

**Department of Materials Management
Procurement Unit
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
45 W. Gude Drive, Suite 3100
Rockville, Maryland 20850**

January 11, 2021

NOTICE TO BIDDERS

The following are questions and responses regarding

RFP No. 4147.4 Office Supplies System Contract

Question 1: RFP Page 3, Section 3.3 (MCPS Business Hub Integration) states that "The successful vendor can only invoice MCPS for costs associated from the delivery of products ordered from the electronic punch-out catalog for the procurement of **office supplies**". Should vendors interpret this language to mean that any item shipped by the contracted vendor that is either excluded from the office supply contract and/or part of another County contract) furniture, AV equipment, printer supplies, computers, computer accessories, custodial equipment and supplies) will not be paid for by the County?

Answer: **The meaning is to alert the awardee that items will be requested to be restricted as some items may be offered in the punch-out catalog but cannot be purchased do to items being available under another contract. We would first confirm how an item that should have been restricted was indeed able to be purchased and may be returned for credit.**

Question 2: With regards to RFP Page 6, Section 8.1 (Complete Response Checklist), as a privately held Corporation all financial information regarding the Company is proprietary and confidential. As such, can the required annual fiscal report be submitted in hard copy format only and excluded from the electronic flash drive response, or is this information, for purposes of electronic submission, subject to the provisions of RFP sections 9.0 and 10.0 and a submission requirement of the electronic submission?

Answer: **This information is subject to the provisions of RFP Sections 9.0 and 10.0.**

Question 3: Are the criteria for award as listed on RFP Page 8, Sections 11.1, 11.2, 11.3, 11.4, and 11.5 listed in order of weight or importance? If not, what weight will each of the five listed individual criteria be given?

Answer: **No, the criteria is not listed in order of weight or importance. Any weight applied to the criteria is not disclosed.**

Question 4: Please elaborate on the process for submission of samples for bidding items other than those specified. Should those samples be submitted with the bid response or according to an alternate protocol, such as submission of samples after submission of RFP upon consideration by the County either for an award or for further negotiation for an award?

Answer: **If your item does not meet the specs of the requested item and will be considered an alternate, please note on the spreadsheet and you will be asked to submit if necessary after the RFP closes.**

Question 5: Are samples required for items proposed by bidder for Office Depot private label items? We ask because this is going to entail a lot of samples and a lot of items (the majority of the items on the 300-item list, in fact) if so, to the point where the County may consider the number of samples to be burdensome and/or cumbersome once you start getting into physical samples for things like folding tables. In the interest of time and simple logistical management, would the County accept as part of the bid submission in lieu of actual samples a link to our website for each item proposed that is not an exact match? Once in receipt of those links, the County could then ask for samples of items it still feels it needs to inspect in hand. This might help cut down on extraneous sampling on common everyday items of standard quality (rulers, rubber bands, etc.).

Answer: **Yes, a link to the webpage where the item may be found will suffice. If needed, a request will be made for the sample after the RFP closes.**

Question 6: RFP Pages 12 and 13 (Section 27.0) state that the usage for Work Sheet 1 items is taken from Calendar 2019 and that the estimated total annual sales for this contract is approximately \$1M. Could a more precise sales number for sales under this contract for calendar 2019 be provided?

Answer: **\$925,000 – 975,000**

Question 7: We have spent some time reviewing the contract documents relevant to 4147.3 posted online on the MCPS procurement site, and while we can find an awardee document, addenda to 4147.1 and 4147.3, the original 4147.3 bid document, and an award made to Office Depot on February 10, 2020, we cannot find anything in regards to either a bid tab for bid 4147.3 or current contract pricing related thereto. Can we access that information anywhere, and if not, can you please furnish it?

Answer: **No. Because this is an RFP and not a bid, a bid tab is not provided and the pricing is not published.**

Question 9: Do we need to submit a physical sample with our proposal for each item that we substitute?

Answer: **Please see response to question 4 & 5 above.**

Question 10: Would a private brand item be considered “like for like”?

Answer: **Yes, if the specs are the same as the requested item.**

Question 11: Since the RFP was released on December 22nd and the pre-bid meeting is not till January 12th. Can the due date be moved from January 22nd to January 29th? Requesting a one-week extension of the due date to January 29th.

Answer: **Unfortunately, we cannot extend the due date at this time.**

Question 12: Due to the current Covid environment and short time frame for the RFP: Can the requirement for hardcopies be waived and submissions be sent to MCPS electronically via email?

Answer: **No. The procurement unit is open for business daily and are able to accept deliveries.**

Question 13: Do you have a projected start date for this contract?

Answer: **April 13, 2021**

Question 14: Our company considers electronic signatures to be legally binding and requests MCPS approval to use in the proposals (hard copy or electronic if approved) we submit to MCPS. We reference E-SIGN Act is federal law passed in 2000.

Answer: **An eSignature is acceptable.**

Question 15: The RFP notes “redacted” copies: What does MCPS want redacted from these copies?

