

April 5, 2024

RFP Number: 4609.1
Due Date: May 3, 2024
Open Time: 2:00 p.m.

To: Prospective Respondents:

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to solicit one or more established providers of evidence-based Tier 3 literacy intervention programs to be used in Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) with a focus on one or more of the following: Word Recognition and Spelling, Fluency, Language Comprehension and Vocabulary Development, Reading Comprehension, Handwriting, and/or Writing.

The contractor must submit their offer per the instructions under the RFP, Section 15.0 Mandatory Submissions. The submission must be signed by an official having authority to contract with MCPS. The firm and official's name shall be used. This solicitation does not commit the district to pay any costs incurred in the submission of proposals or guarantee that an award will be made.

In the event of emergency closing of the MCPS Board of Education offices, this RFP will open at the same time on the next regular working day.

Sincerely,



Angela McIntosh Davis, Director
Division of Procurement

AMD
Enclosure

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

Request for Proposal No. 4609.1
Literacy Intervention Materials for Secondary & Elementary School Grades PreK-12

1.0 INTENT

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to solicit one or more established providers of evidence-based Tier 3 literacy intervention programs to be used in Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) with a focus on one or more of the following: Word Recognition and Spelling, Fluency, Language Comprehension and Vocabulary Development, Reading Comprehension, Handwriting, and/or Writing. Programs need to include explicit, systematic, targeted instruction that can be implemented successfully in a daily 30-minute time block. Tier 3 instruction is more explicit and skill-focused. Students are given intensive instruction using strategies that have been proven through research to be effective.

These literacy intervention programs, as well as staff training to support their effective use, are needed to support the instructional continuum for literacy. This RFP seeks providers (“Respondents” or “Offerors”) who share a vision for ensuring that all students have access to the highest quality interventions aligned to State Standards, to ultimately increase student achievement and ensure success in college and careers. The award may be made to more than one Respondent if it is in the best interest of MCPS to do so.

2.0 BACKGROUND

MCPS is the 14th largest school system in the United States, and the largest in the state of Maryland. There were 161,313 total students enrolled in the district at the start of the 2023–2024 school year. MCPS serves a diverse student body, with 35.3% Hispanic/Latino, 23.9% White, 21.6% Black, 13.7% Asian, .2% Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and 5.2% two or more races. MCPS also serves 40.6% of students receiving Free and Reduced Meals services, 19.7% identified as Emergent Multilingual Learners and 13.6% receiving special education services. It is projected that MCPS will serve more than 162,460 students from 157 countries speaking 150 languages. With a Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 Operating Budget of approximately \$2.92 billion, MCPS employs more than 23,300 employees.

This RFP seeks to identify various evidence-based literacy intervention programs to support elementary and secondary students who may not be reached by the core curriculum including students with and without disabilities. Respondents should include in their submission the results of any efficacy studies, regardless of sample size, to demonstrate that the intervention is evidence-based.

For more information on MCPS, please visit: <https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org>

3.0 SCOPE OF SERVICES

The following list of requirements is intended to provide interested Respondents with sufficient information to submit proposals meeting some or many of the requirements. MCPS is seeking intervention programs that target specific language and literacy skills to fulfill the specific needs of different learners, inclusive of students' cultural and linguistic needs. The list is separated into three groups--General, K-2, and 3-12--because the Science of Reading research explains that the needs of at-risk readers in the primary grades are different from the needs of readers in grades 3-5 who are already demonstrating reading/writing failure.

General Requirements:

Allow for flexibility in meeting the needs of a wide range of students including students who are dually identified as a student receiving special education services and as an English Language Learner who require accommodations.

Include tools, resources, and documents that provide parents/guardians and others with necessary resources to provide transparency into the intervention and provide support to academic content subject areas.

Include a range of materials and resources for students who are verbal and nonverbal who require Assistive Technology and Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC).

Be grounded in high interest texts with a range in Lexile levels, both informational and literary, that are diverse in terms of perspective, topic, genre, and time period.

Grades K-2

3.1 Word Recognition and Spelling

- Pre-assessments to place students in a level of instruction
- Systematic Scope and Sequence for Phonemic Awareness and Orthography Concepts
- Daily and weekly routines are clearly outlined
- Progress monitoring is embedded into instruction
- Phonemic Awareness instruction and practice includes all 44 phonemes
- Intensive Phonological Awareness instruction that includes isolation, blending, segmenting and manipulation tasks that begin with large sound units and progresses to individual phonemes
- Articulatory models and descriptors included
- Phonemic Awareness instruction continues with graphemes once graphemes are mastered

- Instruction of letters includes explicit instruction of handwriting
- Spelling is addressed in tandem with phoneme/grapheme mapping and decoding
- Instruction of letters is supported with embedded mnemonics
- Irregular or Temporarily Irregular High Frequency Words are taught through decoding with the unexpected grapheme(s)
- Daily practice reading words in isolation and connected, decodable text
- Decodable text is aligned with phonics concepts and Irregular High Frequency Words taught
- Daily dictation practice
- Syllable instruction
- Instruction in multisyllabic words includes strategies for flexing the vowel sounds (set for variability)
- Morphology instruction beginning with the 8 inflectional suffixes and most common prefixes is taught along with Kindergarten concepts
- Repeated exposure to words in isolation and in connected text to support orthographic mapping/sight word recognition
- Supports and scaffolds for Multilingual Learners
- Student materials are engaging and purposeful
- Teacher materials are supportive and user-friendly, and include suggestions for adaptations for students with hearing and vision impairments, including how to address phonics instruction with students who are blind or deaf.
- Pacing guides are rigorous but flexible to adjust to needs of different learners
- Assessments measure phonemic awareness, reading words in isolation, reading decodable connected text and spelling
- Assessments measure both accuracy and automaticity
- Professional development is available and high quality

