

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

September 15, 2022

NOTICE TO OFFERORS

**The following are questions and answers regarding
RFP# 4407.3, Student Assessment and Data Analytics Platform**

Question 1: Is MCPS hoping to upgrade, replace, or enhance its current Student Assessment and Data Management Platform (PowerSchool)? Or is this a new platform that will work in conjunction with PowerSchool?

Answer: The purpose of this Request For Proposal (RFP) is to implement the identified assessment and data management platform throughout the district.

Question 2: What is MCPS' current data warehouse?

Answer: MCPS currently uses SQL for its data warehouse for data storage and reporting.

Question 3: What other tools does MCPS have today that it plans to integrate back into the solution?

Answer: This question will be responded to in a follow up once clarification is obtained.

Question 4: What are MCPS' data constraints, and would MCPS consider replacing its current data warehouse if these data constraints could be alleviated?

ANSWER: Please refer back to the scope of services requested as the data warehouse is not part of the scope.

Question 5: Is this going to be a sole source award, or will more than 1 vendor be considered if they work together on the overall solution?

ANSWER: As stated in section 3.8 Selection Process, it is the intention to award to the most favorable respondent(s) based on the evaluation criteria in Section 11.0. However, the Montgomery County Board of Education reserves the right to make awards according to the best interest of MCPS. This request for proposals may result in multiple awards.

Question 6: Can you please provide an agenda or list of topics that will be discussed during the pre-bidder's conference, so that we can choose the appropriate individuals to attend?

ANSWER: The pre-bid conference will review this Q&A document to further clarify any questions asked and will go over the RFP document to further highlight due dates, times, meeting location etc.

Question 7: Can you please provide an extension for the RFP so that we can properly incorporate the responses from our and other vendor's questions as well as the information obtained from the pre-bidder's conference into our response?

ANSWER: At this time, the RFP cannot be extended past the due date of September 28, 2022 at 2:00 per Erratum #1.

Question 8: Can you please confirm that the cost proposal is to be sent as a separate submission, and if so, can you clarify the number of copies of the technical and cost proposal that are required?

ANSWER: Yes, the cost proposal should be submitted separately. You should provide 1 original submission, 1 redacted submission and 5 copies of the original. You may submit 1 copy of the cost proposal. A copy of the cost proposal should also be included on the flash drive.

Question 9: Will you accept electronic signatures?

ANSWER: Yes

Question 10: How does MCPS expect school and district administrators to engage with this platform vs. Performance Matters?

ANSWER: This Request For Proposal (RFP) is to request proposals from firms to provide an identified student assessment and data management platform throughout the district. Our current student assessment and data management platform is Performance Matters and the contract is expiring.

Question 11: Does MCPS expect this new data system to connect / integrate with Performance Matters?

ANSWER: This Request For Proposal (RFP) is to request proposals from firms to provide an identified student assessment and data management platform throughout the district. Our current student assessment and data management platform is Performance Matters and the contract is expiring.

Question 12: Will this platform replace Performance Matters?

ANSWER: This Request For Proposal (RFP) is to request proposals from firms to provide an identified student assessment and data management platform throughout the district. Our current student assessment and data management platform is Performance Matters and the contract is expiring.

Question 13: What is the anticipated budget for this project?

ANSWER: Please submit a competitive bid with your best price for the services requested.

Question 14: Does MCPS intend to award a single vendor for the entire scope of work listed?

ANSWER: Please reference the response to question 5

Question 15: Would MCPS consider vendors that can meet some, not all, of the scope requirements?

ANSWER: As outlined in 3.0 Score of Services *“The following list of requirements, although extensive, is not exhaustive and is intended to provide interested respondents with sufficient basic information to submit proposals meeting minimum requirements, but is not intended to limit a proposal's content or exclude any relevant or essential information.”*

Question 16: Will electronic signatures (e.g. HelloSign, DocuSign, AdobeSign) be accepted?

ANSWER: Yes

Question 17: Would MCPS describe its implementation schedule for both formative (teacher-created) and summative or benchmark (district-created) assessments? Specifically, does the District plan to go live with the new system at all schools at one time, or is there a plan for a phased rollout with school groups and a pilot? If planning a phased rollout, will MCPS outline the plan (how many schools and target date of each phase)?

