

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

**September 7, 2021
NOTICE TO BIDDERS**

**The following are questions and responses regarding
RFP# 4407.2, Student Assessment and Data Analytics Platform**

Question 1: Is teaming (CTA) allowed?

Answer: Yes, teaming is allowed whether you are a GSA contractor or not, however, this award will be separate and apart from the GSA contract. It will be directly with the contractor(s) and MCPS.

Question 2: Is education /similar application experience mandatory; Will private sector experience be considered?

Answer: Private sector experience will be considered, if applicable.

Question 3: In the case of teaming, is teaming company experience considered or only prime experience?

Answer: If the contractors are teaming, MCPS would consider all experiences which should be spelled out in your submission as to what area a contractor would contribute and how their experience relates so that a full understanding and evaluation can be completed.

Question 4 (same as 8, 92, 98, 111): Is there any existing system /or an incumbent on this scope of work?

Answer: The current Student Assessment and Data Analytics Platform that MCPS is using is PowerSchool: Performance Matters.

Question 5 (same as 84): Any specific technology is preferred or proposed by MCPS? Or will the company proposing the cutting-edge relevant technology Or will be identified and considered?

Answer: MCPS would like a SQL database solution that is cloud based and transacting optimally across internet connections using standard internet browsers, such as Chrome. Performance speed and stability of the system is essential. MCPS users would like a system with the flexibility to enhance the system and reports/extracts.

Question 6: Will the local (Montgomery County) certified company be a set-aside or be given a priority?

Answer: No, we do not have set-asides nor do we give priority based on a local company.

Question 7: Any consideration in extending the due date?

Answer: At this time, we are not considering extending, however, this is up to the discretion of MCPS at a later date.

Question 8 (same as 4, 92, 98, 111) : Does the Montgomery County Public School system already use an LMS or assessment Platform? And if so, which one does the system currently use?

Answer: MCPS LMS system is Canvas. Currently MCPS uses PowerSchool: Performance Matters for the student assessment and data analytics.

Question 9: Is there a proctoring system in place currently?

Answer: GoGuardian is currently available to users.

Question 10: Can the District elaborate on their expectations of point #6: “standards-based analysis options for the purpose of driving customized and personalized professional development options to support student achievement through identified areas for improvement in Professional practice”

Answer: The platform will allow for users to systematically use student assessment data (curriculum standards, cluster, strand) to inform instructional needs and identify gaps to then access customized personalized professional learning pathways and/or modules.

Question 11: Are there any budget limitations for the project?

Answer: Please submit a competitive bid with your best price for the services requested.

Question 12 (same as 13,78): Is the associate item type a drag and drop item type?

Answer: An Associate item type requires students to drag and drop text objects to create matched associations between available answer choices.

Question 13 (same as 12,78): Is the associate item type a drag and drop item type?

Answer: An Associate item type requires students to drag and drop text objects to create matched associations between available answer choices.

Question 14: Will the District have its own helpdesk?

Answer: MCPS has an internal help desk system. Vendors are expected to describe what help/user support system they currently use/operate.

Question 15: Can the District give more information on the type of Interpreting that is needed for virtual training?

Answer: During virtual meetings or professional development for teachers, MCPS usually has a sign language interpreter as it is more accurate. Then the interpreter is pinned to the screen for the attendee that needs it.

Question 16: Is the District looking for ready-made assessments provided by the vendor or only item banks?

Answer: Currently, MCPS has agreements with third party vendors that provide ready-made assessments in our current platform. MCPS would like vendors to provide K - 12 standard-aligned item banks in various contents and languages that users can access for formative assessments.

Question 17: In the Platform Requirements tab, Row 132 states: The platform can support turning on/off the features in the portal by school. Can you provide examples of what features you would like to turn it on and off?

Answer: Examples: Schedule, grades, attendance

Question 18: In the Platform Requirements tab, Row 133 states; “the platform has the ability to upload student pictures. Are you interested in loading student ID pictures in the platform or is the platform to be a repository of student pictures?”

Answer: MCPS is seeking capability for yearly mass picture data loading and also district level control of uploading single and/or small group files of pictures when needed throughout the school year.

Question 19 (similar to 79): In the Data Transfers Analytics Report tab, Rows 20-23 state: The platform supports on-line reporting capabilities that track graduation requirements as determined by: Maryland State Department of Education, Montgomery County Board of Education and ESSA Reporting. What types of data is needed to track? Please provide an example if possible.

Answer: Some examples include, but are not limited to, course credits, state assessment scores, Maryland College and Career Readiness, and Career and Technology Education.

