

MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Expanding Opportunity and Unleashing Potential

PROCUREMENT UNIT

March 3, 2020

RFP Number: 4915.1
Due Date: March 31, 2020
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 digital courses to provide Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) with high quality and comprehensive digital course materials in English, mathematics, science, social studies, and technology education/computer science that are aligned with the Common Core State Standards, adopted in Maryland as the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards (the "State Standards") (<https://mdk12.msde.maryland.gov/INSTRUCTION/commoncore/Pages/index.aspx>), and high school graduation requirements in the state of Maryland (<https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/graduation-requirements.aspx>). This RFP seeks course providers ("Respondents" or "Offerors") who share a vision for ensuring that all students have access to the highest quality digital courses aligned to high school graduation requirements and State Standards, to ultimately increase student engagement in the learning process, graduation rates, student achievement and success in college and careers.

Please respond according to the instructions provided in the attached. Submissions must be received on or before 2:00 p.m., on March 31, 2020. Submissions received after this date and time will not be considered. Submittals shall be delivered in a sealed opaque envelope with the RFP number, opening date and opening time indicated in the lower left corner of the envelope. Submissions shall be delivered to Montgomery County Public Schools Procurement Unit, 45 West Gude Drive, Suite 3100, Rockville, Maryland 20850.

The contractor must submit one (1) original, one (1) redacted copy, one (1) electronic version on CD or flash drive and five (5) separate copies of the proposal. 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, Team Leader
Procurement Unit

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. 4915.1,
Digital Courses

1.0 INTENT

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to solicit one or more established providers of digital courses to provide Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) with high quality and comprehensive digital course materials in English, mathematics, science, social studies, and technology education/computer science that are aligned with the Common Core State Standards, adopted in Maryland as the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards (the “State Standards”) (<https://mdk12.msde.maryland.gov/INSTRUCTION/commoncore/Pages/index.aspx>), and high school graduation requirements in the state of Maryland (<https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/graduation-requirements.aspx>). This RFP seeks course providers (“Respondents” or “Offerors”) who share a vision for ensuring that all students have access to the highest quality digital courses aligned to high school graduation requirements and State Standards, to ultimately increase student engagement in the learning process, graduation rates, student achievement and success in college and careers.

MCPS seeks digital courses that provide up-to-date, evidence-based, research-based, relevant, and appropriate materials that will effectively support teaching and learning for credit bearing high school courses, offering opportunities for original credit, credit recovery, and to support innovative instructional models. MCPS seeks digital courses that are culturally responsive; explicitly support English Language Learners, students with disabilities, students in need of additional support, and students identified as gifted and talented; allow for enrichment and acceleration; provide easy-to-understand resources for parents/guardians; and support the learning process. The courses must allow for differentiated instruction and timely support to students, including accessibility features. MCPS anticipates that approximately 2,000 students will access digital courses in the 2020-21 school year.

Specific to mathematics, mathematics courses should emphasize the Standards of Mathematical Practice as the critical processes and proficiencies of curriculum and instruction. The Standards of Mathematical Practice serve as an important force in getting all students—not just some—to the highest levels of attainment; therefore, proposed resources must be up-to-date, evidence-based, research-based, and relevant, and they must align to these standards and promote student-centered classroom environments that enhance student learning. With regard to Algebra 1, the majority of MCPS students successfully complete Algebra 1 aligned to the State Standards before the end of Grade 8. As a result, MCPS’ Mathematics program includes pathways for students to complete high school level Algebra 1 in middle school or to complete Algebra 1 in high school. MCPS mathematics pathways can be found here: <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/math/>

2.0 BACKGROUND

MCPS is the 14th largest school system in the United States, and the largest in the state of Maryland. During the 2019–2020 school year, it is projected that MCPS will serve more than 163,000 students from 157 countries speaking 150 languages. With a Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 Operating Budget of approximately \$2.59 billion, MCPS employs more than 23,300 employees.

The development, implementation, and management of MCPS coursework and curriculum is guided by the Montgomery County Board of Education Policy IFA, *Curriculum* (“IFA”), MCPS Regulation IFA-RA, *Curriculum* (“IFA-RA”) and Curriculum Frameworks adopted by the Board of Education (the “Board”). Please see course list below in Section 3.0, “Scope of Services.”