3.2 Fluency

- Pre-assessments to place students in a level of instruction
- Specially designed practice opportunities in varied levels of decodable text that improve accuracy, reading rate and prosody
- Explicit instruction in attention to punctuation
- Explicit instruction in phrasing
- Explicit instruction in reading with expression
- Student materials are engaging and purposeful
- Teacher materials are supportive and user-friendly
- Assessment tools to measure progress in accuracy, reading rate and prosody
- Professional Development is available and high quality

3.3 Language Comprehension and Vocabulary Development

- Pre-assessments to place students in a level of instruction
- Explicit instruction in sentence structure supported with practice speaking in complete sentences.

- Explicit instruction in the academic vocabulary needed to access and explain content across genres
- Explicit instruction in multiple meaning words
- Systematic scope and sequence for morphology instruction
- Morphemic patterns in words are taught in multiple contexts
- Includes deliberate practice that requires word retrieval and appropriate and varied usage of new vocabulary
- Topics used in instruction are intentional, cumulative, build content knowledge and vocabulary
- Complex text is read aloud to provide language models and anchor instruction
- Authentic opportunities to use and practice language through play
- Supports and scaffolds for Multilingual Learners
- Student materials are engaging and purposeful
- Teacher materials are supportive and user-friendly
- Assessments measure sentence length, sentence complexity and accurate use of vocabulary
- Professional development is available and high quality

3.4 Handwriting

- Pre-assessments to place students in a level of instruction
- Explicit instruction in pencil grip and appropriate pressure
- Systematic Scope and Sequence in lines, curves and letter formation in manuscript and/or cursive
- Visual cues and verbal paths
- Deliberate practice opportunities to develop accuracy and automaticity
- Letter formation is taught with letter names and sounds
- Student materials are engaging and purposeful with suggestions for adaptation for students with physical and visual impairments.
- Teacher materials are supportive and user-friendly
- Progress monitoring tools measure accuracy and automaticity
- Professional development is available and high quality

Grades 3-12

3.5 Word Recognition and Spelling

- Diagnostic pre-assessments to place students in a level of instruction
- Systematic Scope and Sequence for orthography and morphology concepts
- Daily and weekly routines are clearly outlined
- Progress monitoring is embedded into instruction
- Phonemic Awareness instruction that includes isolation, blending, segmenting and manipulation tasks is addressed with graphemes; manipulation tasks are also addressed aurally only
- Articulatory models and descriptors are included
- Instruction of letters includes explicit instruction of handwriting

- Spelling is addressed in tandem with phoneme/grapheme mapping and decoding
- Instruction of letters is supported with embedded mnemonics
- Irregular or Temporarily Irregular High Frequency Words are taught through decoding with the unexpected grapheme(s)
- Daily practice reading words in isolation and connected, decodable text
- Decodable text is aligned with phonics concepts and Irregular High Frequency Words taught
- Daily dictation practice
- Syllable instruction
- Instruction in multisyllabic words includes strategies for flexing the vowel sounds (set for variability)
- Explicit morphology instruction to decode and define
- Repeated exposure to words in isolation and in connected text to support orthographic mapping/sight word recognition
- Supports and scaffolds for Multilingual Learners
- Student materials are engaging and purposeful and appropriate for this age group
- Teacher materials are supportive and user-friendly
- Pacing guides are rigorous but flexible to adjust to needs of different learners
- Assessments measure phonemic awareness, morphological awareness, reading words in isolation, reading decodable connected text and spelling
- Assessment measures both accuracy and automaticity
- Professional development is available and high quality

3.6 Fluency

- Pre-assessments to place students in a level of instruction
- Specially designed practice opportunities in varied levels of uncontrolled text that improve accuracy, reading rate and prosody
- Utilizes performable text; plays, poems, speeches
- Targets sentence and passage reading fluency
- Explicit instruction in attention to punctuation
- Explicit instruction in phrasing
- Explicit instruction in reading with expression
- Student materials are engaging and purposeful
- Teacher materials are supportive and user-friendly
- Assessment tools to measure progress in accuracy, reading rate and prosody
- Professional Development is available and high quality

3.7 Language Comprehension and Vocabulary Development

- Pre-assessments to place students in a level of instruction
- Explicit instruction in sentence structure supported with practice speaking in complete sentences.
- Explicit instruction in interpreting and building compound and complex sentences in and outside of text

- Explicit instruction in the academic vocabulary needed to access and explain content across genres
- Explicit instruction in multiple meaning words
- Systematic scope and sequence for morphology instruction
- Morphemic patterns in words are taught in multiple contexts
- Includes deliberate practice that requires word retrieval and appropriate and varied usage of new vocabulary
- Topics used in instruction are intentional, cumulative, build content knowledge and vocabulary
- Complex text is read aloud to provide language models and anchor instruction
- Opportunities for discourse and oral language practice
- Supports and scaffolds for Multilingual Learners
- Student materials are engaging and purposeful
- Teacher materials are supportive and user-friendly
- Assessments measure sentence length, sentence complexity and accurate use of vocabulary
- Professional development is available and high quality