Question 20 (same as 20, 41, 74, 95): In the MTSS tab, Row 23 states: The platform supports predictive analytics reporting capabilities, what types of predictive analytics reporting are needed? Please provide an example if possible.

Answer: Capabilities that allow the platform to use current data to make predictions about future outcomes based on historical data and analytics techniques such as statistical modeling, ex. on track for graduation, on track for year’s growth, on track to meet growth targets, on track to meet Maryland College and Career Readiness standards, at-risk predictors.

Question 21: Several Column A cells appear blank in the Item Creation tab (Rows 21, 24, and 28) and training & accessibility of resources tab (row 18). However, clicking on each cell reveals text. Are these rows supposed to be blank or are answers required?

Answer: Attachment I has been re-formatted. When downloading, make sure the cells are formatted for ‘wrap text’ and expanded. This will allow all text to show in each cell.

Question 22: On page 10, the second sentence states: All offerors submitting a proposal shall include evidence that they maintain a permanent place of business. Can you clarify what is acceptable evidence and documentation?

Answer: Yes, please provide a physical address of the place of business.

Question 23: Are we allowed to use an electronic signature for the signing authority in the Original Submission?

Answer: Yes

Question 24 (same as 49): Can you clarify: The cost proposal must include a detailed proposal for up to a five (3) year term starting with the 2021-2022 school year. Does this mean you'd like to see a three-year contract with years 4 and 5 as optional? How many years of pricing would you like to be added?

Answer: Initial three-year term with two, optional 1-year extensions totaling 5 years.

Question 25: Professional Development Pricing: Are you wanting just general costs for our different PD options? We will include general pricing for our services, but in terms of the quote would you like the proposed number of sessions added to the pricing on that quote even if that part is negotiable based on Montgomery County School's implementation plan?

Answer: Vendor should submit a proposal that includes estimated costs designed based on current MCPS staff and student population size. Vendor should include those costs and detailed professional development options typically associated with initial contract implementation (such as the proposed number of sessions and method of delivery) as well as cost estimates associated with other professional development.

Question 26: Can you clarify if you would like to report on different school calendars that contain for example different start and end dates or completely different calendar types?

Answer: Currently MCPS has a summer school schedule calendar, traditional school calendar, and innovative school calendar (year-round). Platform should allow data migration, data entry, and data reporting for these types of concurrent school calendars.

Question 27: Can you clarify if you would like reporting to include concurrent enrollments or distinguish between primary and concurrent enrollment?

Answer: MCPS is seeking both primary school and concurrent enrollment reporting.

Question 28 (Same as 79): Can you clarify if you would like to include links within the platform to launch external reports or create links of reports created from the platform?

Answer: Both capabilities are needed in the assessment and data management system.

Question 29 (same as 98): Can you clarify as to what type of specific MTSS and/or RTI data you would like to enter or upload?

Answer: MCPS has an expanded vision of using the data platform to look at intervention data centrally, school wide, and drilled down to the student level. MTSS and/or RTI data should have the ability to create intervention groups using platform filter capabilities (student names, grades), formative and diagnostic data (points), baseline and target goals, attendance, and anecdotal notes. The data should also have the ability to link platform data and migrate data from third-party platforms to the intervention reports.

Question 30 (Similar to Q103): Does MCPS use a specific Data Warehouse product currently? Or, an in-house developed solution? Could you provide some detail on the Data Warehouse you'd like to send data to and it's data import options? (EdFi, CSV via SFTP, API, etc.)

Answer: MCPS has an in-house developed Data Warehouse. We prefer tab delimited data files with SFTP use for data transfers. Data is exported in the following formats: text, tab-delimited, excel, and CSV formats, and API integrations.

Question 31 (similar to Q34& Q35, Q44): Is there a specific item bank you currently are using that you would like to continue using? Or will any item bank that meets these requirements be acceptable?

Answer: MCPS currently has agreements with Great Minds-Eureka Math, Learn Zillion, and CenterPoint. MCPS is also interested in K - 12 standard-aligned item banks in various contents the vendor can provide. Multiple languages for items is also preferred.

Question 32 (similar to Q9): Are you currently using a proctoring solution you would like integrated?

Answer: GoGuardian is currently available to users.

Question 33: Do you need a support person physically located in MD or someone familiar with MD? Is this support technical vs instructional/strategic support or both?

Answer: MCPS values a high level of customer service relations for both technical and implementation support. It will be ideal to have a representative physically located in MD, however it is not required as long as the same high level of support can be accomplished remotely. Expertise with large district implementation, and knowledgeable about local, Maryland State Department of Education, and national requirements is a must.

