. The background check is necessary.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
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| Question 59      | For interpreters who have already completed MCPS fingerprinting and background clearance under the current contract, will those clearances remain valid under the new contract, or will all proposed personnel be required to complete the process again?                                                                     |
| <b>Answer 59</b> | <b>Yes.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
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| Question 60      | The solicitation does not specify a minimum billable service period. Should offerors assume a minimum billable duration for assignments, or should pricing be based solely on actual time worked?                                                                                                                             |

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| Answer 60 | The RFP specifies a 2-hour minimum. All jobs above are paid for the requested hours. If additional hours are needed, it must be approved by the Team Leader of Related Services or MCPS leadership. |
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Angela McIntosh Davis

Director

NAA

Please indicate your receipt of this notice by signing below and returning with your proposal.

Accepted By: \_\_\_\_\_

(Name & Title) Name of Company: \_\_\_\_\_