



**Arlington Public Schools
Purchasing Office**

NOTICE OF ADDENDUM NO. 1

Issued on April 6, 2017

<u>RFP TITLE:</u>	SURVEY RESEARCH AND ADMINISTRATION SERVICES
<u>RFP NUMBER:</u>	44FY17
<u>RFP ISSUE DATE:</u>	MARCH 23, 2017
<u>PROPOSAL DUE DATE AND TIME CHANGED:</u>	APRIL 18, 2017, PRIOR TO 2:00 P.M. (LOCAL PREVAILING TIME)

This Addendum #1 for RFP 44FY17 – SURVEY RESEARCH AND ADMINISTRATION SERVICES. NO acknowledgment is required.

ISSUED BY:

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RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

The following questions and responses are provided to assist offerors with the assembly of their proposal response:

- 1) Under A. GENERAL INFORMATION, the RFP states “Four existing surveys (“surveys” or “survey modules”) will be replaced with one complementary set of four survey modules to be administered...” what detail can APS provide with respect to the breadth of the design effort?
answer: Much of the pre-work for the survey design has already taken place. We have a Survey Advisory Committee who has already been meeting and will be making final recommendations about what primary content areas we hope the survey to cover. Most of these content areas will come from the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child framework. The design effort will focus on making recommendations for wording the survey questions and pre-testing the survey once it has been designed. APS and APCYF have been conducting stakeholder interviews and will be able to provide much of the background information such as questions used in prior surveys and priority topic areas for the new survey. The vendor may also suggest already-existing questions from comparable national surveys that may serve as a comparison point for APS.

- 2) The RFP states on page 7 that “Both APS and APCYF have administered surveys in the past such as those listed below. The new set of complementary survey modules to be designed by the successful Offeror will combine the intent behind these various surveys, into a more comprehensive and streamlined surveys, to be administered at regular intervals.” Can you provide more specific information about the extent to which APS is seeking to design/develop entirely new survey items as opposed to working primarily to administer instruments that are similar to the current versions being used?
answer: We are contracting for completely new surveys to be developed. The past surveys are provided to give some contextual information. The focus of the new surveys to be developed will cover similar areas such as satisfaction, strengths and risks, but will use the Whole Child, Whole Community, Whole School framework to ground their focus. Ergo, it may be appropriate to use some of the same questions that have been used in the past.

- 3) Is any of the survey content set, or will each instrument be developed in concert with the Survey Advisory Group?
answer: The general scope of the content will be determined prior to this contract beginning. It is based primarily in the Whole Child, Whole Community, Whole School framework. The vendor will work with APS/APCYF staff and the Survey Advisory Group to finalize and refine survey questions based on the determined content priorities. We are looking to select a vendor who can develop high quality survey questions based on the legwork that has already been done – prioritization of topic areas to be covered and brainstorming of draft questions.

- 4) Under B. ADMINISTRATION/DATA COLLECTION, what does “technical specifications for the administration for each survey” (“to be submitted 60 days prior to the survey launch date for implementation and testing”) mean?

answer: The exact detail of what the technical specifications includes will be determined as the survey development process proceeds and will depend on the vendor's own recommendations for how best to administer the survey. For example, if the student survey will be administered to 6,000 students using one access point, we would need to know that 60 days ahead of time to ensure that APS' infrastructure and the vendor's infrastructure can support the amount of data being collected.

5) What is the reporting cycle for the project?

answer: We envision administering the survey every two years with reports to follow each administration.

6) The Evaluation Criteria section of the RFP (page 20) calls for the contractor to complete required work within APS' schedule. What is APS' schedule for executing the surveys and reporting? For example, could you give us approximate dates for any board presentations, or when the results might be posted to the APS site?

answer: We expect the survey to be developed between July 2017 and December 2017, with pre-testing and refinement in winter. It will be administered in the spring of 2018. We would like to see the data available by June or July of 2018 and a final report by August/September of 2018. Any presentations to the Board would be expected in September or October of the school year following survey administration.

7) What is the timeline of each survey? Is it all in the same window?

answer: We have typically administered to each respondent group during the same school year, but have staggered the window for each respondent group. This should be able to continue. We hope to administer the surveys in the spring of 2018, and are open to staggering the windows as needed. Typically, we have more constraints on the student survey window and the staff survey window, due to conflicts such as testing and other, one-time, staff surveys.

8) Will every survey population be surveyed every other year or, if not, which populations will be surveyed in which years?

answer: We plan to survey each of these groups in every survey year; in other words, every other school year.