Question 34 (similar to Q31& Q35, Q44): Is Montgomery County looking for content beyond Item Banks? Are they also interested in pre-made formative and benchmark assessments aligned to their standards?

Answer: MCPS currently has agreements with Great Minds-Eureka Math, Learn Zillion, and CenterPoint. MCPS is also interested in K - 12 standard-aligned item banks in various contents the vendor can provide. Multiple languages for items is also preferred.

Question 35 (similar to Q31 & Q34, Q44): The RFP states that “The platform's Item bank contains a minimum of 10,000 items that are searchable and aligned to National and state standards including Maryland College and Career Readiness Standards? Can you please provide more information on the common core Items banks? Is this part of your Must have list?

Answer: MCPS currently has agreements with Great Minds-Eureka Math, Learn Zillion, and CenterPoint. MCPS is also interested in K - 12 standard-aligned item banks in various contents the vendor can provide. Multiple languages for items is also preferred.

Question 36: Have you received a Demo from other vendors and if yes, can you release the name the vendors?

Answer: No

Question 37: How many users will need to access the system?

Answer: Currently there are over 20,000 MCPS staff and over 160,000 students who will need access to this platform. While the current platform does allow parent access, at this time parents do not utilize this function in the current platform.

Question 38: Are all the user's internal users or are some of them external partners and customers? If some are external, can you describe how they would use the system?

Answer: Currently, external partners and customers do not have direct access to the student assessment and data analytics platform.

Question 39: What platform/environment is the “MCPS Data Warehouse”? (section 3.1.f.e)

Answer: MCPS Data Warehouse is SQL based and currently it is on SQL Server 2017.

Question 40: What is meant by “Item statistic analysis”? (section 3.1.g.v.)

Answer: The platform has the capability to analyze individual items in detail (ex. standard, difficulty, choice distribution, P-value, discrimination value, etc.) using student performance data for items that are created in the platform.

Question 41(similar to 20,74, 95): Can you define “Predictive analytics reporting capability”? (section 3.1.g. viii.)

Answer: Capabilities that allow the platform to use current data to make predictions about future outcomes based on historical data and analytics techniques such as statistical modeling, on track for graduation, on track for year's growth, on track to meet growth targets, on track to meet Maryland College and Career Readiness standards, and at-risk for course failure predictors.

Question 42: How would MCPS envision leveraging a scan-sheet/hybrid assessment workflow ("Various test formats: Online, scan sheet, hybrid")? (section 3.1.i.d.)

Answer: Tests created in the platform that allow for scan sheets or online testing would also have the capability for direct teacher score entry in the platform. Rationale: if moving from an in-person environment to virtual or for student accessibility requirements.

Question 43: Can you clarify what "distractor analysis" may entail? (section 3.1.j.e.)

Answer: All possible answer choices are displayed with the percentage of students who selected each response. Distractor analysis is connected to item analysis in an assessment and allows for the opportunity to understand, for example, how many times each distractor is selected. With item statistics, it is the item discrimination range provided indicating the effectiveness of distractors and pinpoints possible misfits.

Question 44 (same as 31, 34, 35): Can MCPS provide an example "Available standard-based/common core item banks"? (section 3.1.j.f.)

Answer: MCPS currently has agreements with Great Minds-Eureka Math, Learn Zillion, and CenterPoint. MCPS is also interested in K - 12 standard-aligned item banks in various contents the vendor can provide. Multiple languages for items is also preferred.

Question 45: Will MCPS be able to provide the "National, state, and local standards"? (section 3.1.m.)

Answer: Yes.

Question 46 (same as 33 & 86): Can a dedicated Account Manager reside outside of the state of Maryland? (section 3.1.p.)

Answer: MCPS values a high level of customer service relations for both technical and implementation support. It will be ideal to have a representative physically located in MD, however it is not required as long as the same high level of support can be accomplished remotely. Expertise with large district implementation, and knowledgeable about local, Maryland State Department of Education, and national requirements is a must.

Question 47: What platform/environment does the “MCPS Student Information System” operate on? (section 3.2.a.)

Answer: MCPS Student Information System is a vendor-based product on a cloud-based platform.

Question 48: Is the “Instructional Data Management platform” the name for the platform that will be implemented as a result of this RFP? (section 3.2.d)

Answer: *Instructional Data Management Platform* and *Student Assessment and Data Analytics Platform* are terms used by MCPS as descriptors for our internal communication.

Question 49 (same as 24): Would MCPS prefer a proposal for a five year, or three-year, term? (section 3.3)

Answer: Initial three-year term with two, optional 1-year extensions totaling 5 years.

Question 50: Is the desire for all students to have a login/authentication?

Answer: Yes, through single sign on.