- Secondary English Language Arts:
<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/english/index.aspx>
- Secondary Mathematics:
<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/uploadedFiles/curriculum/math/homepage/CurriculumFramework-SecondaryMath-Tentative.pdf>.
- Secondary Science:
<https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/science/>
- Secondary Social Studies:
<https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/socialstudies/>
- Computer Science and Technology Education
<https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/computer-science//>
- Fine Arts
<https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/finearts/>
- Health
<https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/health/>
- Physical Education
<https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/physed/>
- World Languages
<https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/languages/>

All high school coursework is aligned to the MCPS graduation requirements, which are variable by graduation year.

- Class of 2020:
https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/uploadedFiles/curriculum/1025.19_GradReqAtAGlanceClass2020_Flyer.pdf
- Class of 2021:
https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/uploadedFiles/curriculum/1025.19_GradReqAtAGlanceClass2021_Flyer.pdf
- Class of 2022:
https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/uploadedFiles/curriculum/1025.19_GradReqAtAGlanceClass2022_Flyer.pdf
- Class of 2023:

https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/uploadedFiles/curriculum/1025.19_GradReqAtAGlanceClass2023_Flyer.pdf

3.0 SCOPE 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. Proposals should address the entire scope of services requested.

In this RFP, the term "Digital Courses" is defined to be the comprehensive digital materials needed for the total instructional experience for a diploma-bound learner in an online "classroom" for a given course, aligned to the State Standards or specified graduation requirements. Digital Courses should include the entire course material and assessments of student learning. Materials should utilize current evidence-based and research-based practices; align to Maryland high school graduation requirements and State Standards in preparation for increased achievement on external measures of college and career readiness; and provide explicit high quality instruction in the digital setting.

Proposals must comply with the following requirements as written in Board Policy IFA:

- The Board expects that learning will be enhanced by adherence to a curriculum that promotes continuity and cumulative acquisition and application of skills and knowledge from grade to grade and from school to school. Digital Courses should reflect the best knowledge of the growth and development of learners, the needs of learners, and the desires of the community, state law, and Maryland State Board of Education rules.
- Digital Courses shall promote: (1) An opportunity for every student to participate; (2) Achievement at the highest level in every curricular area for every student; and (3) Objectives derived from local, state, national, and international standards as appropriate in all subject areas.
- Digital Courses shall provide teachers, students, and parents/guardians with the Board's expectations of what students should know and be able to do at the end of each course.
- Subject area written curriculum frameworks, scopes and sequences, expectations, curriculum guides, and material for parents/guardians shall be developed for every grade level and course.
- Instructional resources such as textbooks, software, electronic resources, and other materials shall be selected based upon their alignment with the curriculum standards and priorities of the system using a uniform process.

Proposals must indicate how the Respondent's Digital Courses are responsive to the applicable MCPS graduation requirements and curriculum frameworks described in Section 2.0. In the event the Respondent's Digital Courses do not fully align with the respective MCPS curriculum framework(s), the Respondent must clearly identify these areas.

Respondents may submit responses for all or some of the following courses:

English

- [Honors](#) and [On-level English 9](#)
- [Honors](#) and [On-level English 10](#)
- [Honors](#) and [On-level English 11](#)
- [Honors](#) and [On-level English 12](#)
- [Advanced Placement Language and Composition](#)
- [Advanced Placement Literature and Composition](#)

Mathematics

- Algebra 1
- [Honors](#) and [On-level Geometry](#)
- [Honors](#) and [On-level Algebra 2](#)
- [Honors](#) and [On-level Precalculus](#)
- [Calculus](#)
- [Mathematics of Personal Finance](#)
- [Advanced Placement](#) and [On-level Statistics](#)
- [Advanced Placement Calculus A/B](#)
- [Advanced Placement Calculus B/C](#)

Science

- [Investigations in Science 6](#)
- [Investigations in Science 7](#)
- [Investigations in Science 8](#)
- [Advanced Placement](#), [Honors](#), and [On-level Biology](#)
- [Advanced Placement](#), [Honors](#), and [On-level Chemistry](#)
- [Advanced Placement](#), [Honors](#), and [On-level Physics](#)

