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## Arlington Public Schools Procurement Office

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### Information Item No. 1

Issued on February 14, 2019

**RFP Title:** Individual Components of Comprehensive Assessment System

**RFP Number:** 12FY19

**The following questions were received in response to the Request for Proposals issuance.**

1. May companies based outside the United States (e.g. India or Canada) submit a response to this RFP?
  - a. Yes, companies based outside the United States may respond to the RFP.
2. Will the eventual contractor for this solution be required to attend on-site meetings?
  - a. Yes. It is required that the contractor be available to attend on-site meetings as required or necessary. This may depend on the project phase or activity.
3. Can tasks related to the eventual contract be performed outside the United States (e.g. India or Canada)?
  - a. Some yes, may be completed outside the United States, but not all.
4. Can proposals be submitted via email?
  - a. No.
5. Our team provides an instrument for Pre-K thru 3. Will APS consider multiple instruments [Components] for screening students for literacy in K-12?
  - a. Yes, please refer to Addendum No. 2 which addresses the revisions to the solicitation where the individual Components are concerned.
6. Domains differ for screening instruments for students based on grade level. The RFP lists multiple domains like Nonsense Words and Comprehension. For younger students, these domains aren't always included. Is it required that the screener address (include) each domain for each grade?
  - a. No, that was an exhaustive list and not all components are applicable to all grades.
7. In the background section, APS mentions that there are 5,000 adult education students. Are these students to be supported by the systems proposed?
  - a. The mention of the 5,000 adult education students in this section is not included in the intended user group of the Components required in this solicitation.
8. The RFP requests proposals to each of seven components. Is it the intention that proposals for each component be submitted as entirely separate proposals, with separate cover sheets, scopes of work, signed appendices, and fee schedules?

- a. Per Section I. Introduction to RFP 12FY19, Item B Offerors can submit a Proposal for one (1) or more of the Components. Offerors are required to check the box(es) on Title Page 4 confirming which Component(s) the Offeror is submitting a Proposal on behalf of.
9. When a company is responding to a multi-part proposal, it is important to consider the total scope of work to be undertaken, because much of the proposer's effort may be spread over one or more than one components. For example, connecting with APS's student information system for roster uploads in support of just one component may require nearly as much effort as it would be in support of all seven components. How should this situation and similar situations like it be handled in our proposals? How are we to deal with similar overlaps in our price proposals?
    - a. Appendix F – Fee Schedule is broken down by Component and allows Offerors to submit pricing for each element required to successfully implement its proposed Component(s) individually. Offerors interested in proposed on more than one Components should price their Proposal to effectively cover the efforts in providing one or more offered Component(s) under Contract.
  10. In V. Professional Learning and Product Support, A. 2. a. there is a statement that access to a phone or virtual "help disk" for teachers be available from 6:00 am to 6:00 pm. In XI. E. 3. it states that technical assistance should be available from 7:00 am to 4:00 pm. Are these statements inconsistent; if not, please explain?
    - a. The requirement is for 6:00 am to 6:00 pm. This inconsistency is addressed in Addendum No. 1.
  11. In VI. Reporting A. 3. Parent reports are requested. Is this for all Components, or only for some?
    - a. This requirement is for all Components.
  12. In the table in VII A. 1. it seems to indicate that the 2nd component, Benchmark Assessment is the only component that uses the student information system, Synergy Education Platform ("Synergy"), to build school, class, teacher, student rosters. How will the other components get this information?
    - a. The table in this Section indicates that it is mandatory for Component 2 to integrate with the Synergy. It is desirable for the remaining Components 1a, 1b, 1c, and 1d to integrate with Synergy as well, but not required. For Components that do not integrate with Synergy APS will explore using a manual import; however, Offerors should note that the Evaluation Criteria speaks to this capability.
  13. Can you please elaborate on X. Technical Requirements, C. "Support overlapping terms, staff assignments, and student enrollments; and?"
    - a. Overlapping terms refers to semesters or school years ending and starting wherein a student may be tasked with completing an assessment at the end of a semester and at the beginning of a new semester for the same course. Staff assignments are similar impacted in that teaching staff may be tasked with administering assessments across overlapping terms (semesters or school years).
  14. This is a very comprehensive assessment plan; Can APS supply the vendor names and the products which APS has been/is using to fulfil the various assessment functions until now? This information might help vendors in their proposals.
    - a. Currently APS Contracts with the following providers for the various components

<b>Component</b>	<b>Contractor of Record</b>
Component 1a – Universal Screening in Literacy K – 3	PALS
Component 1b – Universal Screening in Literacy 4 – 12	Grades 4 – 5 PALS Grades 6 – 9 Reading Inventory
Component 1c – Universal Screening in Mathematics K – 5	Grade 5 Math Inventory
Component 1d – Universal Screening in Mathematics 6 – Algebra II	Math Inventory