Question 51 (same as 53): What might their expected level of activity be? (page/report “reads”)

Answer: The platform/product should be able to support a large district such as MCPS (staff and student count).

Question 52 (same as 50): Is the desire for all Montgomery County Public School employees to have a login/authentication?

Answer: Yes, through single sign on.

Question 53 (same as #51): What might their expected level of activity be (page/report “reads”)?

Answer: The platform/product should be able to support a large district such as MCPS (staff and student count).

Question 54: Is the intent to replace the current LMS system, or simply interface with it?

Answer: MCPS is seeking a centralized student assessment and data analytics platform at this time. MCPS would like all systems to have the ability to interface.

Question 55: Will the awarded platform be used to deliver tests/assessments, or be an “orchestration” layer to consolidate/report on the results?

Answer: The expectation is the platform will be used to administer assessments, provide data analytics, and function as a centralized student data depository.

Question 56(same as #8): What is the current LMS system?

Answer: Canvas, by Instructure, Inc.

Question 57: What might an example assessment be?

Answer: This question is not clear. MCPS currently has district developed and teacher created items and assessments in the current platform. Items are aligned to standards. There are multiple item types available. Tests can be copied and used year to year.

Question 58(same as 83): What type of interface/workflow incorporating HP multi-function printers/ scanners are needed/envisioned?

Answer: Tests created in the platform that allow for scan sheets or online testing would also have the capability for users to scan/upload assessments to the student assessment and data analytic platform. The platform/product will need to be able to integrate with HP Multifunction printers (see question 83 for list of HP products).

Question 59 (similar to #75): Regarding language translation – will there be builders needing to have the platform functionality in different languages or more intended for users to interact in various languages?

Answer: The platform should have the ability to change text from English to another language for any student facing parts of the platform (ex. testing experience). Examples are item type templates and any hard-coded language that is part of the student testing experience. This is different from having a system or tool that translates the English text to another language in real time.

Question 60: Article 5 – references county and school board policies with a link to them. In reviewing the link, I couldn't tell what policies they were trying to capture. Can they clarify the specific policies?

Answer: As stated in Article 5, the contractor shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and county laws and regulations to include but is not limited to the Board of Education Policy ACA, *Nondiscrimination, Equity, and Cultural Proficiency* (“Board Policy ACA”), which prohibits discrimination based on actual or perceived personal characteristics, including race, ethnicity, color, ancestry, national origin, religion, immigration status, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, family/parental status, marital status, age, physical or mental disability, poverty and socioeconomic status, language, or other legally or constitutionally protected attributes or affiliations.

Question 61: What other documents can be provided instead of the financials?

Answer: Please provide any documentation that can show your company's financial stability and capability to service a contract if awarded.

Question 62: Are the five spaces for Company Name & Address, Contact Person, and Phone Number on page 14 of the RFP for our references?

Answer: Yes

Question 6: In the “Complete Response must include:” section on page 16 of the RFP please clarify what is meant by a “Separate overview of the vendor’s product and services as well as a statement explaining their alignment with MCPS curriculum standards” can this be submitted as an executive summary?

Answer: No.

Question 64 (same as 73, 105): In the table under 7.0 Format of Response, System Interface Integrations, it says, “the proposal shall address in generic terms how the provider solutions interfaces with other systems, and specifically reference the systems listed in Section 2.1.” Please clarify what is meant by Section 2.1 and what systems it references.

Answer: MCPS currently uses Edupoint: Synergy (SIS), Instructure: Canvas, and PowerSchool: Performance Matters, SQL-based MCPS Data Warehouse, Go-Guardian proctoring system. Vendors should list all systems that their product interface and their ability to customize to MCPS current systems.

Question 65: Will you accept digital signatures for the proposal or do the forms/attachments and proposal need to be signed in ink?

Answer: Digital signatures are acceptable

Question 66: Does MCPS have a budget (initial, ongoing) for this RFP?

Answer: MCPS does not have this information available to share.

Question 67: Would MCPS consider extending the question deadline by one week to allow vendors more time to and consider all of the requirements and ensure we can provide the most complete proposal in response to your RFP?

Answer: The questions will be reviewed during the pre-proposal conference at which time further clarification or additional questions can be asked and answered.

Question 68: Which languages does MCPS require for item creation? Which languages does MCPS require for the assessment creation platform? Additionally, there is a requirement for seven languages to be supported under the Parent Portal. Which seven languages are required for the parent portal?

Answer: Currently MCPS has World Language Immersion schools. In addition to English, MCPS is seeking capability to create items and assessments in the following languages: French, Spanish, and Chinese. While the current platform does allow parent access, at this time parents do not utilize this function in the current platform. Vendors should provide a list of languages currently available.

