

Addendum to RFP Number 14SDE0016RFP¹

Professional Services for Low-Performing Schools to Support and Empower Teachers and Leaders

March 3, 2014

1. How many districts have been identified/selected by the State to participate in this work?

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) has not yet identified the schools and districts to participate in this partnership. The CSDE anticipates that schools will likely fall within approximately 10 total districts.

2. How many schools have been identified/selected by the State to participate? How many are elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools?

Please reference the response to question #1 regarding school participation. The CSDE anticipates approximately 20 total schools, including elementary, middle, and high schools.

3. Can the State share its estimates for how many coaches are needed per school? Can coaches work at more than one school? If so, how many schools?

Please provide detailed information on your staffing model and the types/level of staffing necessary to support the successful execution of your proposal. The CSDE will not prescribe an exact coaching ratio; this will depend on the respondent's proven coaching model.

4. Is it expected that the coach position will be full-time (i.e., at the school each day)? If not, can the State share the estimated number of days coaches are expected to work in the schools?

Please provide detailed information on your staffing model and the types/level of staffing necessary to support the successful execution of your proposal. The CSDE will not prescribe the coaching frequency, though the CSDE expects a regular and embedded presence in schools; the exact coaching frequency will depend on the respondent's proven coaching model.

5. Do coaches have to be licensed teachers? If so, must they be licensed in Connecticut?

No, but the respondent must provide ample evidence of the expertise, skill level, and experience of its coaching staff.

6. What is the budget for this program?

Please include a detailed cost summary, outlining costs necessary to successfully deliver the staffing, services, and/or products described in your proposal.

7. The page restrictions for each section of the proposal are noted. If additional detail is deemed necessary to adequately respond to the specifications, may this information be included in an appendix?

¹ Please note that duplicative questions submitted by multiple respondents are listed once.

The CSDE will consider required sections and appendices when evaluating responses. This does not preclude an organization from submitting additional materials; however, these will not be considered in the formal review and scoring of applications.

8. Is there a state-level rubric for teacher evaluation?

Yes, but districts were not required to adopt it. The CSDE has provided state-level rubrics for educator evaluation. Districts have the opportunity to modify these rubrics or develop local rubrics, requiring approval by the CSDE. For more information, please visit the CSDE's System for Educator Evaluation and Development (SEED) [website](#).

9. Does a statewide system/technology platform supporting the teacher evaluation process exist?

Yes, the CSDE conducted an RFP and identified BloomBoard as a platform to support evaluations. Districts had the opportunity to use the BloomBoard technology or pursue an alternate platform.

10. Is the state looking for an “off the shelf system” to attract talent? Or custom design? Or both?

The CSDE is looking for tools, systems, and processes that will achieve the goals outlined in the RFP in Section II, Part D.

11. There are four deliverables outlined on p. 5 of the RFP and the scope of the activities states “and/or” on p. 4, do we submit a proposal of 6 pages each for each of the deliverables or is it expected that all four deliverables be addressed within the same 6-page proposal?

Respondents should describe their ability to deliver on the services requested as part of the RFP. Please reference the RFP rubric for specific evaluation criteria. The complete response should be six pages in length. Please review Sections IV and VII of the RFP.

12. Can we include additional documents, such as an Executive Summary, or appendices, such as project descriptions and staff resumes? Is there a page limit?

The CSDE will consider required sections and appendices when evaluating responses. This does not preclude an organization from submitting additional materials; however, these will not be considered in the formal review and scoring of applications.

13. What are the guidelines for submitting the proposal, the selection criteria, submittal requirements, etc.?

Please review Sections II-VII and Appendix A of the RFP.

14. What are the number of low-performing schools included in the RFP, the number of leaders, the number of teachers, and the number of students?

Please reference questions #1 and #2 to approximate the number of teachers and students.

15. What is the timeframe for implementing the professional services?

Please reference Section II, Part E of the RFP.

16. We have found that different low-performing schools often require very different types of support. The RFP indicates that more than one vendor may be approved. Can the CSDE please confirm that vendors can propose solutions that do not include all of the deliverables listed in Section C?

Respondents should describe their ability to deliver on the services requested as part of the RFP. Please reference the RFP rubric for specific evaluation criteria.

17. Once vendors are chosen, how will service be rolled out to the schools and districts in the state? Does the CSDE anticipate creating a list of proven vendors that will be available to schools and/or districts?

The CSDE expects that this RFP process will result in a contract(s) between a provider(s) and the CSDE. The CSDE will work collaboratively with the provider(s), schools, and districts to foster positive and collaborative working relationships.

18. We understand that vendors should provide unit pricing in their proposal. Can vendors also provide pricing for clusters of schools to demonstrate potential cost efficiencies?

Yes, this is strongly encouraged.

19. For what schools will these services be rendered? Is it possible for vendors to propose supports to a subset of schools?

Yes, please reference the answer to question #1.

20. Will the CSDE permit a vendor to propose only leadership support without direct teacher instructional job-embedded proposal development?