Component 2 – Benchmarking for the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) in all content areas	PowerSchool
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15. Looking at the Scope of Work descriptions for Component I, A. Universal Screening: We find these descriptions somewhat confusing. Reference is made to screening for grades K-12 for Literacy and to K-Algebra II for Mathematics. For Literacy, it appears that APS is looking for an instrument such as the PALS or DIBELS Assessment, as the descriptors given in the RFP are similar to those produced in the reports of those tests. (PALS has Assessments that range from PreK thru Grade 3. DIBELS seems to assess grades K-8.) On the other hand, the descriptors given for Mathematics are simply the same as the names of the mathematics strands used in Virginia's SOLs, with the addition of the names of three upper-level SOL courses. Additionally, screening assessments used at the lower elementary levels would be drastically different from those used in middle and high school for both Literacy and Mathematics. The middle and high school tests could be used for placement or screening in order to identify potential areas of need for individual students, regardless of their grade level. . Could APS please supply more details about what is desired for Components 1a and 1b and about how they would be used at different grades?
  - a. For universal screening in literacy, the aspects assessed will vary from grade to grade. For example, APS expects to see a focus on alphabetic knowledge in K-1 but not in grades 4-5. For math, yes APS is looking for it to not only screen for math proficiencies, but also go high enough for secondary teachers to use it. In Virginia, public schools don't refer to math K-12 because after Math 8 the public schools refer to the course by its name such as Algebra, Geometry etc.
16. Regarding the Minimum Qualifications on page 18 Section E, what if some of the project references we site are not of similar size/scale to the intended rollout for this RFP, but they are of similar nature to the intended rollout of this RFP, will those references be considered valid?
  - a. Yes, APS will consider this experience. Please refer to Addendum No. 2 for more details on the revised Minimum Qualifications.
17. Regarding Section III. Instructions to Offerors paragraph 7. Arlington County Business License, is that required for the Contractor?
  - a. Offerors are reminded to consult the Arlington County Business License Division, Office of the Commissioner of the Revenue at 703-228-3060 to confirm if the business they operate is subject to maintaining an Arlington County Business License.
18. Could APS please elaborate on what it expects based on Section 27. Copyright on page 32?
  - a. The requirement is as stated in this section. If an Offeror wishes to take exception to this provision it should state any exception in accordance with Section V.A. on page 22 and include it in Tab 5 of its Proposal.
19. Is it necessary for all insurance coverages to be held by the Offeror at the time of Proposal submission, or prior to Contract Award?
  - a. Each Offeror is required to review the insurance requirements section carefully with its insurance agent or broker prior to submitting a Proposal to ensure they can provide the specific coverage requirements and limits applicable to the solicitation. The Certificate of Insurance is not required at the time of proposal submission.
20. Regarding page 13 Section 11 paragraph B, what specific types of roles does APS want to have in the Component?
  - a. Traditionally APS offers each teacher their own unique login. There will be instances where there are multiple teachers per class and each teacher will need to have their own logins to allow them to access the Component independently. We will need school based roles that have access to all of the school data for coaches and administrators. Additionally, we will need district roles that have access to all of the data district wide.

21. Regarding page 12 Section IX. Paragraph C.1. “Provide universal screening, formative, summative, and progress monitoring options.” What is meant by “summative” as it is used here?
  - a. Summative can refer to teachers having access to an item back to create end of unit/chapter tests, finals etc.
22. Regarding page 13, Section X, Item E. “The proposed Component(s) must include the capability for data transfer from the APS Student Information System (Synergy) to the proposed Component(s) online system. Manual transfer of student information into the Component(s) is acceptable; however, automated nightly synchronization of student information into the Component(s) is preferred.” Who will the Offeror be working with to make the automated synchronization possible, APS staff or the vendor from Synergy?
  - a. The Contractor will work directly with APS Information Services staff to accomplish this.
23. For entering demographic information how would that work?
  - a. The demographic information resides in Synergy, and the transfer of such information would likely occur via a secure file transfer from APS to the Contractor as opposed to a directly provided by a teacher.
24. Will APS agree to remove item 27 from Appendix D and accept notice of cancellation from the contractor, in lieu of having to endorse our policy to have the insurer provide direct notice?
  - a. Item 27 does not dictate the source from whom the Notice of Cancellation originates, only that Notice be given in accordance with the timeline stated. Item 27 will not be removed from the requirement.
25. No mention is made of any effort to help students prepare for ACT or SAT testing. Is help for these preparations desired?
  - a. No not at this time.
26. Could you briefly discuss how APS is responding to the various new assessment initiatives from the VDOE: i.e., the Local Alternative Assessments such as the Grade 3 History, Grade 3 Science, Grade 5 Writing, US History I, and US History 2; the new writing testing model(s); and the recent emphasis on Performance Based Assessments. Do these relate to this RFP and is APS involved in any consortia with other divisions centered around these newly introduced approaches?
  - a. No, our content offices have already addressed assessment requirements through VDOE.
27. Regarding Section VI. Contract Terms and Conditions on page 25, The Contract with the successful Offeror (“Contractor”) will contain the following contract terms and conditions, with incomplete information to be added based upon the final negotiations between APS and the successful Offeror. Offerors who propose to use additional or modified language must include such language with their Proposal. If Offeror has additions or exceptions that it intends to include in its response, how should Offeror include them in the response?
  - a. Offerors should note these exceptions in accordance with Section V. A and include them in Tab 5 of its Proposal.
28. Regarding Section VI. Contract Terms and Conditions provisions 27. Copyright and 28. on page 32, Offeror is in the practice of licensing access to its assessment services to subscriber districts, instead of passing title to them. Please confirm that APS is interested in licensing access (in lieu of ownership) and if so, please clarify how Offeror should include licensing terms with its bid.
  - a. Offerors should note these exceptions in accordance with Section V. A and include them in Tab 5 of its Proposal.
29. Regarding Section VI. Contract Terms and Conditions provision 31. Data Security on page 33, The Contractor shall hold APS Information in the strictest confidence and comply with all applicable APS security and network resources policies as well as all local, state and federal laws or regulatory

