**Office of Finance**
**Division of Procurement**
**MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**
**45 W. Gude Drive, Suite 3100**
**Rockville, Maryland 20850**
**January 18, 2023**

**NOTICE TO OFFERORS**
**The following are questions and responses regarding**
**RFP# 6808.1 Integrated Web-based Student Transportation Routing and GPS Tracking System**

Question 1:    What is the current routing system?

**Answer:       MapNet**

Question 2:   What is the current GPS system?

**Answer:       BusPatrol/TRBOnet dispatch software**

Question 3:   What is the current parent app?

**Answer:        Connect-Ed**

Question 4:    What is the current student tracking application?

**Answer:       N/A**

Question 5:   What is the current student information system?

**Answer: Synergy**

Question 6:    How many users will require the following permissions in your routing system?

**Answer:       a.       Administrator (IT Team) 5**
**b.       Read/Write (DM, DOT Leadership, Dispatch, TCM, BRS) 25**
**c.       Read only – 40**

Question 7:   How many jurisdictions will be required for the routing system map? (ie. Montgomery County, etc.)

**Answer:       Montgomery County Public Schools**

Question 8:   For clarification, can a district provide an example "Routing software must allow for temporary changes or one-time changes without altering regular schedule"?

**Answer:       This response cannot be provided at this time.**

Question 9:    Can you please define IAQ?

**Answer:        Indoor Air Quality**

Question 10:  Does MCPS have a pricing sheet or format they would like responders to follow?

**Answer:    No, please respond in the manner that your agency would respond to fit the needs of this request.**

Question 11:   Item 8.4 indicates that implementation timeline, training and PD be included in the separate pricing proposal. MCPS also has a training requirements section (page 7 of the RFP) in the main RFP response. Does MCPS *only* want pricing for training and professional development in the pricing proposal or additional descriptive content on training and professional development?

**Answer: Page 7 indicates the requirements for training.  Please outline in your pricing proposal the costs for those requirements to be met.**

Question 12:   In Section 7.0 of the RFP regarding references, it is stated: "Also, as an appendix, offerors shall include a list of all current school district clients." Most respondents to this RFP have hundreds and hundreds of current school district clients, and thus a listing of each would go on for pages. Could the district either rescind this requirement or at least explain why it is important to have such a listing?

**Answer: Please provide a list of school districts comparable in size to MCPS and the number of students served.**

Question 13: In section 3. "Environment" of the RFP, it is stated: "g. MCPS will use our Service-        Level agreement (attached in Appendix X)." There doesn't seem to be an Appendix X to the RFP documents.

**Answer: MCPS will issue an erratum to include a sample of the service level agreement.**

Question 14: In Section 8.0 of the RFP regarding pricing, it is stated: "8.4 Pricing proposal shall be submitted as a separate document outlining content, timeline for implementation, training, professional development, etc.". To clarify, does this mean that the pricing proposal should be in a separate envelope from the other proposal materials? And is the requirement for the number of copies of the pricing proposal the same as for the other material: "One (1) original and three (3) copies as well as one (1) electronic version on flash drive and one (1) redacted copy of responses"?

**Answer: Yes, a pricing proposal should be submitted in a separate envelope. Yes, please provide the same number of copies as the other proposal documents.**

Question 15: For the purposes of pricing, how many vehicles would require GPS hardware and installation? We would, of course, provide a per unit price for these items. Installation is   requested, is that correct?

**Answer: We expect installation on 1,400 buses.**

Question 16: Throughout the RFP, there are mentions of "current routing system," as in the following: "i. The GPS data shall be displayed over the same map as used in the current routing and scheduling system. The maintenance of two (2) separate maps is unacceptable." Our assumption is that the district is requesting a replacement of the current routing system because of this statement: "Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) is soliciting proposals from qualified vendors for the provision and implementation of an integrated web-based GPS, Parent application, routing software, and Student Tracking system that efficiently manages the collection, centralization, and reporting of transportation data throughout the district." Is our assumption correct regarding a replacement for the current routing system?