3.8 Reading Comprehension

- Pre-assessments to place students in a level of instruction
 - Fluency; CWPM should be near grade-level targets
 - Comprehension; poor responses to general and text dependent questions
- Text and content is culturally sensitive and highly engaging
- Text used in instruction is primarily paper based, not online
- Daily and weekly routines are clear and easy to follow
- Explicit instruction in text structure
 - Simple, compound and complex sentences
 - Pronoun assignment
 - Subject and predicate identification
 - Paragraph Structure
 - Narrative and Essay Structure
- Explicit instruction in genre structure
- Explicit metacognitive strategy instruction and opportunities for authentic application in text and assignment of tasks that demand it
 - Monitoring understanding while reading
 - Rereading when understanding is challenged
 - Defining unknown words in context
 - Defining unknown words with morphemes
 - Interpreting figurative language
 - Inferring
 - Predicting
 - Summarizing
 - Prioritizing important information
 - Connecting related ideas
 - Visualizing

- Explicit instruction in marking text for later reference
- Use of tools to support working memory when processing text
 - Graphic organizers, sticky notes, highlighters
- Explicit instruction in how to express understanding of text orally and in writing
 - Retelling a story
 - Summarizing
 - Answering questions with text support

3.9 Writing

- Systematic Scope and Sequence that addresses language structure, syntax, grammar
 - Explicit instruction in construction of simple, compound and complex sentences
 - Sentence expansion and combining strategies
 - Use of transition words, conjunctions and appositives
 - Explicit instruction in paragraph structure
 - Explicit instruction in multi-paragraph essays
- Explicit instruction in Planning for Writing
 - Idea Generation
 - Note-taking
 - Organizing ideas
 - Outlining
 - Sequencing information
 - Targeting Audience
- Explicit instruction in Process
 - Drafting
 - Writing
 - Revising
- Editing

4.0 TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

The Respondent's proposal shall identify and describe:

1. Applicable technical requirements and recommended configurations necessary to fully implement and utilize the digital or online intervention materials including but not exclusive to:
 - a. Hardware requirements;
 - b. Operating system requirements;
 - c. Software requirements;
 - d. Browser-specific requirements;
 - e. Network and security requirements;
 - f. Licensing models;
 - g. Copyright and fair use guidelines.

2. Processes and provisions regarding the automated exchange of data between the Respondent and MCPS student information and assessment systems.
3. Processes and provisions regarding the handling, use, storage, and retention of MCPS data and information to ensure the privacy of staff, students, and parents/guardians, consistent with the MCPS General Contract Articles and elsewhere in this RFP.
4. Processes and provisions to provide ongoing technical support to staff, students, and parents/guardians.
5. Examples of similarly completed projects, or projects in progress, that demonstrate the Respondent's expertise and capabilities in each of the above-listed areas. Examples might include, for example, detailed descriptions supported by screenshots, references, websites or apps for MCPS review.

4.1 REQUIRED: Intervention must meet the following technical requirements for digital or online components in order to be considered:

Vendor provides a comprehensive Accessibility Compliance Report (ACR) based on the March 2022 revision of the Voluntary Product Accessibility Template ([VPAT 2.4Rev WCAG](#)) provided by the Information Technology Industry Council (ITI). The ACR should include a review for each unique digital component of the Vendor's product and identify whether the document was completed by internal staff or a named third-party contractor.

4.1.1 Materials available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for MCPS staff, students, and parents/guardians as applicable.

4.1.2 Materials are accessible from any Internet-enabled device including but not exclusive to personal computers, laptop computers, Chromebooks, tablets, and smartphones. A comparison of features or functionality that vary across device types should be provided as applicable (ex. web-based experience v. mobile application).

4.1.3 The Respondent supports single sign-on (SSO) for staff and students. District-supported options for SSO include Microsoft Azure/AD (now called Entra ID), Google SAML, and Clever SSO.

4.1.4 Materials are compatible with all modern Internet browsers including but not exclusive to Microsoft Edge, Google Chrome, and Safari using default installation settings and without additional system hardware or software components required on end-users' devices.

4.1.5 Materials include student-facing and teacher-facing materials and resources with digital or online formats compatible with Google Suite for Education.

4.1.6 The Respondent provides automated processes for the provisioning and management of user accounts. District-supported processes for account provisioning and management include Secure File Transfer Protocol (SFTP), OneRoster, and Clever rostering.

4.1.7 Materials support integration with Canvas by Instructure, the district's Learning Management System (LMS), or alternative LMS that MCPS adopts at its sole discretion, via the Learning Tools Interoperability (LTI) specification, version 1.1 or higher. Respondent is required to remain current with the subsequent versions of the LTI open standard within a reasonable time period.

4.1.8 Materials, in part or in whole, are in editable formats including but not exclusive to Google Docs and Microsoft Word, or are customizable within the platform, for the purposes of tailoring lessons on an as needed basis. AND in platform customizations must also adhere to WCAG accessibility standards.

4.1.9 The Respondent includes centralized management of digital or online materials for all users that enables MCPS to establish, customize, and control levels of user access and can be managed by the district locally.

4.1.10 The Respondent shall provide MCPS with statistics regarding usage of online resources by MCPS and its authorized users according to the then current standards in the industry.