9) What is the data delivery schedule for the project?

answer: We expect the survey to be administered in the spring of 2018. We would like to see the data available by June or July of 2018 and a final report by August/September of 2018.

10) Please indicate the desired schedule for survey development, data collection, and reporting services?

answer: We expect the survey to be developed between July 2017 and December 2017, with pre-testing and refinement in winter. It will be administered in the spring of 2018. We would like to see the data available by June or July of 2018 and a final report by August/September of 2018.

11) The Fee schedule provided on page 44 includes only years 1, 3, and 5. However, the RFP indicates the project will be funded for 1 year with 4 additional years. We are assuming the table provided on page 44 of the RFP is a model only, and that budgets should be included for years 2 and 4 as well?

answer: Year 1 will be development of the survey, to include pre-testing, and administering the survey. Initial results should be available in Year 1 and a final report in Year 2. Year 3 will include the second administration of the survey along with making adjustments to the questions or process as informed by Year 1. A final report is expected in Year 4. Year 5 will be a repeat of administration and adjusting questions and process as needed. Years 2 and 4 will include activities listed under the Standard Itemized Price List and the evaluation of these costs will be the consideration for years 2 and 4. The Fee Schedule as provided in Appendix F is not a model but will be the basis for reviewing a proposals cost.

12) The budget form asks for budgets for years 1, 3 and 5. But our reading of sequence of surveys seems like surveys will also happen in years 2 and 4? Please clarify.

answer: We expect year 1 to include survey development, testing, administration and initial analyses. There will be some wrap up work in year 2, but year 3 will be the next survey administration.

13) What is the meaning of "extended cost" column in budget work sheet?

answer: This represents the total amount per category, the hourly rate multiplied by the level of effort.

14) What activities are to take place in each year of the contract?

answer: Year 1 will be development of the survey, to include pre-testing, and administering the survey. Initial results should be available in Year 1 and a final report in Year 2. Year 3 will include the second administration of the survey along with making adjustments to the questions or process as informed by Year 1. A final report is expected in Year 4. Year 5 will be a repeat of administration and adjusting questions and process as needed.

15) Based on our understanding from the RFP, four existing surveys will be replaced with one complementary set of four survey modules. Does this mean one module for each population (i.e. students, parents, staff and Arlington residents not included in the other three modules) or are the modules designed to mirror the four existing surveys that were conducted with different populations?

answer: Each module will be for each population. The modules should be complementary in terms of the content covered and the way the questions are structured, although we expect that each module will include unique questions as well (e.g., staff engagement questions on the staff survey, use of APS facilities by community members on the community member survey). The content will be similar to the surveys they will replace, but will not mirror them.

Essentially, we are combining four existing surveys – some of which went out to students only, some of which went out to multiple response groups - in terms of the content of the questions to be asked. The new survey will cover these various question topics in one survey PER response group, of which there are four.

16) Can you clarify what is the expected first year for administration for each of the modules?

- a. The site based survey?
- b. The community Satisfaction Survey
- c. The Developmental Assets Survey

d. The YRBS survey

answer: To clarify, the modules are specific to each respondent group (see question 15). See response to question 7 for information about the timeline. We expect to survey each respondent group during Year 1, but imagine this will be done through staggering response windows.

17) Is the fee schedule meant to be limited to the four personnel categories listed, or may more categories be used?

answer: In the day to day additional categories may be utilized, please try best to approximate those efforts into the categories defined in the fee schedule that would be useful for us to ensure we are able to evaluate proposal pricing consistently.

18) Will the APS Language Services Registration Center translate survey modules in to Spanish?

answer: The decision to utilize the LSRC for translation services will depend on APS staff capacity. If the vendor has an existing means for translating a survey into Spanish we would like to know more about that. However, the APS LSRC can and may be utilized for translation if that is determined to be the more accurate source for Spanish language translation.

19) We understand that, as a minimum, all surveys will be administered in English and Spanish. What other languages of administration have been used in past surveys or what other languages might APS anticipate using in this present endeavor?

answer: We anticipate administering the survey in English and Spanish, but if you have developed language tools, we would like to learn more about what is possible given the diversity of languages spoken in our community. The top five languages spoken by our student/family population, other than English, are: Spanish, Arabic, Amharic, Mongolian, and Bengali. Other than Spanish, these all involve non-Latin scripts, which has complicated our ability to administer surveys online in those languages.