**Answer: Either upgrade of existing or replacement if awarded to another vendor.**

Question 17: Student tracking is mentioned in section 1.0 ("Intent"), but there doesn't seem to be any further mention of what the district is seeking for student tracking in the remainder of the RFP. Could this be clarified? Is such a system to be considered optional in regards to pricing?

**Answer: Student Tracking is as optional for potential future use if in fact MCPS decides to pursue this feature**

Question 18: Could there be an extension of the submittal deadline by at least one week beyond January 27? Our experience has been with such RFPs that there will be a substantial amount of submitted questions and answers which will require considerable revisions to any respondent material already created in response to the initial text of the RFP.

**Answer: At this time, the due date remains the same with no extension.**

Question 19: What is the district's current routing provider?

**Answer: TripSpark**

Question 20: Can you share any pain points with the current system?

**Answer: We do not have any "pain points" with current system. We are looking to expand the functionality of a system and upgrade capabilities**

Question 21: What is the district's current dispatch software provider? Is MCPS interested in potentially replacing it with a module inside of the new routing system?

**Answer: No**

Question 22: What is the district's current fleet maintenance software provider? Is MCPS interested in potentially replacing with a module inside of the new routing system? NO

**Answer: Faster**

Question 23: Is the district currently using any kind of automated eligibility verification system?

**Answer: No**

Question 24: What Student Information System does MCPS use?

**Answer:Synergy**

Question 25: How many buses operate daily for general education students?

**Answer: Approx. 650**

Question 26: Please explain the route structure for your bus runs. Are you picking up K-12 all in one bus   run? Do you pick up high school students and drop them off, then pick up middle school   students and drop off, and then elementary school?

**Answer: We pick up and drop off HS, MS and ES students.**

Question 27: What is the total number of individual runs/trips performed by all general education buses in the morning? *(Example: If 15 vehicles do a High School / Middle School run, then 17 vehicles do an Elementary run, that would be 32 AM runs/trips total.)*

**Answer: we have 1,230 daily schedules and each may complete 3 to 4 runs**

Question 28: How many general education runs/trips in the **afternoon**?

**Answer: Approximately 650 (2-4 schools each)**

Question 29: Are the afternoon bus runs essentially a 'mirror' of the morning runs? *(Same core stop locations? Buses generally run the same area AM & PM?)*

**Answer: Generally, yes.**

Question 30: How many special needs runs are operating in the morning? Afternoon?

**Answer: Approx. 580**

Question 31: How many staff members will need training and access to the routing software for editing purposes vs. read-only access?

**Answer: 10 users**

Question 32: How many staff members will need training and access to the GPS software for        editing purposes vs. read-only access?

**Answer: Approximately 75**

Question 33: How many staff members will need training and access to the student tracking and parent application software for editing purposes vs. read-only access?

**Answer: 15-20**

Question 34: What county map or maps are required to encompass the district's entire service area? Please specify.

**Answer: Montgomery County, Frederick County, MD, Howard County, MD, Prince Georges County, MD, Baltimore City, MD, Baltimore County, MD, Washington, D.C., Prince William County, VA, Loudoun County, VA, Fairfax County, VA, Arlington, VA, Alexandria, VA**

Question 35: How many total drivers, including substitute drivers need access to the in-vehicle tablet?

**Answer: N/A**

Question 36: How many students are transported?  Of the students transported how many are        regular education students vs. special needs students?

**Answer: We transport approximately 102,000 students daily**

Question 37: Are all students stored in your current SIS System or in different systems?

**Answer: yes**

Question 38: Do you have GPS on your buses? If yes, who, are you looking to replace it? Do you want the proposed routing system to integrate with your current GPS? If replacing your current GPS will the vendor be responsible for installation and/or removal of the existing system?

**Answer: Small % of vehicles are equipped. The awarded vendor will be required to install all equipment on buses.**

Question 39: How many vehicles need GPS tracking?