Yes.

21. Will the CSDE permit a vendor to propose a lesser number of the activities outlined in the RFP? What are the restrictions on proposing a lesser number of the 9 activities?

Respondents should describe their ability to deliver on the services requested as part of the RFP. Please reference the RFP rubric for specific evaluation criteria.

22. Will the CSDE engage multiple vendors?

The CSDE may make multiple awards.

23. Can out-of-state vendors be awarded a contract?

Yes. Out-of-state vendors are in no way precluded from responding to this RFP.

24. What vendors has the CSDE previously engaged in this work?

In recent years, the CSDE has not engaged a vendor(s) explicitly for this type of partnership and work. The CSDE has an active partnership with LEAD Connecticut to provide leadership development and talent pipeline support for school leadership.

25. How are schools identified to take part in this project?

The CSDE will identify schools largely based on need and the opportunity to positively impact teaching and learning. The CSDE will concentrate services on meeting the needs of Connecticut's lowest-performing schools.

26. Are they focus or priority schools?

Yes, this RFP is designed to support select Turnaround, Focus, and/or Review schools.

27. How many teachers and school leaders will be part of this project?

This will depend, in large part, on the respondent's service delivery model. The CSDE aims to dramatically improve student achievement in the targeted schools. Respondents should propose an educator support and development model that will support this end goal.

28. Will schools and districts have the option of working with the provider(s) or will their participation be mandated by the CSDE?

The CSDE anticipates and strongly prefers collaborative relationships with all stakeholders.

29. How will the success of this project be determined by the state?

Please reference Section II, Part D of the RFP.

30. How much funding is currently allocated to support the work outlined in this RFP?

Please include a detailed cost summary, outlining costs necessary to successfully deliver the staffing, services, and/or products described in your proposal.

31. What capacity do school districts have to support online training to calibrate teacher evaluations?

This is variable by district; however, many districts have invested heavily in technology in preparation for Smarter Balanced Assessments.

32. Can the provider administer a needs assessment during the pre-implementation period of the contract?

Yes, please describe the process for and anticipated outcomes of this work in support of the broader goals of the RFP.

33. Given the expressed goal of increasing student performance, do you anticipate extending the contract beyond one year?

As stated in the RFP in Section IV, Part C, the CSDE and provider may extend the contract contingent on results.

34. Will partner responses be accepted, meaning can two or more parties submit a response (prime, subcontractor)?

Yes. Please explain this relationship and the services to be provided in your RFP response.

35. What is the approximate value of the contract, and will the state be purchasing the services or individual districts?

Please include a detailed cost summary, outlining costs necessary to successfully deliver the staffing, services, and/or products described in your proposal. The partnership expected to result from this RFP process will be between the CSDE and the provider.

- 36. The limited number of allowable pages will make it challenging to articulate our offerings/models and related expected outcomes. Will there be another opportunity later in the process for us to expand in written format and/or provide an oral presentation?**

As stated in Section IV, Part G, the CSDE reserves the right to request additional information and/or in-person presentations.

- 37. Given the number of leader teacher populations requiring training have not been identified, when supplying pricing, should we just identify prices per cohort or per person?**

Please consider including a detailed cost breakdown that addresses these variable costs (e.g., costs based on the size of the schools, personnel counts, etc.).

- 38. What are the expected number of on-site consultation days per month anticipated for the External Provider's Project Leaders relative to their work with the CSDE's Turnaround Office and related state-level personnel? To provide school-based implementation experts relative to their work with each individual low-performing high school assigned by the CSDE?**

This will depend on the partner's service delivery model. Please describe your evidence-based model in your proposal.

- 39. Will meetings of school personnel from different high schools in the same geographic area of the state be acceptable for some of the training, supervision, and coaching required in the RFP?**

Yes.

- 40. Will CSDE personnel also be assigned to the low-performing high schools who will also work in collaboration with the External Provider? Specifically, will each low-performing school have someone from the CSDE assigned to it from the Turnaround Office?**

Many of the schools likely to participate in this work fall within Alliance Districts. The Turnaround Office has designated staff members serving as liaisons to these districts. Some schools participating in special turnaround programs have school-specific Turnaround Office designees.

- 41. Will new teachers to the profession, in each school, still have mentors or supervisors assigned to them relative to the state's teacher induction and district tenure process?**

Yes, new teachers will participate in the TEAM process. For more information, visit the CSDE's [TEAM webpage](#).

- 42. Will the external provider have a direct hand in the selection of administrators in the low-performing schools?**

No, but the provider may provide tools, trainings, and resources to support strong district recruiting and hiring practices.

- 43. Will the external provider have a direct hand in the selection of new teachers being recruitment by/to the low-performing schools?**

No, but the provider may provide tools, trainings, and resources to support strong district recruiting and hiring practices.

44. Is there a competitive advantage to partnering with other provider organization(s) when submitting a proposal?

No.

45. What is the approval process/timeline?

Please reference the timelines provided in Sections II and IV of the RFP.