ANSWER: Below are the project phases listed in the RFP with additional details to specifically address the question. There is an expectation to have full implementation by School Year 2023-2024 (August 2023) for all schools and offices in the district.

Phase 1: Requirements Analysis, Validation of Requirements, Security Analysis, Change Management and, Proposed roll-out Strategy for Implementation, including specific proposals for sequencing of module roll-out, Sequencing of Training plan. During this phase, initial preparation for migration of MCPS created formative and summative assessments and items, with the goal of having assessments and items ready for administration by the start of the 2023-24 school year.

Phase 2: Initial Configurations, Customizations, Backups/Disaster Recovery and, Application Integrations

Phase 3: Data Migration and Testing of the application

Phase 4: Initial district Roll-out, including proposed training - This would include roll-out to central office staff and assessment and data management school site contacts in

Spring of 2023. The roll-out to these groups would build user capacity in creating data reports to monitor student progress and creation of assessments in the platform.

Phase 5: Continue Customization and integration of additional functionality, feedback and, evaluation of initial roll-out on phase 4, Testing

Phase 6: Enterprise Roll-out, training, feedback, and evaluation. In this phase, the focus will be on the 209 site users for full implementation by the start of the 2023-24 school year. In addition, ensuring formative and summative assessment migration is complete and assessments are ready for administration.

Question 18: The RFP lists the requirement to import data from additional platforms. Does this include test items and if so, will MCPS specify how many items are to be imported, and from which systems?

ANSWER: The current platform has about 22,000 user-created and third-party items used on formative and summative assessments, these items would need to be migrated into the awarded platform. In addition, the district works with multiple third-party vendors such as Benchmark Education, Eureka Math, and StudySync for assessments in English and multiple languages. At this time some of the third party assessment items are administered in the platform and others the data from the vendor is imported into the platform.

Question 19: Can we hand deliver our proposals to the address stated in the solicitation?

ANSWER: Yes

Question 20: The RFP states "This includes, but is not limited to, the Respondent's point-by-point response to this RFP. If the Respondent responds only "Understand and comply," it is assumed that the Respondent complies with MCPS' understanding of the requirement." Is this referring to the requirements listed in 3.1?

ANSWER: Not as a sole response. Section 3.1 states that your proposal should address the entire scope of services. You can indicate that you understand and comply but in doing so, be sure that your response addresses the requirements stated.

Question 21: On page 14 is a list of names, emails, etc. Are these to be used for references?

ANSWER: Yes

Question 22: Are financial documents being requested and can you clarify what financial records are required? The request is as follows, "Respondent's annual fiscal report in order to demonstrate the Respondent's financial stability (If desired, the Respondent also may include any other financial documents that the Respondent wishes to include regarding Respondent's financial condition)."

ANSWER: We are asking that you provide any documentation that provides MCPS with information that shows that you are financially stable. Provide some information that addresses the financial stability of the company.

Question 23: Does the Cost Proposal need to be submitted as a separate document or should it be within the proposal?

ANSWER: See response to question 8 above..

Question 24: What third-party assessment data will need to be loaded?

ANSWER: MCPS currently works with multiple vendors, such as NWEA, Benchmark Education, Amplify, iReady, Eureka Math, StudySync. This does not include all and may change based on vendor contract.

Question 25: What is the volume of district-created items that need to be loaded? What item types and in what format will they be provided (e.g. QTI, PDF documents)? What are the district-created materials that need to be loaded?

ANSWER: There are assessment items created by district writers in the current platform. A process to transition items would need to be further discussed with the awarded vendor; however the platform should allow manual, QTI, and through text file uploads. There are variable of items types such as but not limited to) multiple choice single/multiple correct response, graphing, hotspot, matching, short and extended text, equation/numeric, and drop-down. The approximate volume of items and tests range as follows: 3500 assessments and 22,000 district user created items.

Question 26: How many years of historical data will MCPS require?

ANSWER: Three

Question 27: Does the district want 30 separate sandbox accounts or will it be sufficient if all users can use the same login credentials with the proper selection of roles with associated permissions?

ANSWER: In lieu of 30 sandbox accounts, providing access for all users to use the same login credentials will be acceptable if more than one can use at the same time. If not, a minimum of 5 sandbox accounts is required.