**Answer: We have 1,400 buses that need to be equipped**

Question 40: How many vehicles do you plan to equip with tablets?

**Answer: We are not looking to equip the buses with tablets at this time.**

Question 41: How many vehicles do you plan to equip with RFID scanners?

**Answer: We are not looking at installing RFID on buses at this time.**

Question 42: Can the district provide a complete vehicle asset list including VIN? Being a responsive and responsible bidder means doing everything we can to provide an **accurate quote** for the services ordered. Without the VIN we are unable to provide accurate pricing for hardware and installation fees that can be directly compared to other vendor's bids.

**Answer: Yes**

Question 43: What is your email system?

**Answer: Microsoft Exchange/Outlook & Google.**

Question 44: In the "Operational Requirements" section, "i" and "l" refer to using your current routing and scheduling system.  Does the district intend to continue using its current routing and scheduling system? Or is this referring to the vendors proposed routing solution?

**Answer: Continue using our current routing software.**

Question 45: Do students currently utilize student ID's? If yes, what type of cards are being used RFID, bar code or other?

**Answer: This is not relevant to this RFP**

Question 46: Does the district need ID cards?  If yes, how many ID cards does the district need?

**Answer: At this time, no**

Question 50: Do you want to be able to print your own cards for replacement purposes of lost cards?

 **Answer: N/A**

 Question 51: What camera solution are you currently using on your buses?

**Answer: BusPatrol**

Question 52: Do you currently use a student disciplinary management system? If so who.

**Answer: This question is not relevant to RFP**

Question 53: 3. Environment, g. "MCPS will use our Service-Level agreement (attached in Appendix X). Please provide Appendix X Service-Level agreement.

**Answer: See response to question 13**

Question 54: 1. Technical Environment, h. "The GPS device shall have the ability to be mounted in a specific area of the vehicle with the option of removing the device and re-installing it." Can you please clarify if the district is looking for hardwired GPS units that would provide vehicle events like doors open as well as vehicle diagnostics, with the ability to uninstall and reinstall equipment as needed? Or are you looking for light duty GPS that provides location pings and can easily be swapped between vehicles without the need for installation?

**Answer: A response cannot be provided at this time.**

Question 55: Given the timeline for when answers will be provided (Jan. 19) and when     responses need to be mailed to ensure they arrive by the due date (mailed no later than Jan. 25), providing only 3 working days between these times, will the district extend the deadline one week to Feb. 3?

**Answer: Responses to the questions will be posted on 1/18/23 and reviewed on 1/19/23.**

Question 56: Is the district looking for new routing software, if so are the specific functions they are looking for.

**Answer: Upgrade or replacement. Dependent on who is awarded**

Question 57: Total number of vehicles in your fleet? Please specify route buses, spares, special needs vans, shuttles etc.

1. Can you provide a fleet list with VIN numbers, make, model and fuel types included?
2. How many total drivers does the district have?

**Answer: 1. Yes.  2. Not relevant to the RFP**

Question 57: Does your school district transport to other counties within Maryland other than Montgomery County? If yes, which counties?

**Answer: See response to question #34**

Question 59: The RFP states you provide transportation within Virginia and Washington D.C. Which counties do you transport within for these states?

**Answer: See response to question #34**

Question 60: Does the school have a county GIS department we can work with to determine map source?

**Answer: Yes.  That information will be provided to the awarded vendor.**

Question 61: How many transportation personnel will be trained as users in the routing software?

**Answer: Full access approximately 75 and read-only 25**

Question 62:  How many people will need training on the boundary planning portion of the application, if any?

**Answer:   2**

Question 63: In how many separate locations will staff be located during training?

**Answer: 1**

Question 64: Is activity trip scheduling a concern for this RFP? If yes:

How many Transportation staff need to be trained in the field trip software? Full access_____ and read-only _____How many people will need to be trained to request trips in the field trip software? How many people will be trained to approve trips? Will budget staff be using the field trip software? If so how many will be trained? Will field trip software be rolled out in transportation only or district-wide? If district-wide, is the plan to phase in or have all schools and departments come online at the same time?