4.1.11 The Respondent shall conduct daily backups of MCPS data, either incremental or full, and must conduct full weekly backups. If the Respondent's products and services retain data for individual students, such data shall be retained in the Respondent's online system for a minimum of five years following the creation of each student account and one year following the graduation of each student, unless otherwise as specified or directed by MCPS.

4.1.12 The Respondent shall have the ability to configure a nightly (or more frequent) transfer of system data to MCPS' Student Information System (SIS) or any updated, upgraded, or alternative systems that MCPS adopts at its sole discretion.

4.1.13 The Respondent includes district level and site level reporting options.

4.1.14 For digital or online assessments, assessment systems shall have the capability to automate the transfer of student assessment data. If this cannot be done via direct connection, assessment data can be readily imported in at least one of the following file formats into Unify: .csv (comma delimited) or .tsv (tab delimited).

4.1.15 By agreeing to deliver materials within this contract, and as per the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the publisher shall prepare and submit, within 30 days of the contract start date, a National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard (NIMAS) file set to the terms and procedures set forth by the National Instructional Materials Access Center (NIMAC). The files will be used for the production of specialized formats as permitted under the law for students with disabilities. The publisher also will submit to MCPS a Certification from NIMAC to demonstrate submission of the file.

4.1.16 All materials must embed principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL).

4.1.17 Student facing materials in digital formats including websites must be able to be easily downloaded into a Braille Ready File (BRF) format for the timely conversion to Braille and printable for the timely conversion to enlarged print (paper format).

4.1.18 Materials in digital or print formats are compatible with the district's accessibility tools for students including but not exclusive to **Read & Write for Google** by TextHelp. All digital materials (including audio, video, PDF files and web pages) designed by the publisher are required to be interoperable with district's accessibility tools to provide the following accessibility features: (i) Screen Reader (ii) Text Reader (text to speech) (iii) Word Prediction (iv) Speech to text (v) Ability for students to type directly on the documents (vi) Math equation editor for mathematics documents, i.e., worksheets (vii) Highlighting tools (viii) Annotation tools (ix) Dictionary tools (x) Closed Captions and transcripts for video and audio materials (xi) Resizable text.

4.2 PREFERRED: MCPS prefers literacy intervention programs that meet the following technical requirements:

4.2.1 Reading interventions programs meet the latest LTI standards, version 1.3 and LTI Advantage.

4.2.2 Literacy intervention programs support and are in conformance with Common Cartridge version 1.3 or higher for the import and export of content.

4.2.3 The Respondent supports and is in conformance with OneRoster version 1.1 or higher.

4.2.4 The Respondent provides programmatic access to system resources via a REST API for accessing or modifying data and configurations externally from the main application to support the district's need for customization.

5.0 MATERIALS DELIVERY PROCESS

The Respondent's proposal shall specify the method(s) of delivery by which materials will be provided to MCPS, including but not limited to the delivery of any hard-bound materials, access to downloadable materials for copy and use by MCPS, or the use of licenses or subscriptions to access online materials or software.

5.1 SAMPLE MATERIALS DELIVERY PROCESS

The Respondents shall submit sample materials, after the close of the RFP and only if contacted by MCPS following the initial review of the submission. This will occur no later than May 17, 2024. Direction on when and where to provide the sample(s) will be provided through a notification from the Procurement Unit.

If contacted, Respondents should not provide copies of all materials available. Rather, Respondents should provide a **representative sample only**. Respondents should provide a guide or overview with the materials that will assist evaluators in navigating sample materials and examining evidence relative to requirements of the RFP. If the respondent will be providing access to downloadable materials for copy and use by MCPS, or the use of licenses or subscriptions to access online materials or software, including accessibility via captions, this should be specified in the RFP submission.

6.0 PRICING

The Respondent's proposal shall provide pricing for each intervention that the Respondent is proposing under this RFP, include pricing for the various types of interventions offered by the Respondent.

7.0 TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND KEY STAFF

Montgomery County Public Schools expects to implement each of the reading and mathematics intervention programs in 42 Middle Schools and 25 High Schools, ranging from 2,000 to 4,000 total students across various groups.

7.1 The Respondent's proposal shall include a plan and schedule for implementation in accordance with MCPS' implementation plan described above.

7.2 After the Respondent has made the reading intervention program available to MCPS, MCPS shall have a period of thirty (30) days (“Acceptance Testing Period”) from the date of availability to verify that the reading intervention program substantially performs to the specifications contained in the RFP. In the event that MCPS determines that the reading intervention program does not meet such specifications, MCPS shall notify the Respondent in writing, and Respondent shall modify or correct the program so that it meets these specifications, or MCPS may determine in its sole discretion to terminate the contract in accordance with the MCPS General Contract Articles referenced in Section 20.0.

7.3 In addition, the proposal shall identify key staff members on the Respondent’s project team, describe each team member’s relevant experience and describe the role he or she would play in the project. Such key staff shall not be substituted with other personnel or reassigned to another project without MCPS’ prior approval in accordance with the MCPS General Contract Articles.