Social Studies

- [World Studies 6](#)
- [World Studies 7](#)
- [U.S. History 8 \(Circa 1763 through Reconstruction\)](#)
- [Honors](#) and [On-level United States History](#) (Post-Reconstruction to Present)
- [Advanced Placement](#), [Honors](#) and [On-level American Government](#)
- [Honors](#) and [On-level Modern World History](#)
- [Advanced Placement United States History](#)
- [Advanced Placement World History](#)

World Language

- [Spanish 1](#)
- [Spanish 2](#)
- [Honors](#) and [On-level Spanish 3](#)
- [Honors](#) and [On-level Spanish 4](#)
- [Spanish 5](#)
- [Spanish 6](#)
- [Advanced Placement Spanish Language](#)

- [Advanced Placement Spanish Literature](#)
- [French 1](#)
- [French 2](#)
- [Honors](#) and [On-level French 3](#)
- [Honors](#) and [On-level French 4](#)
- [French 5](#)
- [French 6](#)
- [Advanced Placement French Language](#)
- [Chinese 1](#)
- [Chinese 2](#)
- [Honors](#) and [On-level Chinese 3](#)
- [Honors](#) and [On-level Chinese 4](#)
- [Chinese 5](#)
- [Chinese 6](#)
- [Advanced Placement Chinese Language](#)
- [Russian 1](#)
- [Russian 2](#)
- [Honors](#) and [On-level Russian 3](#)
- [Honors](#) and [On-level Russian 4](#)

Electives

Respondents should include options in the subject areas below:

- [Art](#)
- [Music](#)
- [Physical Education](#)
- [Technology and Computer Science](#)

Each proposal should contain a suite of unique products that include one, multiple or all of the Digital Courses noted above, delivered through the same digital platform. Proposals should only include Digital Courses aligned to award high school credit. Standalone intervention programs or platforms, or supplemental programs or platforms, will not be accepted. See Section 8.0 Mandatory Submissions for numbers of copies and other proposal submission requirements.

MCPS reserves the right to award contracts for multiple products or outside of the courses listed above if applicable.

For additional requirements for the submission of the proposal and sample materials, see section 3.3 Sample Materials Delivery Process and Section 8.0 Mandatory Submissions below.

3.1 REQUIREMENTS

As **requirements**, Digital Courses must:

1. Demonstrate alignment to content-specific, national and state standards, and to college and career-ready standards and other indicators of high quality as recommended by educators.

2. Provide a scope and sequence of course work that awards credits toward high school graduation (for high school courses).
3. Include resources that support the teaching and learning of students needing enrichment and acceleration.
4. Integrate explicit instruction and resources to support the teaching and learning of English Language Learners.
5. Include explicit instruction and resources that support the teaching and learning of students with disabilities.
6. Allow for flexibility in meeting the needs of a wide range of students and include accommodations for special populations, including English Language Learners, students with disabilities, and students identified as gifted and talented.
7. Include culturally relevant materials and culturally responsive teaching and instructional practices that are inclusive of a variety of cultures and ethnicities and are free from bias in the portrayal of ethnic groups, gender, age, cultures, religion, and people with disabilities, consistent with Board Policy ACA, *Nondiscrimination, Equity, and Cultural Proficiency*.
8. Include formative and summative assessment materials, aligned to the curriculum and intended to inform and improve instruction, not intended to replace other standards-based external assessments administered in MCPS.
9. Include tools, resources, and documents that provide parents/guardians and others with necessary resources to provide transparency into coursework and to provide support to academic progress at home or outside the school setting.
10. Provide digitally available student-facing, teacher-facing, and parent/guardian-facing materials and resources.
11. Allow for MCPS to add or remove content to meet specific course needs.
12. Embed principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL).
13. Allow for the use of specific parts of the course as modules for credit recovery.
14. Include diagnostic assessments for use prior to credit recovery modules which allow for students to demonstrate previous content mastery.

3.1.2 Preferred

- a. Digital Courses have undergone the Maryland State Department of Education approval process for online course approval.
- b. Purchase structure will allow for full courses, rather than seats, to be purchased or leased.