 **Answer: This question is unable to be answered at this time.**

Question 65: How many users will need to be trained to use the Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) software?

**Answer: Approximately 20**

Question 66: How many people will need training on the web interface to look up routing and student busing information?

**Answer: Approximately 25**

Question 67: Based on the following definition of a run, how many runs does the district operate? Are the runs tiered? If so how many Tiers does the district run? *"A run is defined as when a bus begins empty, picks up students, and then drops them off, leaving the bus empty. A single bus would typically have multiple runs throughout the day. "Example: i.     In the morning, Bus 100 has 1 high school run, 1 middle school run, and 1 elementary school run. ii.     In the afternoon, Bus 100 has 1 high school run, 1 middle school run, and 1 elementary school run. iii.     Bus 100 has a total of 6 runs.*

b. Does the District expect vendors to quote pricing for building both AM and PM runs built for regular education students?

**Answer: We currently operate 1,230 schedules in AM and PM that do a mix of tiered schools. We also have a significant amount of mid-day schedules**

Question 69: In addition to professional installation, we will conduct self-installation training for district staff. How many people will need to be trained?

**Answer: Approximately 10**

Question 70: How many people will need training in the use of GPS software?

**Answer: Approximately 20**

Question 71: The district has six transportation depots, is it possible to consolidate the fleet to one location during GPS installation? If not, please provide the addresses for each site.

**Answer: There are 5 physical locations for buses being garaged. Installation will have to be done at each individual location. Addresses are listed on MCPS web site on our Transportation page**

Question 72: Will GPS installers have access to the district's fleet on evenings and/or weekends?

**Answer: Yes**

Question 73: Is there GPS hardware currently installed? If yes, please specify the vendor and number of vehicles the GPS solution is installed on.Will the GPS need to be removed?

**Answer: No**

Question 74: How many vehicles would only need GPS location but not student tracking capabilities?

**Answer: Currently we are only looking at bus tracking capabilities**

Question 75: Our tablets are portable, but would require a mount/power supply to be installed on any vehicle where the tablets will be utilized. On how many vehicles does the district require that we install mounts?

**Answer: We are not looking at to install tablets on buses right now**

Question 76: How many total tablets does the district need (consider number of drivers, number of buses, number of spares, etc.)?

**Answer: We are not interested in installing tablets right now**

Question 77: What is the total number of drivers who will be using the onboard tablet for navigation?

**Answer: N/A**

Question 78: How many others at the district will need to be trained on the tablet?

**Answer: N/A**

Question 79: The district has six transportation depots, is it possible to consolidate the fleet to one location during Tablet installation? If not, please provide the addresses for each site.

**Answer: See response to question #71**

Question 80: Will tablet installers have access to the district's fleet on evenings and/or weekends?

**Answer: We are not interested in installing tablets right now**

Question 81: Are there any tablets currently installed on any of your vehicles? If yes, please specify the vendor and number of vehicles the tablet is installed on. Do they need to be removed?

**Answer: No**

Question 82: How many vehicles need student tracking capabilities?

**Answer: N/A**

Question 83: Does the district currently have RFID cards? If yes, what type and how many? How many vehicles are currently equipped with RFID readers?

 **Answer: No**

Question 84: How many vehicles is the district planning to equip with card readers?

**Answer: None at this time.**

Question 85: How many students will be issued cards?

**Answer: None at this time.**

Question 86: In addition to professional installation for Student Tracking devices, we will conduct self-installation training for district staff. How many people will need to be trained?

**Answer: N/A**

Question 86: How many people outside of transportation need training for Student Tracking?

**Answer: N/A**

Question 87: Is the district open to considering a software system that includes bidding, billing, and reporting on field trip management?