requirements concerning data privacy and security. Please provide the APS policies referenced in this section or direct Offeror to the location on the APS website it can find them.

- a. [Policy I-9.2.5.1](#). Electronic Technologies Acceptable Use
- b. [Policy M-12](#) Technology – Networked Resources
- c. Policy Implementation Procedure ([PIP](#)) [I-9.2.5.1](#) [PIP-1](#) Electronic Technologies Acceptable Use
- d. Policy Implementation Procedure ([PIP](#)) [M-12](#) [PIP-5](#) Technology – Networked Resources

30. Regarding Section VI. Contract Terms and Conditions provision 38. Audit on page 36, APS or its authorized agents shall have full access to and the right to examine any of the above documents during this period and during the Initial Contract Term or any Renewal Contract Term. Please provide any further detail as to the type of audit Offeror [APS] proposes to perform pursuant to this section or any other section of the solicitation.
- a. No additional information can be provided on this item; however, historically APS has not invoked this provision on its Contractors. Offerors should note any exceptions to this provision in accordance with Section V. A and include them in Tab 5 of its Proposal.
31. Regarding Section IX. Appendix C pages 44-45 and Section XIII. Appendix G pages 51-53, Non-Disclosure and Data Security Agreement & Student Data Usage and Privacy Agreement, will the Offeror be permitted to negotiate the terms of these Appendices post-award or should any changes be made part of Offeror's exception and deviations.
- a. Offerors should note these exceptions in accordance with Section V. A and include them in Tab 5 of its Proposal.
32. Regarding Section XI. Appendix E, page 48, Sample Form Agreement, is the Offeror required to sign this as part of its Proposal? If so shall the Offeror reference its exceptions and deviations on this form?
- a. Offerors are not required to sign the Sample Form Agreement as part of its Proposal submission.
33. Regarding Section IV. E. Proposal Requirements, Format & Content on page 21, Tab 5: Trade Secrets or Proprietary Information: Offerors are to provide information on the data or other materials sought to be protected and state the reasons why protection is necessary or falls within the exceptions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act. If the Offeror plans to include confidential or proprietary information with its response, is it sufficient for the Offeror to merely included proprietary and confidential information as Tab 5 and mark such information with its response so that it is not released to the public, or is APS asking for a detailed explanation as to why the information is confidential or proprietary for each submission?
- a. Offerors are to submit a sufficiently detailed listing of the propriety and confidential elements of its Proposal in Tab 5 and a brief reason justifying why the information should be treated as proprietary and confidential. The inclusion of these elements in Tab 5 is not intended to preclude them from being displayed in other Tabs of the Proposal.
34. Regarding Section VI. Reporting on page 11, Parent reports that include the student's assessment results, growth, and recommendations for at home support. Does APS have specific formatting requirements for these parent reports, e.g. electronic?
- a. No, APS does not require a specific format. We would hope the parent reports are user friendly, provide an explanation of the results, and be available in both English and Spanish.
35. Regarding the Scope of Work, Section IX. Functional Requirements on page 12, Subsection C. Assessments point 1. Provide universal screening, formative, summative, and progress monitoring options. Is APS looking for a summative assessment in addition to the components listed in the RFP?
- a. No, we are looking for the Benchmark/Quarterly assessment system to include an item bank of questions aligned to the VA SOLS for teachers to create their own formative and summative assessments.

36. Regarding the Scope of Work, Section XI. Staff Training on page 13, Subsection B. The expectation is that all Users will be able to access and utilize all functions of the Component(s) as appropriate to their role, so differentiated access and permissions by role are required. Some staff roles in APS are unique, so flexibility to specify and structure customized role-based permission sets is required. What is APS looking to achieve with customized role-based permissions?
- a. Please see the response to number 21.