3.2 TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

The Respondent's proposal shall identify and describe:

1. Applicable technical requirements and recommended configurations necessary to fully implement and utilize Digital Courses 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; or
 - 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, Synergy and Canvas.
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 implementing Digital Courses in other school districts, 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.

3.2.1 **Required:** Digital Courses also must meet the following technical requirements in order to be considered:

1. All course materials including associated data are available and accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for MCPS staff, students, and parents/guardians as applicable.
2. Course materials are accessible from any Internet-enabled device including but not exclusive to personal computers, laptop computers, Chromebooks, tablets, and smartphones.
3. Digital Courses support single sign-on (SSO) authentication services using the LDAP or SAML protocol.
4. Digital Courses support the automated rostering of staff and students using the Clever SFTP specification, the IMS Global OneRoster specification, or an alternative file specification that can be synced one or more times per day.
5. Digital Courses allow staff and students to be associated to one or more schools/locations concurrently within the platform.
6. Digital Courses provide staff with opportunities to collaborate and share course materials within the platform.
7. Digital Courses are compatible with all modern Internet browsers including but not exclusive to Chrome, Edge, Internet Explorer, and Safari using default installation settings and without additional system hardware or software components required on end-users' devices.
8. Digital Courses include student-specific and instructor-specific materials and resources in digital or online formats that integrate with G Suite for Education such as Google Drive, Google Docs, Google Slides, and Google Sheets.
9. Digital Courses 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 to support SSO and grade passback. Respondent is required to remain current with newer versions of the LTI standard within a reasonable time period.
10. Digital Courses are customizable within the platform, for the purposes of tailoring lessons on an as needed basis.
11. Assessment products and services in Digital Courses shall provide either:
 - (i) PDFs of assessments that can be uploaded for Answer Key Only (AKO) testing;
 - or

- (ii) Items and assessments in Question and Test Interoperability (QTI) 2.1 format that can be readily imported into MCPS' data management system (finalists will be asked to submit sample files). In the event that assessments or data content is currently incompatible with current systems, proposals should include a specific timeline to bring content into alignment.
12. Respondent includes centralized management of materials for Digital Courses for all users that enables MCPS to establish, customize, and control levels of user access and can be managed by the district locally.
 13. Respondent shall provide MCPS with statistics regarding usage of Digital Courses by MCPS and its authorized users according to the then current standards in the industry.
 14. 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 retains 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.
 15. Respondent shall have the ability to configure a nightly (or more frequent) transfer of student data including but not exclusive to online activity and online assessment data to MCPS' data management system (Unify) or any updated, upgraded, or alternative systems that MCPS adopts in its sole discretion.
 16. 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).
 17. 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.
 18. Digital Course materials including websites are required to meet current [Section 508 compliance](#) guidelines.
 19. Digital Course materials 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

3.2.2 Preferred:

MCPS prefers that Digital Courses meet the following technical requirements:

- a) Digital Courses meet the latest LTI standards, version 1.3 and LTI Advantage.
- b) Digital Course materials support and are in conformance with Common Cartridge version 1.3 or higher for the import and export of content.

3.3 Sample Materials Delivery Process

The Respondents shall submit sample materials for its Digital Courses, 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 April 14, 2020. Respondents may be requested to provide remote access to sample materials, during a designated time frame during the week of April 20, 2020. There will be no presentation or demonstrations of the materials, only displayed for the evaluation team's review.

If contacted, Respondents should provide access to all Digital Courses in the submission. 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.

3.4 Pricing

The Respondent's proposal shall include a completed pricing sheet provided in Attachment E for each Digital Course that the Respondent is proposing under this RFP. If Respondent proposes an alternative pricing methodology or schedule, it shall be clearly presented in a way that provides all of the information specified in Attachment E.

3.5 Timeline for Implementation and Key Staff

- 3.5.1 MCPS plans to implement these Digital Courses beginning in August of the 2020-2021 school year.
- 3.5.2 After the Respondent has made the Digital Course materials available to MCPS, MCPS shall have a period of 180 days ("Acceptance Testing Period") from the date of availability to verify that the Digital Course(s) substantially performs to the specifications contained in the RFP. In the event that MCPS determines that the Digital Course(s) does not meet such specifications, MCPS shall notify the Respondent in writing, and Respondent shall modify or correct the Digital Course(s) 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.
- 3.5.3 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.