**Answer: Yes**

Question 88: The GPS software must be able to produce turn-by-turn directions for each route. The solution should allow for Transportation Department to modify directions, re-route in real-time, and add and remove stops. Does the district mean that when a direction is changed in the site and it updates to our tablets immediately? Or do they mean a driver goes off-path, and the system re-routes them back on track?

**Answer: We are not using tablets**

Question 89: Can the district clarify "use the MCPS system."

**Answer: This question will be clarified in the pre-proposal conference.**

Question 90: 220,000 students are in the district; how many do you route?

**Answer: We need to break down the type of routes (regular, special ed, homeless, foster, private). We currently transport approximately 102,000 students daily.**

Question 91: What is the process for reviewing the general contract? If the vendor has minor proposed modifications, which stage of the process do we share them with redlines?

**Answer: If you take any exception to our contracting articles (there are 30), you should indicate those exceptions in your submission.**

Question 92: The coldfusion Event Calendar link provided in the RFP document leads to a screen that shares a broken link notification. Could the district share an updated link and additionally confirm whether or not there has been any addenda, or errata?

**Answer:  This has been occurring intermittently.  We are working to correct it.  Clearing your browser cache or history typically helps.  At this time no erratum has been issued, however, we will issue one based on the statement above.**

Question 93: If selected for demonstration, what are potential weeks/days for the demonstration? Will the district consider a virtual demonstration, given the timeline between submission and selection?

**Answer: The timeframe will be determined once the responses are received. We are willing to consider a virtual demonstration.**

Question 94: Does the district have an ideal "go-live" timeline

**Answer: Anticipated for mid-May to June**

Question 95: What technology is currently in use on your fleet?  ie GPS, WiFi, cameras, driver route directions, ridership.  The vendor used for each currently is also appreciated

**Answer: BusPatrol - GPS and Cameras (BusPatrol)**

Question 96: Do your bus depots have wifi currently?

**Answer: Yes**

Question 97: Once you make the final decision, what is the expected timing for installation and implementation?

**Answer: Mid May to June**

Question 98: Will the scoring favor indirect software providers or aggregators that partner with other software vendors, or will the scores not be impacted by the nature of the provider providing all services directly vs partnering with other software vendor?

**Answer: The responses will be evaluated in the best interest of MCPS.**

Question 99: Given the Transportation Directors prior employment with an eligible vendor, First Student, please clarify whether or not any services are currently provided by First Student

**Answer: Transportation Director was never employed by First Student, and no services are provided by First Student.**

Question 100: Appendix X – MCPS's Service Level Agreement referenced in 3.0 Scope of Work, Item 3 Environment on page 4 was not included with the RFP and is not available via the MCPS website. If Appendix X is applicable to the RFP, please provide a copy of this document for review.  If this Appendix X is not applicable, can MCPS please remove Item 3, paragraph g from the RFP?

**Answer:  See response to question 13**

Question 101: MCPS Operational Requirement – 1.i The GPS data shall be displayed over the same map as used in the current routing and scheduling system. The maintenance of two (2) separate maps is unacceptable. Are you asking for the fleet solution to integrate with your routing system or would you like verification that the solution we offer does not have multiple admin. Sites?

**Answer: We are looking for a single solution provider**

Question103: MCPS Operational Requirement – 1.aa Routing software must adjust stop locations based on safety concerns. Can you clarify what qualifies as a 'safety concern' and if you are wanting the routes to automatically adjust under certain conditions. Please define 'safety concern' and detail expected adjustments from the solution.

**Answer: Current system does not recognize safety concerns, it is done manually.**

Question 104: MCPS Operational Requirement – 1.dd – Routing software must maintain all data (past and current) in one database for tracking student rider and driver management. Can you provide specifics regarding what student information that you would like to be tracked?

**Answer: At this time, the student tracking requirement is not applicable.**

Question 106: MCPS 8.4 states – Pricing proposal shall be submitted as a separate document outlining content, timeline for implementation, training, professional development, etc. Can you clarify that you want 1 original proposal, 1 pricing proposal, and 3 copies of each? This is based on the listed requirement is Section 9. If yes, can both the proposal and pricing proposal be included on the same flash drive? Further, can you detail what you are seeking for professional development?

