

Addendum to RFP Number 14SDE0014

Professional Services for Low-Performing Schools in the Areas of Assessments, Data Support, and Aligned Professional Learning Opportunities
December 19, 2013

Please Note: As these were not posted timely, the RFP deadline has been extended one week to January 24, 2014.

Q: Must an applicant have 501(c)(3) not-for-profit status to be eligible for consideration?

A: No. Section III.5 of the RFP is amended accordingly.

Q: How many students are enrolled in Connecticut’s 100 lowest-performing schools?

A: Approximately 50,000 students.

Q: Section III of the RFP specifies Contractor Qualifications. Must an applicant meet all five criteria to be eligible for consideration?

A: Yes, however, the organization is not required to have 501(c)(3) not-for-profit status.

Q: Section II.C.3. of the RFP describes professional learning opportunities. Should the professional learning opportunities be delivered at each school site or may they be centrally hosted?

A: It depends on the professional learning opportunity and the applicant’s ability to deliver the service at scale. Regardless of the delivery format, professional learning opportunities must be highly effective, positively impacting professional practice and student achievement.

Q: In developing an overview of the costs associated with a model, how should applicants estimate the number of students and staff per school?

A: Applicants are encouraged to provide per pupil cost estimates, noting any scale benefits; suggested estimates in response to this question:

	Approximate # of Teachers	Approximate # of Students
K-6	30	500
K-8	40	700
9-12	75	1,000

Q: Approximately, how many teachers are involved in the program?

A: It depends on the scale of the applicant’s proposal. The applicant is not expected to submit a proposal to provide professional services for all 100 low-performing schools. Responses should provide the proposers’ recommended approach based on past success (e.g., training all vs. a subset of teachers in a school and/or district).

Q: Approximately, how many students are involved in the program?

A: It depends on the scale of the applicant’s proposal. The applicant is not expected to submit a proposal to provide professional services for all 100 low-performing schools.

Q: Is the CSDE able to provide a list of schools of Connecticut’s low-performing schools?

A: Yes, please see: http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/evalresearch/accountability/2012-13_school_classification_summary.pdf

Q: May proposers request that portions of their response be held confidential?

A: No.

Q: Does the CSDE require actual letters of reference from an applicant's customers, or will contact information suffice? If the former, should these letters be submitted with the proposal or directly to the CSDE?

A: As stated in Section V of the RFP, proposers must provide actual letters of reference evidencing their experience and track record in similar engagements. These letters are important since they will be scored as part of the CSDE's review of the proposer's application. Letters must be included in the completed proposal.

Q: May bidders include a cover letter? If so, is the cover letter included in the six-page limit specified in the RFP?

A: Yes. A cover letter will not be included in the specified page limit.

Q: Does the CSDE expect K-3 students to participate in the periodic assessments?

A: Yes. The CSDE will consider specialized approaches to assessment in Grade K-3 to allow for the age of those students.

Q: What is an approximate breakdown of the grade ranges for the low-performing schools?

A: K-12.

Q: Section II.B.2 references "core content areas." Please define "core content areas."

A: Reading and mathematics, at minimum.

Q: What student information systems are used in the 30 school districts?

A: The systems vary by district. Power Schools is perhaps most commonly used across low-performing schools.

Q: Does the CSDE intend to make one award or multiple awards? If the CSDE plans to make multiple awards, how will schools be notified and informed about their options? Will there be a vendor fair that allows schools to meet and select providers? Alternatively, will providers be assigned to specific schools/districts?

A: The CSDE may make multiple awards. As stated in the RFP, the CSDE reserves the right to award contract(s) in a manner deemed to be in the best interest of the State. Please see Sections IV.G and IV.H for further information.

Q: Will the assessment content, data system and professional services outlined in the RFP be funded by CSDE or will each individual school district pay for the services?

A: It will depend upon the services being offered and other details specific to the proposal and active grant opportunities.

Q: Are you seeking – or is there a preference for – a fixed form, computer adaptive, paper/pencil, or computer-based interim assessment?

A: No preference.

- Q: Section II.B.2 of the RFP describes ready-to-administer periodic assessments. Does the CSDE expect periodic assessments to occur in the fall, winter, spring, and summer?**
- A: The CSDE expects periodic assessments to occur every 6 to 8 weeks.
- Q: Section II.B.11 of the RFP describes curricular resources. Does the CSDE expect that the curricular resources be consistent across all schools?**
- A: Yes, the resources provided by the contractor should be consistent across all schools within the scope of the potential contract.
- Q: Beyond the initial contract, does the CSDE expect to extend this work?**
- A: Yes, if the initial contract is successful, as determined by the CSDE. As stated in Section IV.C of the RFP, the CSDE reserves the right to extend the contract(s), or parts thereof, for a period up to or exceeding the full original contract(s) term with mutual consent between both parties.
- Q: Does the proposer selected by the CSDE have the opportunity to submit its standard form of agreement as the starting point for negotiations?**
- A: Yes.
- Q: Section II.C.2 of the RFP describes analytics and data infrastructure deliverables. Can the word “mastery” in this section be defined as significant growth toward mastery?**
- A: Mastery must align to proficiency relative to Common Core State Standards. Applicants are encouraged to define how their assessment systems measure and define goal/mastery/proficiency, and against which nationally-normed standards.
- Q: Section III.3 of the RFP references “local context.” Please define and provide an example of what is meant by “local context.”**
- A: Providers must demonstrate the skill, ability, and willingness to adapt to the local educational environments in various districts. For example, it is likely that different districts are employing different curricula and serving unique students populations.
- Q: Will the CSDE consider negotiating alternatives to ownership of products developed under the contract (e.g. a license)?**
- A: This could be discussed during the negotiation period. As stated in the RFP, the CSDE reserves the right to award contract(s) in a manner deemed to be in the best interest of the State.
- Q: If the vendor provides products and materials from its standard offerings, will they be exempt from this requirement?**
- A: This could be discussed during the negotiation period. As stated in the RFP, the CSDE reserves the right to award contract(s) in a manner deemed to be in the best interest of the State.