Question 28: Please confirm that MCPS only requires an "Understand and comply" for the point-by-point responses. We understand that confirms that we comply with the MCSP understanding of the requirement.

ANSWER: Correct. If a detailed response is not needed, please respond with "Understand and Comply".

Question 29: The RFP has the requirement for "The ability to import data from additional platforms." Can MCPS provide a list of these platforms that will require a data exchange?

ANSWER: MCPS currently works with multiple vendors, such as NWEA, Benchmark Education, Amplify, iReady. This does not include all and may change based on vendor contract. Current MCPS policy asks for other vendor data to have a footprint in MCPS system before sending to other platforms and does not ask one vendor to another vendor to have direct data transfer.

Question 30: Can MCPS confirm that if it chooses to terminate for convenience, any such termination will not result in any refund or credit for products and services already delivered, or for the remaining balance of any unused subscription period?

ANSWER: During this process, MCPS cannot address the contract clauses. This question should be addressed in your submission as a clarification under section

Question 31: How does MCPS expect school and district administrators to engage with this platform vs. Performance Matters?

ANSWER: This Request For Proposal (RFP) is to request proposals from firms to provide an identified student assessment and data management platform throughout the district. Our current student assessment and data management platform is Performance Matters and the contract is expiring.

Question 32: What data is currently being pulled from Synergy into the Performance Matters platform?

ANSWER: Student Demographics, Courses, Schedules, Marks, Attendance, State & National Assessments, Special Programs , Services like IEP, 504, ELL, SSL, CTE

Question 33: Does MCPS use a 3rd party tool like Clever or Class link to share the data between Synergy and Performance Matters?

ANSWER: No, data is currently not shared using Clever or Class link. Native ETL functions are used to produce text files.

Question 34: What are the third-party assessments MCPS is looking to migrate the data from in the section on data analytics(3.1.h)?

ANSWER: MCPS currently works with multiple vendors, such as NWEA, Benchmark Education, Amplify, iReady. This does not include all and may change based on vendor contract. Current MCPS policy asks for other vendor data to have a footprint in MCPS system before sending to other platforms and does not ask one vendor to another vendor to have direct data transfer.

Question 35: What specific graduation requirements is MCPS tracking in 3.1.o?

ANSWER: The graduation requirements that are inline with the guidelines from Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and the Maryland Blueprint for education.

Question 36: What third party data is looking to be utilized for MTSS and RTI response in section 3.1.z?

ANSWER: This question will be responded to in a follow up once clarification is obtained.

Question 37: Are you using a 3rd party Single Sign On (SSO) such as Active Directory, Google, Identity Automation, etc.?

ANSWER: We use Active Directory.

Question 38: Do you want to import legacy items via QTI?

ANSWER: There are assessment items created by district writers in the current platform. All items would need to be transitioned to the through a manual, QTI, and/or through text file uploads.

Question 39: What is meant by Item statistical analysis across the document?

ANSWER: The capability to analyze individual assessment items in detail (ex. Standard, difficulty, choice distribution, P-value, discrimination value, etc.) using student performance data for items that are created in the platform.

Question 40: What kind of data would MCPS want to export from a new system into MCPS internal data systems in section 3.1.g.iii?

ANSWER: MCPS has multiple third-party data exports like NWEA, Benchmark Education, Amplify, iReady, in addition to student assessment data directly administered in the platform. Student assessment information that was administered in the platform would need to be exportable to MCPS internal systems.

Question 41: Is there a need for supporting differentiated practice targeting student gaps?

ANSWER: This question will be responded to in a follow up once clarification is obtained.

Question 42: Will MCPS share more details of your high value data warehouse of multi assessment reports?

ANSWER: We will issue a follow-up response once we obtain clarification.

Question 43: Will the District accept digital signatures on any required forms for this submission?

ANSWER: Yes

Question 44: Does MCPS want item bank content quoted in the submission? Item banks were not in the description but were included in the bullet point.

ANSWER: Yes

Angela McIntosh-Davis, Director
Division of Procurement

Please indicate your receipt of this notice by signing below and returning with your proposal or under a separate cover.

Accepted: _____
Name and Title

Company Name: _____