**Answer: Correct as stated above.  All copies can be on the same flash drive.  Remember to also submit 1 redacted copy.  As far as professional development, we are seeking a schedule that outlines what training you provide and how it is provided.**

Question 107: In MCPS Section 7 – References, you state: List all current school district clients.  Are you referring to all school districts in Montgomery County?

**Answer: MCPS is the only school district. We are asking for clients similar in size and scope to MCPS across the US.**

Question: 108: What contracts would MCPS consider?

**Answer: Contracts similar in scope and size of MCPS**

Question 109: How many student transportation vehicles will need to be equipped w/ the following:

- · GPS devices
- · Student tracking card scanners

· Tablets
· Emergency buttons

**Answer: MCPS will require all 1,400 school buses to be equipped with GPS tracking devices**

Question 110: Does the district wish to have GPS installed on any white/auxiliary fleet vehicles and, if so, how many additional vehicles would need GPS devices?

**Answer: No**

Question 111: Does the district desire to have live engine diagnostics in addition to the requested GPS events detailed on Page 5, Item "m", under Technical Requirements?

**Answer: No. Not part of this RFP**

Question 112: Is the district currently utilizing a student RFID card for meals, library, etc.? If so, would you want to use the same card for student ridership tracking?

**Answer: N/A**

Question 113: Do you anticipate the awarded vendor will install all of the vehicle hardware or will that be handled internally?

**Answer: Vendor will do installation**

Question 114: On page 4, under Environment, Item "g" references "Appendix X". I did not see that in the RFP document files.

**Answer: See response to question 13**

Question 115: Does the district require a bid bond[MAS2] ?

**Answer: No**

Question 116: What is the total number of vehicles that MCPS would like quoted for this project?

**Answer: 1,400 school buses**

Question 117: Operational Requirements Item 1d indicates *"Email alerts need to use the MCPS email system."* Is it sufficient to set the 'reply-to' as a MCPS email address to meet this requirement? Our system is cloud-hosted and notifications are sent directly from the server.

**Answer: If the service can use third party's like SMTP2Go, we have a tenant with them and they can use it. Or if the server can authenticate with an account on our exchange servers they can send with that account. Other than that the third option is to let them send as us (add them to our SPF record).**

Question 118: Operational Requirements 1h: Would you prefer to have individual accounts for each school?

**Answer: We would like each school to have it's own AVL and each Depot will have an AVL based on its clusters**

Question 119: Do vehicles regularly service multiple schools, or is a vehicle typically dedicated to a single school?

**Answer: Multiple Schools**

Question 120: Operational Requirements 1y:

    a.      What is meant by 'parent support'?

    b.      Could providing electronic documentation or tutorials fulfill this need for end user support?

    c.      What kind of technical or operational support would be required via direct assistance to parents?

**Answer: Parent support only pertains to the parent app**

Question 121: Operational Requirements 1dd, what is student rider management?

**Answer: This cannot be answered at this time.**

Question 122: Would all DOT alerts be automatically distributed? Or will notifications need to be previewed before publishing the alert?

**Answer: Previewed first by individual depots prior to sending notifications.**

Question 123: 0perational Requirements, Item 2: does IAQ refer to "Indoor Air Quality"? Will that information be provided?

**Answer: Yes**

Question 124: Could you further clarify how the guardian/child relationship is managed? Is DOT expecting to be able to manage this in real time? If a student gets on a different vehicle than they were supposed to, is it expected that the parent would receive an alert to notify them?

**Answer: We are not currently looking to track students**

Question 125: Do you have existing on-board Wifi you would like us to plug into or would you like to see it listed as an option in proposals?

**Answer: No**

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


Accepted By: _____
                              (Name & Title)
Name of Company: _____


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Angela McIntosh-Davis, CPPB,
Director, Division of Procurement

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