3.6 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 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*.

3.7 Training and Professional Development

The proposal shall describe the initial training and professional development necessary to begin implementation of the Digital Courses. The training plan should include mechanisms to train district teachers and central services specialists who, in turn, will train school staff and provide support districtwide, including availability of digital professional learning tools.

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 web-based materials for MCPS personnel must be section 508 compliant and meet accessibility guidelines for our teachers with disabilities. Each Respondent's training and professional development plan must include immediate on-site and/or interactive web-based training for MCPS personnel so the selected curriculum materials can be used for training and classroom use in the fall of the 2020-2021 school year. The successful Respondent(s) shall work with MCPS to adapt on-site and/or interactive web-based training as needed.

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 Board reserves the right to make awards according to the best interest of MCPS. As stated in Section 3.0, Respondents may submit responses for any number of Digital Courses outlined therein.

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.

The selected Respondent(s) must have demonstrated experience in developing and implementing high-quality digital curriculum, assessments, and professional learning in K–12 school districts.

In determining the qualifications of a Respondent, MCPS will consider the Respondent's record and performance of any prior contracts with MCPS, federal departments or agencies, or other public bodies, including but not limited to the Respondent's record providing Digital Courses to MCPS or other schools or school districts. MCPS expressly reserves the right to reject the proposal of any Respondent if the investigation discloses that the Respondent, 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 Respondent to perform the work, and the Respondent 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 Respondent or investigation of such Respondent fails to satisfy MCPS that such Respondent 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 Respondents 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. Respondents 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 Digital Courses and professional development, as needed or piloted, should its requirements change during the contract term. Also, nothing in this RFP precludes MCPS from utilizing Digital Courses either developed by MCPS or otherwise at any point during the contract term.

4.0 CONTRACT TERM

The initial term of contract shall be for three years, subject to the provisions of the MCPS General Contract Articles; however, the contract may not begin until one day after approval by the Board 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 to extend the contract or decide to rebid. If the contract is extended by the Board, a contract amendment will be issued.

5.0 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.

6.0 REFERENCES

All Offerors shall include a list of a minimum of five references who use the Respondent’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, e-mail address and phone number of all references. Also, as an attachment, Respondents 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 Respondents are contacted. MCPS reserves the right to contact references other than, and/or in addition to, those furnished by a Respondent.

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

7.0 FORMAT OF RESPONSE

- 7.1 Response to this RFP shall be submitted in the same order as the RFP and provide an individual response to each RFP specification.
- 7.2 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.
- 7.3 A pricing proposal shall be submitted as a separate document outlining content, timeline for implementation, training, professional development, etc.

8.0 MANDATORY SUBMISSIONS

Each Offeror must submit a complete proposal including all required information and attachments, do not include sample materials at the time of submission, see 3.3 Sample Material Delivery Process for detail. 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, team leader, MCPS Procurement Unit, at Angela_S_McIntosh-Davis@mcpsmd.org, a Microsoft Word version to help them in preparing the response.

One (1) original and ten (10) copies, as well as one (1) electronic version on CD or flash drive of the response, and one (1) redacted copy, as well as one (1) electronic version on CD or 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 March 31, 2020. Submit responses of the entire RFP proposal to:

Montgomery County Public Schools
Procurement Unit
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.

8.1 Complete Response must include:

- One unique product, which is defined as a Digital Course or suite of Digital Courses delivered through the same digital platform. Single responses that contain multiple products, programs, or options therein will not be accepted. Respondents who publish multiple products or programs should submit separate proposals for each product or program..
- Point-by-point Response to each section of the RFP, including but not limited to each subsection and bulleted list in Section 3.0.
- Separate overview of the Respondent's products and services as well as a statement explaining its alignment with Maryland College and Career Ready Standards.
- Sample of online curriculum content for Digital Courses, either through website access or digital downloads, including accessibility via captions.
- Pricing Proposal (use Microsoft Excel). Provide a completed pricing sheet provided in Attachment E for each course or suite of courses, that the Respondent proposes, including (i) details regarding the components covered by the unit price; and (ii) a delineation of all Digital Course pricing structures offered by the Respondent.
- References, See 6.0 References
- List of all current school district clients, See 6.0 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)
- Mid-Atlantic Purchasing Team Rider Clause
- 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 20.0 of this RFP).
- A redacted copy of the Respondent's proposal as specified in Sections 9.0 and 10.0.