8.0 DATA PRIVACY AND SECURITY

As specified in more detail in the MCPS General Contract Articles and elsewhere in this RFP, the Respondent will comply with all federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and ordinances applicable to this project, including but not limited to the requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”), 20 U.S.C. § 1232g, and its implementing regulations (34 C.F.R. part 99), the Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (“COPPA”), 15 U.S.C. § 6501-6505, and its implementing regulations (16 C.F.R. § 312, et seq.), the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment, (“PPRA”) 20 U.S.C. § 1232(h) and its implementing regulations (34 C.F.R. § 98.1 et seq.), the Maryland Student Privacy Act of 2015, Md. Ed. Code Ann., §4-131, Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) 13A.08, as well as applicable Board of Education policies and MCPS regulations, including but not limited to MCPS Regulation AFA-RA, Research and Other Data Collection Activities in Montgomery County Public Schools, MCPS Regulation JOA-RA, Student Records, and MCPS Regulation JFF-RA, Federal Requirements for Use of Protected Student Information.

9.0 TRAINING

The proposal shall describe the training necessary to implement, support, and use the proposed reading intervention program(s). Respondents shall also provide a training plan for each school year referenced in the MCPS implementation plan described in Section 7.0.

The professional development plan should be designed to supplement, not supplant, the district’s existing approach to professional development that includes: development of school and district expertise and capacity to deliver training districtwide; a focus on equity and cultural proficiency; school-based embedded support from school and district staff; and development of blended professional learning models that include both face to face and virtual learning. Each Respondent’s training and professional

development digital or online web-based materials for MCPS personnel must be section 508 compliant and meet accessibility guidelines for our teachers with disabilities.

10.0 SELECTION PROCESS

It is the intention to award to the most favorable Respondent(s) based on the evaluation criteria in Section 18.0. However, the Board of Education reserves the right to make awards according to the best option for MCPS. The selected Respondent(s) must have demonstrated experience in developing and implementing reading intervention programs in middle schools and high schools in grades PK-12.

This RFP may result in multiple awards for different components of the scope of services, or MCPS may choose to select an open educational resource in lieu of extending a contract award.

In determining the qualifications of an Offeror, MCPS will consider the Offeror's record and performance of any prior contracts with MCPS, federal departments or agencies, or other public bodies, including but not limited to the Offeror's record providing reading intervention programs to MCPS or other schools or school districts. MCPS expressly reserves the right to reject the proposal of any Offeror if the investigation discloses that the Offeror, in the opinion of MCPS, has not properly performed such prior contracts or has habitually and without just cause neglected the payment of bills or has otherwise disregarded its obligations to subcontractors or employees.

MCPS may conduct any necessary investigation to determine the ability of the Offeror to perform the work, and the Offeror shall furnish to MCPS all such information and data requested, such as information about its reputation, past performance, business and financial capability and other factors that demonstrate that the provider is capable of satisfying MCPS' needs and requirements for a specific contract. MCPS reserves the right to reject any proposal if the evidence submitted by the Offeror or investigation of such Offeror fails to satisfy MCPS that such Offeror is properly qualified to carry out the obligations of the contract and to complete all requirements contemplated therein. Consideration will be given to any previous performance with MCPS as to the quality and the acceptability of bidder's services.

All Offerors submitting a proposal shall include evidence that they maintain a permanent place of business. Copies of any appropriate licenses necessary to perform this work shall be submitted with each proposal. Offerors also shall demonstrate that they have adequate staff to perform the required services. Use of subcontractor(s) and/or third party providers, if any, must be specifically identified within the proposal. Subcontractor and/or third party provider roles shall be clearly expressed. MCPS reserves the right to accept or reject use of proposed subcontractor(s) and/or third party provider(s).

MCPS reserves the right to add or delete Respondents, as well as literacy intervention program content and professional development, as needed or piloted, should its requirements change during the contract term. Also, nothing in this RFP precludes MCPS from utilizing other literacy intervention programs either developed by MCPS or otherwise at any point during the contract term.

11.0 CONTRACT TERM

The initial term of contract shall be for three years. However, the contract may not begin until one day after approval by the Board of Education and will conclude as stated under the contract term. MCPS reserves the right to extend this contract at existing prices, terms, and conditions for up to three additional terms for one (1) year each. Written notice indicating MCPS' intention to pursue the extension of the contract will be issued to the successful Respondent(s) 90 days prior to the expiration of the original contract. The Respondent(s) shall have ten (10) days from the date of notification to return the notice acknowledging its intent to accept or reject the extension.

Once all responses are evaluated, MCPS staff may make a recommendation to the Board of Education to extend the contract or decide to rebid. If the contract is extended by the Board of Education, a contract amendment will be issued.

12.0 CONTRACT TERMINATION

MCPS reserves the right to cancel the contract in whole or in part at any time in accordance with Article 12 of the MCPS General Contract Articles. MCPS also reserves the right to cancel the contract with a Respondent for failure to comply or failure to fulfill the terms of this contract in accordance with Article 13 of the MCPS General Contract Articles.

13.0 REFERENCES

All Offerors shall include a list of a minimum of five references who use the Offeror's services who can attest to their quality of work and, if possible, shall include school districts of comparable size to MCPS that have utilized the Respondents' services. Include names of client, contact person, email address and phone number of all references. Also, as an attachment, Offerors shall include a list of all current school district clients.

References may or may not be reviewed or contacted at the discretion of MCPS. Typically, only references of the top ranked short listed Offerors are contacted. MCPS reserves the right to contact references other than, and/or in addition to, those furnished by an Offeror.