Answer: **You may redacted any information you deem confidential or proprietary in the event a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request is made of MCPS in regard to this RFP, the redacted version of the submission is what will be used in our response.**

Question 16: Regarding the MAPT Rider Clause:

- a. Are there other entities currently utilizing this MCPS contract?
- b. If yes, how many entities are using the contract and what is the total usage and sales volume for all entities currently utilizing this contract?

Answer: **MCPS is not aware of any other entity using this contract at this time. If another entity were to use this contract, they would enter into a separate agreement with the vendor.**

Question 17: There is no toner on the core bid list (bid sheet 1), but there is a section on bid list 2 for discount off list for Ink and Toner.

- a. Is there a separate contract for toner and, if so, how does MCPS procure its toner?
- b. What is the total spend on ink and toner on this contract?
- c. Does MCPS have an HP big deal?
- d. If yes, we are requesting to be granted access to the MCPS HP big deal.

Answer: **a. Yes. MCPS currently bridges a contract through the office of technology with Williamsville Central School District in New York.**
b. MCPS obtained board approval to spend up to \$200,000 for one year.
c. No
d. n/a

Question 18: Does MCPS utilize other toner brands (Lexmark, Dell, etc.)?
a. If yes, does MCPS have any special pricing/big deals with these manufacturers?
b. If yes, we are requesting to be granted access to any MCPS special pricing programs with any of these vendors.

Answer: Yes, but we do not have any special pricing or big deals with these manufacturers.

Question 19: Is the estimated expenditure noted on bid sheet 2 for all categories inclusive of all spend (i.e. inclusive of the spend for the items on bid sheet 1 and bid sheet 2 combined B) or does it only account for spend beyond the items on bid sheet 1?

Answer: Yes

Question 20: What was the total spend on this contract in each calendar year in 2018, 2019 and 2020?

Answer: This information will have to be provided as an addendum.

Question 21: What is the estimated spend on this contract in the next year?

Answer: Approximately \$1 million

Question 22: What percentage of the total annual spend comes from the items on Bid Sheet 1 and what percent comes from the items/categories on Bid Sheet 2?

Answer: Approximately 75%

Question 23: Can you provide, in excel format, a usage report for ALL items purchased under this contract for the past 12 months (1/1/2020 to 12/31/2020) and the previous year (1/1/19 to 12/31/2020) separately?

Answer: No. The information provided in the bid sheet provides the top 300 items purchased in 2019. That is all of the information that will be provided at this time.

Question 24: What is your average order size under this contract?
a. Having noted the bulk of the purchases are in May and June, could you provide the average order size for those two months as well as the average order size for the remaining 10 months?

Answer: \$45.00

a. The bulk in May and June is due to our early ordering process in preparation for the upcoming school year.

Question 25: We are a little unclear on the direction for populating discounts for the six (6) categories listed in bid sheet 2. On the spreadsheet, you are requesting discounts based on language stating, “Annual Volume increases to \$1.5 Million” and, “Annual Volume increases to \$3 Million”. But, it appears the estimated annual volume of this contract is \$1,000,000. In the event sales do not exceed \$1.5M: what happens then? As there is not a field to populate the discounts under 1.5M. Should there be a discount for sales up to 1.5M, sales between 1.5M to 3M and sales of 3M and up?

Answer: No. The estimated annual spend is \$1 million. However, if the sales were \$1.5 million, please provide the discount that would be offered. The same if the sales approached \$3 million.

Question 26: In your PDF DOC you reference “if sales exceed 1MM” not 1.5M Can you clarify this (see below):

- a. “Pricing Proposal (use Microsoft Excel). Provide a completed pricing sheet for the top 300 items provided in Bid Sheet 1 and provide a completed Bid Sheet 2 which outlines the available discount per category should the annual volume grow past an estimated \$1,000,000.”

Answer: Please see response to question 25.

Question 27: Would MCPS prefer to use a Vendor Cooperative with or without rebates or prefer the vendor to provide a customized pricing program.

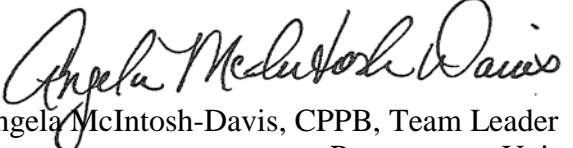
Answer: We are looking for a customized pricing program.

Question 28: Under 21.0 Provision for Price adjustment please clarify definition of Contractors Catalog. "All Prices Quoted in the Contractors Catalog will be firm for one year. Is this referring to the 300-item list.

Answer: Yes, in addition to any other items that are eligible for purchase that are not restricted.

Question 29: Will a WET signature be required, or will DocuSign be acceptable for the bid document submission?

Answer: DocuSign is acceptable.


Angela McIntosh-Davis, CPPB, Team Leader
Procurement Unit

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

Accepted By: _____
(Name & Title)

Name of Company: _____