20) Will each of the four survey types be required to be made available in other languages besides English and if so, what languages would be required for each type of survey?

answer: We plan to make each survey, including the staff survey, available in Spanish. If it is determined the APS translation services are best then we can translate ourselves, but are interested in learning more about contractor's translation experience or capabilities.

21) Are CONTRACT TERMS AND CONDITIONS (p. 22), negotiable (following award)?

answer: answer: In accordance with the RFP, Non-negotiable, mandatory provisions required by Virginia Law or the Arlington Public Schools Purchasing Resolution are indicated by an asterisk (“*”).

22) Is there a target confidence interval for sampling the students?

answer: We aim for a margin of error of 5 or less for each response group by school, or in the case of community members, overall.

23) Has APS thought about response by survey/module component?

answer: We aim for a margin of error of 5 or less for each response group by school, or in the case of community members, overall.

24) For defining the scope of work and budgeting purposes, does APS expect sample sizes and response rates for the designed survey to match the sample sizes and response rates from reported for the component surveys when conducted in the past?

answer: answer: Recognizing that our student and parent population is growing, APS expects a student sample size similar to – but possibly larger than - that of the Site-Based Survey, in terms of proportion of total population and target margin of error. Given that the survey will now include an opt-out component, the sample will most likely need to be increased to allow for a reduced number of responses.

Likewise, we expect a similar sample size/target margin of error for the community survey. The parent and staff surveys go out to the entire population and we would welcome suggestions for how to increase the response rate among those groups.

25) Is there a required response rate for each respondent group?

answer: We aim for a margin of error of 5 or less for each response group by school, or in the case of community members, overall.

26) On what basis should we establish response rates?

answer: We aim for a margin of error of 5 or less for each response group by school, or in the case of community members, overall.

27) Please provide the desired sample size for each of the groups to be surveyed?

answer: The two groups to be sampled are students and community members. For both groups, we strive for a margin of error of 5 or less, and in the case of students, this margin of error applies to the school level (i.e., the sample for each school must be large enough so that we achieve a margin of error of 5 or less to report out students' responses at each school).

We survey all parents and staff. There are approximately 5,000 staff members and 15,000 households. For purposes of the Site-Based Survey, we have sent a survey to each household for each school attended by a child in the family. For example, if a family has three children and two of them attend one school while the other attends another school, that family receives two surveys – one for each school. In addition, if a student attends an APS high school and also takes classes part-time at the Career Center, parents have received a survey for both of those schools. This year's SBS includes 21,750 parent surveys.

We anticipate that the new parent survey will include some school-based questions (such as responsiveness of principal) and some non-school-based questions (such as child's access to community assets). We welcome suggestions from the vendor on the best way to approach the parent survey given these two types of questions and the need for a good margin of error at the school level.

A large element of this initiative is to improve our process so we are open to recommendations based on best practice to determine sample sizes or expected response rates.

- 28) Will the survey be administered to all parents/guardians of APS students or a sample of parents/guardians?
answer: We seek to administer survey to all parents/guardians.
- 29) Is APS targeting all adult residents (as a pool for sampling) who live within the boundaries of Arlington County? Or how many community members will APS want to survey to get a representative group?
answer: We strive for a margin of error of 5 or less. In the 2015 Community Satisfaction Survey, we had 602 responses from community members, with a margin of error of 4. The population is all adult Arlington residents who do not have children attending APS. As this was done via telephone survey in the past, our vendor was able to control the response rate and representativeness of the sample by continuing to make phone calls until the requirements were met. APS welcomes discussion of alternative methodology.
- 30) What is the source of sample that has been used in the past to reach community members?
answer: Prior vendors have purchased landline and cellphone telephone lists to conduct telephone surveys of community members. APS is flexible on using different methodology, but we do not have our own source of information about who community members are/contact information. Additionally, APCYF is a Partnership between the County and the Schools. Therefore, we have some county partners who can possibly assist in communicating to the wider community.
- 31) What percentage of surveys do APS anticipate being conducted by phone?
answer: Community members are the only group we anticipate may need to be reached via telephone survey. See above response.
- 32) Currently through which channels does APS communicate with its community members?
answer: APCYF is a Partnership between the County and the Schools. Therefore, we have some county partners who can possibly assist in communicating to the wider community.
- 33) Does APS possess a list of addresses that are within the community (i.e. the voter file) to determine which stakeholders should be part of a community survey project?
answer: APS does not have contact information for community members.
- 34) Also, what kind of disaggregation by group might be required?
answer: We would seek to disaggregate by standard demographics; within each response group at the school and district levels: school level (districtwide data) and race/ethnicity and possibly also language background. We have not included questions on the parent survey about household income or education background and would welcome a conversation about the pros and cons of including such questions. We have not disaggregated the community survey in the past and would welcome a conversation about important variables for that group such as possibly: race/ethnicity, age, neighborhood, household income, etc.
- 35) What types of reports are expected for each survey? (e.g. school reports, district reports, etc...) and in what formats?
answer: At a minimum, we are interested in the following reports:

- A summary of the methodology along with key districtwide findings
- School report cards capturing highlights across respondent groups and a comparison to the district overall (elementary school compared to elementary overall, etc.)
- A longer school report showing responses to all survey questions, preferably with the district-level comparison included

We are also interested in learning about any dynamic, online reporting capabilities.

36) Is there a page count limitation on the offeror's technical proposal response?

answer: No, there is no page count limit for the proposal responses.

37) Are previous incumbents eligible to bid?

answer: Yes.

38) Was the work outlined by this RFP previously awarded? And if so, to whom?

answer: No this is an entirely new undertaking. The previously awarded contractors are eligible to compete but are reviewed equitably with all proposals received with no special considerations made.

39) Is there a previous vendor who has provided these services to you in the past? If so, who is that vendor and are they eligible to compete for this contract?

answer: This survey is an entirely new undertaking. However, APCYF has contracted with the Search Institute to do the Assets survey work. APCYF has conducted the YRBS survey using APS staff. APS contracted with K12 Insight to conduct the Site-Based Survey for the 2016-2017 school year. All current and past contractors are eligible to bid.

40) If there was a prior vendor contract to perform these tasks what was the yearly budget for the work?

answer: This survey is an entirely new undertaking, so defining the budget for this exact work is difficult. The budget information from the previous contract will not be disclosed at this time.

41) Could APS identify the current external vendors (if applicable) involved in conducting work for each of the survey instruments included in the RFP?

answer: APCYF has contracted with the Search Institute to do the Assets survey work. They conduct the YRBS survey using APS staff. APS contracted with K12 Insight to conduct the Site-Based Survey for the 2016-2017 school year. This survey will represent a new effort and we have not contracted with anyone to do specifically this survey.

42) What have been the past levels of effort for this work?

answer: APCYF has a data specialist who has worked on administering the YRBS for 2017. Effort for this survey included stakeholder discussions, moving the survey to an online platform and coordinating logistics of administration to include sending opt-out letters to parents or students selected and ensuring those students who are not allowed to take the survey don't. In total this represents about 150 hours for development and administration and 200 hours for reporting and analysis. APS level of effort for the 2016-2017 school year has been approximately \$75,000.

- 43) Does APS have a projected target for funding level or FTE staffing on the project?
answer: This information is to be determined at this time.
- 44) What was the cost of each of the previous survey administrations?
answer: The estimated average cost across the assets survey and the SBS and CSS is \$12,615. In 2017. APS level of effort for the 2016-2017 school year has been \$75,000.
- 45) There are many ways of structuring the data collection effort, depending on the time and resources available. Please provide APS' expectations concerning the level of effort and budget.
answer: The precise level of effort is to be determined and the budget information is not being disclosed at this time.
- 46) Could APS provide some indication of the total budget allocated for each of the surveys each year and/or the anticipated level of effort (e.g., the number of hours) each year?
answer: The precise level of effort is to be determined and the budget information is not being disclosed at this time.
- 47) Does APS have a set budget in mind for this program?
answer: Budget information associated with the project will not be disclosed at this time.
- 48) What is budget for this project?
answer: Budget information associated with the project will not be disclosed at this time.
- 49) Is this a fixed price contract?
answer: Please refer to Section 7. Contract Amount on page 23 of the solicitation.
- 50) What is the anticipated length of the questionnaire/modules?
answer: Given the scope of the information to be collected we anticipate that the student questionnaire may be around 80-90 questions. In the past these surveys have reached nearly 150 questions, but we hope to keep it as streamlined as possible. We anticipate that the length for other response groups will be shorter. Additionally, we welcome suggestions for ways to streamline or add in skip logic to make the survey as accessible as possible.
- 51) How long are each of the modules expected to take to complete?
answer: We want to keep as streamlined as possible and follow best practice recommendations about how long a respondent is likely to be attentive. However, for the lengthier student survey it has taken about 30 minutes to complete and will likely need to remain that length to cover all content areas.
- 52) What is the approximate length (either in terms of number of questions or pages of questions) of the parent survey, the administrator survey and the community survey?
answer: We are open to feedback about how long the survey should be in order to ensure accurate responses. However, in order to capture the content, we anticipate the student survey may be up to 80 questions.