9.0 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.

10.0 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 MPIA, 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.

11.0 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 12.0, Schedule of Events. Only proposals received by the deadline will be considered. Proposals will be screened down to a number of finalists.

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, Respondents shall be prepared to provide a products and services demonstration, 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 Digital Courses 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.

11.1 The determination of those that are qualified, interested, and available, and MCPS' choice of the best qualified will be based on the following criteria:

- 11.1.1 Completeness of response.
- 11.1.2 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).
- 11.1.3 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, educational research, and ability to respond to findings of the external curriculum review.
- 11.1.4 Qualifications, reputation, and experience of key staff that will be responsible for this contract.
- 11.1.5 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.
- 11.1.6 Pricing proposal and fee structure.

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

12.0 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

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

RFP issued: March 3, 2020
Questions Due: March 11, 2020
Pre-Proposal Conference: March 16, 2020
Proposals Due: March 31, 2020
Sample Material Set up: April 20, 2020

Anticipated award date: July, 2020

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

13.0 PRE-PROPOSAL CONFERENCE

A Pre-Proposal Conference for prospective Offerors will be held on **March 16, 2020, from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. at Carver Educational Services Center (CESC), Auditorium, 850 Hungerford Drive, Rockville, Maryland 20850**. Attendance at this conference is encouraged, but is not mandatory. Questions to this RFP are due by 4:00 p.m. on March 11, 2020 so that responses can be prepared for distribution at the pre-proposal conference. The purpose of the pre-proposal conference will be to allow prospective firms the opportunity to obtain clarification of the RFP and ask questions directly of MCPS staff to assist them in the preparation of their proposal responses. Attendees to the pre-submission conference will enter the CESC building via the North Entrance.

Respondents shall provide the names of the persons who will attend the pre-proposal conference or who will participate via conference call. Please send no more than two representatives. Send the names to Angela McIntosh-Davis, CPPB, Team Leader, fax number 301-279-3173 or e-mail [Angela S McIntosh-Davis@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Angela_S_McIntosh-Davis@mcpsmd.org) no later than March 9, 2020.

The following information is provided for Respondents who wish to call into the pre-proposal conference:

- | |
|--|
| <p>1. You must use a touch-tone phone to participate in an Instant Meeting conference.</p> <p>2. Dial the appropriate access number.</p> |
|--|

<p>Participants: Enter your numeric participant passcode followed by a # sign.</p>

Toll Free :	USA 877-973-0884
Participant Passcode:	6489354

14.0 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 "Open Solicitations" <http://procurement.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/home/Bids> or contact the Procurement Unit at 301-279-3555 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 bid being deemed non-responsive.

15.0 eMARYLAND MARKETPLACE ADVANTAGE

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 emma.maryland.gov, regardless of the award outcome for this procurement as it is a valuable resource for upcoming bid notifications for municipalities throughout Maryland.

16.0 MULTIAGENCY 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 also will 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.

17.0 INQUIRIES

Inquiries regarding this solicitation must be submitted in writing to Mrs. Angela McIntosh-Davis, Team Leader, MCPS Procurement Unit, 45 W. Gude Drive, Suite 3100, Rockville, MD 20850, via fax at 301-279-3173 or e-mail to Angela_S_Mcintosh-Davis@mcpsmd.org. Questions are due 4:00 p.m. on March 11, 2020. Responses will be posted on eMaryland Marketplace and on MCPS' Procurement website on March 13, 2020. The Board 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/.

18.0 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.

19.0 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.

20.0 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, 16-19, 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.

21.0 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. Fax Number _____
- 6. Toll Free Number _____
- 7. E-mail Address _____
- 8. Website _____

III. OFFEROR'S CERTIFICATION: Upon notification of award, this document in its entirety is the awarded Offeror's contract with MCPS. By signing below, the undersigned acknowledges that he/she is entering into a contract 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 _____