<u>Company Name & Address</u>	<u>Contact Person</u>	<u>Phone Number</u>
1.	_____	
	Email _____	
2.	_____	
	Email _____	
3.	_____	
	Email _____	
4.	_____	
	Email _____	
5.	_____	
	Email _____	

14.0 FORMAT OF RESPONSE

14.0.1 Response to this RFP shall be submitted in the same order as the RFP and provide an individual response to each RFP specification.

14.0.2 Respondents shall include any and all statements and representations made within its proposal in the contract for services with the MCPS. 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.

14.0.3 A pricing proposal shall be submitted as a separate document outlining content, timeline for implementation, training, professional development, etc.

15.0 MANDATORY SUBMISSIONS

Each Offeror must submit a complete proposal including all required information, attachments, and samples of the materials. The response shall address each paragraph in the same order as the RFP and provide an individual response to each RFP specification. All proposals must be presented using the same numbering sequence and order used in this RFP document or as otherwise specified by MCPS. Offerors may request via e-mail to Mrs. Angela McIntosh-

Davis, Director, MCPS Division of Procurement at [Angela S McIntosh-Davis@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Angela_S_McIntosh-Davis@mcpsmd.org), a Microsoft Word version to help them in preparing the response.

One (1) original and (1) copy, as well as one (1) electronic version on flash drive of the response, and one (1) redacted copy, as well as one (1) electronic version on flash drive of the redacted response must be sent by mail, courier or hand-delivery to the address below. Responses shall be in binders with tabs identifying each section. A table of contents should be included and all pages numbered as referenced in the Table of Contents. No faxes or electronic submission of proposals will be accepted. Proposals are to be received no later than 2:00 p.m. on May 3, 2024. Submit responses of the entire RFP proposal to:

Montgomery County Public Schools
Division of Procurement
45 West Gude Drive, Suite 3100
Rockville, MD 20850

Submissions will become the property of MCPS.

The proposal must be signed by an official having authority to contract with MCPS. The firm and the official's name shall be used in the contract process. MCPS reserves the right to make an award without further discussion of the proposals received. MCPS also may negotiate with the one Offeror who submits the best proposal or with two or more Offerors who are in the competitive range. Therefore, it is important that the Offeror's proposal be submitted initially on the most favorable terms from both the technical and cost standpoints. After the submission and closure of proposals, no information will be released until after the award. It is understood that the Offeror's proposal will become a part of the official file on this matter without obligation to MCPS.

The proposal must be complete and comply with all aspects of these specifications. Marketing or promotional verbiage will likely overshadow the Offeror's qualifications and expertise. MCPS urges the Offeror to be specific and brief in their responses.

MCPS shall not be responsible or liable for any costs incurred by the Offeror in the preparation and submission of their proposals and pricing.

Complete Response must include:

- Point-by-point Response to each section of the RFP, including but not limited to each subsection and bulleted list in Section 3.0.
- Pricing Proposal. Provide a completed pricing sheet provided in [Attachment E](#) for each reading and/or mathematics intervention program that the Respondent proposes, including (i) details regarding the components covered by the unit price per student; and (ii) pricing for the various types of reading and/or mathematics intervention program offered by the Respondent.
- Accessibility Compliance Report (ACR) based on the March 2022 revision of the Voluntary Product Accessibility Template ([VPAT 2.4Rev WCAG](#)) provided by the Information Technology Industry Council (ITI). (see section 4.1)

- References, See 13.0 References
- List of all current school district clients, See 13.0 References
- 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).
- Equal Opportunities Certification (Attachment A)
- Certification of Non-segregated Facilities (Attachment B)
- Minority Business Enterprise (Attachment C)
- Non-Debarment Acknowledgement (Attachment D)
- Data Elements (Attachment E)
- Current Form W-9
- A list of any allowable variances from, or objections to this RFP or the terms and conditions of the MCPS General Contract Articles, as well as a justification for any such variances or objections (a list of non-negotiable terms and conditions are provided in Section 27.0 of this RFP.)
- A redacted copy of the Respondent's proposal as specified in Sections 15.0 and 17.0.

16.0 TREATMENT OF TECHNICAL DATA IN PROPOSAL

The proposal submitted in response to this RFP may contain technical data which the Offeror does not want used or disclosed for any purpose other than evaluation of the proposal. The use and disclosure of any such technical data, subject to the provisions of the Maryland Public Information Act ("MPIA"), may be so restricted:

Provided, that Offeror marks the cover sheet of the proposal with the following legend, specifying the pages of the proposal which are to be restricted in accordance with the conditions of the legend: "Technical data contained in pages ___ of this proposal shall not be used or disclosed, except for evaluation purposes."

Provided, that if a contract is awarded to this Offeror as a result of or in connection with the submission of this proposal, MCPS shall have the right to use or disclose these technical data to the extent provided in the contract.

This restriction does not limit the right of MCPS to use or disclose technical data obtained from another source without restriction.

MCPS assumes no liability for disclosure or use of unmarked technical data or products and may use or disclose the data for any purpose and may consider that the proposal was not submitted in confidence and therefore is releasable. Price and cost data concerning salaries, overhead, and general and administrative expenses are considered proprietary information and will not be disclosed, if marked in accordance with the instructions in Section 10.0.