- 53) On page 11 of the RFP, there is a requirement for passive parent consent. How has that process been implemented in the past?
- answer: The parent/guardian for every student who has been selected for the student sample must receive a letter explaining the survey purpose and their right to opt their child out. We typically give them a window of 3 weeks to respond by email, fax or mail. We then provide the classroom teachers with the listing of those students who may not be given the survey.
- 54) With regard to student surveys to be conducted, does APS require informed consent of all respondents? If so, does APS require that the informed consent be documented?
- answer: For surveys given to students younger than 18 **passive** consent must be obtained from their parents/guardians. See p. 11 (a) and response to question 55 above.
- 55) Similarly, with regard to community surveys to be conducted, does APS require informed consent of all respondents? If so, does APS require that the informed consent be documented?
- answer: No, the community survey will not be targeted to youth and likely will not ask the same level of sensitive questions.
- 56) What portion of the parent surveys are expected to be completed online (vs. paper) based on the 2016 study?
- answer: Typically, our online response rate has been low. In 2015, the last full administration of the Site-Based Survey, 335 surveys were submitted online out of a total of 1,225 surveys submitted. We hope to increase our online response rate. The 2017 parent version of the Site-Based Survey has not been administered yet but we are experimenting for the first time with sending an email invitation to parents for whom we have an email address on file. In the past, we have sent a letter home with a paper survey as well as instructions for how to access the survey on our website. Our goal with the parent survey is to ensure that all parents receive the survey, which has always necessitated the use of US mail, while also looking for ways to increase our online response rate.
- 57) What is the proportion of paper/online for each respondent group?
- answer: answer: In 2015, the last full administration of the Site-Based Survey, 335 parent surveys were submitted online out of a total of 1,225 surveys submitted. We hope to increase the online response rate (see above).
- Starting next year, we hope to move the student survey entirely online. Students in the surveyed grades will all have personal devices (iPads or laptops) by then.
- The only other group that we have used paper for is select staff groups. In 2016, we administered the survey online to most staff members, and we provided paper surveys – with Spanish translation – to bus drivers, food service workers, and maintenance staff, all of whom have limited access to computers during their workday.
- 58) For student on-line survey administration what types of computer access is available for each grade? For instance, all students have their own computers, computer labs, computers on carts brought to classrooms, et cetera?
- answer: Starting in 2017-18, all students in the grades included in the survey will have personal devices (either an iPad or a laptop).

- 59) What percentage of students will not have any computer access for on-line surveys?
answer: Starting in 2017-18, all students in the grades included in the survey will have personal devices (either an iPad or a laptop).
- 60) What contact mechanisms are available for staff emails, home addresses and/or internal mail addresses?
answer: APS will provide staff email addresses and household lists with mailing address and parent email address, if available.
- 61) Is APS willing to survey all students if budget allows?
answer: We are open to discussion of the pros and cons of this approach. One goal of sampling has been to limit disruptions to instruction.
- 62) Could APS share the survey instruments that are currently being used prior to the proposal due date?
answer: Copies of these surveys and reports can be found online:
- <https://apcyf.arlingtonva.us/youth-risk-behavior-survey/>
 - <https://apcyf.arlingtonva.us/reports/>
 - <https://www.apsva.us/planning-and-evaluation/evaluation/surveys/>
- 63) Are incentives allowed to be used to improve response rates for the following?
a. community survey respondents;
b. parent respondents;
c. staff respondents?
answer: Due to policy restraints, APS cannot offer incentives for people to participate in surveys.
- 64) Will our proposal be considered if we do not provide a reference from a “school district or county of similar size or composition to Arlington”?
answer: Offerors must meet or exceed the minimum qualifications referenced in the solicitation. A reference from a school district or county of similar size OR composition to Arlington.
- 65) Do you have a mandatory minimum number of in-person meetings planned between the vendor and school administration either for planning or for discussion of results?
answer: We are open to meeting via web or phone, but hope to meet at least 1-2 times in person. In total there will likely be 3-4 meetings for the development of the content, 1-2 around the administration of the survey and 1-2 around the reporting. But these do not all have to take place in person.