17.0 PROPRIETARY AND CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

Offerors are notified that MCPS has unlimited data rights regarding proposals submitted in response to this solicitation. Unlimited data rights means that MCPS has the right to use, disclose, reproduce, prepare derivative works, distribute copies to the public, or perform publicly and display publicly any information submitted by the Offeror in response to this or any solicitation issued by MCPS. However, MCPS will exempt information that is confidential, commercial, or financial information of an Offeror, as defined by the Maryland Public Information Act, State Government Article, Section 10-617, from disclosure. It is the responsibility of the Offeror to clearly identify each part of its proposal that is confidential, commercial, or financial information by stamping the **bottom right-hand corner** of each pertinent page with one-inch bold face letters stating the words “**confidential**” or “**proprietary**.” The Offeror agrees that any portion of the proposal that is not stamped as proprietary or confidential is not proprietary or confidential. As a condition for MCPS keeping the information confidential, the Offeror must agree to defend and hold MCPS harmless if any information is inadvertently released. Each Offeror must submit a proprietary and confidential redacted copy of its proposal to be used in responding to MPIA requests.

18.0 EVALUATION CRITERIA

MCPS reserves the right to ask clarifying questions about submitted proposals. Offerors also may ask questions that they may have related to this RFP prior to submitting their responses. See Section 19.0, Schedule of Events. Only proposals received by the deadline will be considered.

MCPS reserves the right to convene a meeting with the top qualified Offeror(s) prior to awarding a contract. The purpose of the meeting will be to afford both parties an opportunity to discuss any aspects of the requirements and services that will be performed and clarify any issues. Issues raised during the meeting, which cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of MCPS, shall be cause to reject the proposal.

In addition, if necessary, Respondents shall be prepared to provide a products and services demonstration of the reading intervention program(s), providing an overview of the proposed products and services at no cost to MCPS. As appropriate, the Respondent shall be responsible for the installation of the proposed products and services and any third party software at the MCPS designated demonstration facility before the demonstration, as necessary. If requested by MCPS, the top qualified Offeror(s) shall provide MCPS with an opportunity to access and review the Respondent’s system as in operation at that time, via the Internet from a MCPS computer, to ensure conformity to the requirements of this RFP as well as for the quality and ease of the user interface.

All Offerors are advised that in the event of receipt of an adequate number of proposals, which, in the opinion of MCPS require no clarification and/or supplementary information, such proposals may be evaluated without further discussions. Therefore, proposals should be submitted initially on the most complete and favorable terms and conditions. Should proposals submitted require additional clarification and/or supplementary information, Offerors should

be prepared to submit such additional clarification and/or supplementary information, in a timely manner, when requested.

Proposals meeting all requisite criteria will be evaluated. Those who do not meet requisite criteria will not be evaluated further. The determination of those that are qualified, interested, and available, and MCPS' choice of the best qualified will be based on the following criteria:

- 18.1** Completeness of response.
- 18.2** Ability to perform and meet MCPS' needs (based on the criteria set forth in this RFP, including but not limited to Section 3.0, Scope of Services).
- 18.3** Qualifications, reputation, and experience of the Respondent relevant to the Scope of Services including specific experience in providing products and services to school districts of similar size, including the bidder's knowledge of best practices and educational research.
- 18.4** Qualifications, reputation, and experience of key staff that will be responsible for this contract.
- 18.5** Past performance as determined by recent and relevant contracts. Evaluation will be based on information obtained from references provided by the bidder as well as other relevant past performance information obtained from other sources known to MCPS.
- 18.6** Pricing proposal and fee structure.

A selection committee comprised of MCPS staff and potentially outside stakeholders will evaluate proposals based on these criteria.

19.0 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

The anticipated schedule of activities related to this RFP is as follows:

RFP issued:	April 5, 2024
Questions Due:	April 11, 2024 by 4:00pm
Answers Posted:	April 15, 2024
Proposals Due:	May 3, 2024 at 2:00pm
Anticipated award date:	July 2024

All dates are subject to change at the discretion of MCPS.

20.0 PRE-PROPOSAL CONFERENCE

Not applicable to this RFP

21.0 ADDENDA/ERRATA

Changes and addenda to a solicitation may occur prior to the solicitation opening date and time. It is the Offeror's responsibility to check the MCPS website under "Event Calendar"

<https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/calendar/mcpsbids.aspx> or contact the Division of Procurement 240-740-7600 to verify whether addenda/errata have been issued.

In the event that MCPS issues addenda/errata, all terms and conditions will remain in effect unless they are specifically and explicitly changed by the addenda/errata. Offerors must acknowledge receipt of such addenda/errata by returning one signed copy of each of the addenda/errata with its proposal. Failure to provide the signed acknowledgement of the addenda/errata may result in a proposal being deemed non-responsive.

22.0 eMARYLAND MARKETPLACE

Maryland law requires local and state agencies to post solicitations on eMaryland Marketplace. Registration with eMaryland Marketplace is free. It is recommended that any interested supplier register at www.eMarylandMarketplace.com, regardless of the award outcome for this procurement as it is a valuable resource for upcoming bid notifications for municipalities throughout Maryland.

23.0 MULTI-AGENCY PARTICIPATION

MCPS reserves the right to extend the terms and conditions of this solicitation to any and all other agencies within the state of Maryland as well as any other federal, state, municipal, county, or local governmental agency under the jurisdiction of the United States and its territories. This shall include but not be limited to private schools, parochial schools, nonpublic schools such as charter schools, special districts, intermediate units, nonprofit agencies providing services on behalf of government, and/or state, community and/or private colleges/universities that require these goods, commodities and/or services. Use of this solicitation by other agencies may be dependent on special local/state requirements attached to and made a part of the solicitation at the time of contracting. The supplier/contractor agrees to notify the issuing agency of those entities that wish to use any contract resulting from this bid and will also provide usage information, which may be requested. A copy of the contract pricing and the bid requirements incorporated in this contract will be supplied to requesting agencies. Each participating jurisdiction or agency shall enter into its own contract with the Award Offeror(s) and this contract shall be binding only upon the appropriate approved signature of such an agreement. Invoices shall be submitted “directly” to the ordering jurisdiction for each unit purchased. Disputes over the execution of any contract shall be the responsibility of the participating jurisdiction or agency that entered into that contract. Disputes must be resolved solely between the participating agency and the Award Offeror. MCPS assumes no authority, liability, or obligation on behalf of any other public or nonpublic entity that may use any contract resulting from this bid. MCPS pricing is based on the specifications provided in this solicitation.

24.0 INQUIRIES

Inquiries regarding this solicitation must be submitted in writing to Mrs. Saady Espinal De Volez, Buyer II, MCPS Division of Procurement via email to Saady_EspinalDeVeloz@mcpsmd.org. Questions are due by 4:00p.m. on April 11, 2024.

Responses will be posted on eMaryland Marketplace and on MCPS' Procurement website on April 15, 2024. The Board of Education will not be responsible for any oral or telephone explanation or interpretation by any agent or employee of MCPS. Any binding information given to an Offeror in response to a request will be furnished to all Offerors as addenda/errata, if such information is deemed necessary for the preparation of proposals, or if the lack of such information would be detrimental to the uninformed Offerors. Only such addenda/errata, when issued by MCPS, will be considered binding on MCPS.

Contact by Offerors with any other MCPS employee regarding this solicitation until the contract is awarded by MCPS will be considered by MCPS as an attempt to obtain an unfair advantage and result in non-consideration of its RFP response. In addition, MCPS expects all Offerors to review and assure compliance throughout the RFP process with Board Policy BBB, Ethics, and MCPS Regulation GCA-RA, Employee Conflict of Interest

The MCPS Procurement website address is
www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/procurement/.

25.0 UNNECESSARILY ELABORATE BROCHURES

Unnecessarily elaborate brochures or other presentations beyond those sufficient to present a complete and effective proposal are not desired and may be construed as an indication of the Offeror's lack of cost consciousness. Elaborate art work and expensive visual and other presentation aids are neither necessary nor wanted.

26.0 BID PROTESTS

Any bid protests, including appeals, will be governed by the applicable MCPS Procurement Unit Regulations. The burden of production of all relevant evidence, data and documents and the burden of persuasion to support the protest is on the Offeror making the protest.

27.0 CONTRACT

MCPS plans to enter a contractual agreement with Respondent(s) to whom the award is made and intends to make MCPS General Contract Articles, attached hereto and incorporated herein as Appendix A, part of the contractual agreement, except and unless modified by MCPS. Proposals must clearly identify any variances from or objections to the specifications in this RFP and the terms and conditions of the MCPS General Contract Articles. Lacking any response to the contrary, MCPS will infer that the Respondent agrees to the specifications of this RFP and each term and condition of the MCPS General Contract Articles. Respondents should note that any variance may provide a basis for MCPS to reject the proposal. **In particular, the provisions set forth in Articles 5, 12-14, 16-18, 21-24, 26, 28, and 29 of the MCPS General Contract Articles are non-negotiable.**

As a note of clarification, Article 19 of the MCPS General Contract Articles applies to any products or services that the Respondent develops specifically for MCPS pursuant to this RFP, not to the Respondent's existing off-the-shelf products and services. MCPS understands and

acknowledges that the Respondent retains all intellectual property rights to its existing off-the-shelf products and services and that MCPS will be granted licenses to utilize such products and services.

28.0 NOTICE TO OFFERORS

The appropriate items below must be completed as part of the RFP. Failure to comply may disqualify your bid. Type or print legibly in ink.

I. OFFEROR INFORMATION: As appropriate, check and/or complete one of the items below.

- 1. Legal name (as shown on your income tax return) _____
- 2. Business Name (if different from above) _____
- 3. Tax Identification Number _____

A copy of your W-9 must be submitted with this bid response.

II. OFFEROR'S CONTACT INFORMATION: This will be filed as your permanent contact information.

- 1. Company Name _____
- 2. Address _____
- 3. Bid Representative's Name _____
- 4. Phone Number/Extension _____
- 5. Email Address _____
- 6. Website _____

III. OFFEROR'S CERTIFICATION: By signing below, the undersigned acknowledges that he/she if awarded, intends to enter into a contract agreement with MCPS.

- A. The undersigned proposes to furnish and deliver supplies, equipment, or services, in accordance with specifications and stipulations contained herein, and at the prices quoted. This certifies that this bid is made without any previous understanding, agreement or connection with any person, firm, or corporation making a bid for the same supplies, materials, or equipment, and is in all respects fair and without collusion or fraud.
- B. I hereby certify that I am authorized to sign for the bidder and that all statements, representations, and information provided in this response to the Request for Proposals, including but not limited to the Non-Debarment Acknowledgement, are accurate.

By (Signature) _____
Name and Title _____
Witness Name and Title _____