Question 69: Is the district interested in self-directed e-learning that would be housed for staff in your Learning Management System? If so, what Learning Management System is used for staff professional learning?

Answer: In addition to self-directed e-learning, MCPS would prefer to have options for in-person, synchronous and asynchronous learning. MCPS uses Canvas for staff professional development courses.

Question: 70: Can you please provide an estimate of how many staff members will need to be trained by role/function (eg. 20 central office staff, 150 building-level leaders?)

Answer: MCPS has approximately 24,000 staff. The staff groups that will need to be trained are approximately 16,000 school-based staff and 1,000 district level staff.

Question 71: Does the district prefer a train-the-trainer approach?

Answer: MCPS has a team dedicated to support the implementation of the student assessment and data analytics platform. This team will need to be directly trained on the usage and functions of the platform/product. Concurrently, there will be additional train-the-trainer sessions from the vendor in collaboration with the MCPS implementation team to selected school and district staff.

Question 72: Is there a preference for either onsite or virtual training?

Answer: MCPS prefers onsite training. However, given the ever-changing impact of the pandemic, the default preference will be synchronous training and where appropriate self-directed e-learning or asynchronous training.

Question 73 (same as 64, 105): On page 2 of the RFP, in section 1.0 Intent, MCPS indicates the platform must offer “compatibility with existing student data set formats.” Can you identify what assessment system MCPS is currently using? Also, can you explain what specific formats you are referring to?

Answer: MCPS currently uses Edupoint: Synergy (SIS), Canvas, and PowerSchool: Performance Matters, SQL-based MCPS Data Warehouse, Go-Guardian proctoring system. Vendors should list all systems that their product interface and their ability to customize to MCPS current systems.

Question 74 (same as 20, 41, 95): On page 4 of the RFP, under 3.1(g).b.viii, can you give some examples of the data points for which you would like “predictive analytics reporting capability”?

Answer: Capabilities that allow the platform to use current data to make predictions about future outcomes based on historical data and analytics techniques such as statistical modeling, ex. on track for graduation, on track for year’s growth, on track to meet growth targets, on track to meet Maryland College and Career Readiness standards, or at-risk for course failure predictors.

Question 75: On page 4 of the RFP, under 3.1(i).c, can you elaborate in what way the system would need to “limit us Created assessments”? Would this limit on the number, or type, or something else?

Answer: The platform should allow district administrators to locally control which users can create or edit items and/or assessments in the platform.

Question 76 (same as 58): On page 4 of the RFP, under 3.1(j).k, can you give an example of how you’d like the system to “change hard coded item text to other languages”? Does that mean to provide machine translation of items?

Answer: The platform should have the ability to change text from English to another language for any student facing parts of the platform (ex. testing experience). Examples are item type templates and any hard coded language that is part of the student testing experience. This is different from having a system or tool that translates the English text to another language in real time.

Question 77: On page 5 of the RFP, under 3.1(k).i, can you elaborate on the requirement to “limit student feedback option at the test level”? Does this mean feedback from students or to students? And limit in what regard? The amount of feedback?

Answer: Platform has the ability for local control in limiting/setting/or allowing feedback to students on assessments administered at the item and assessment level in the platform.

Question 78 (same as #12, 13): On page 5 of the RFP, under 3.1(l) can you provide an example or description of the “Associate” item type you seek to support?

Answer: An Associate item type requires students to drag and drop text objects to create matched associations between available answer choices.

Question 79 (similar to 19): On page 5 of the RFP under 3.1.n, MCPS indicates that the platform must have "online reporting capabilities that track graduation requirements as determined by the Maryland State Department of Education, Montgomery County Board of Education and ESSA reporting." Can you clarify what type of reporting MCPS needs at the board level?

Answer: Some examples, but are not limited to, course credits, state assessment scores, College and Career Readiness, and Career and Technology Education.

Question 80: On page 6 of the RFP, in section 3.1.p.c, MCPS indicates a requirement for a "24/7 live remote help desk"? For most vendors, this will have significant cost implications. Is MCPS open to other technical support. Strategies vendors have used to great success with other large customers? Will excluding 24/7 live remote help desk from a proposal be considered non-compliant?

Answer: The proposal should include your best and existing approach to providing support to clients during work and off hours. MCPS values high levels of customer service relations for both technical and implementation support. Since MCPS is seeking a digital online platform, users will access this platform during work and off hours.

Question 81(Same as 28): On page 7 of the RFP, under 3.1(u).c, can you explain if "links that launch external reports" means placing links in the assessment system that launch external reports, or the ability to have links in external systems that launch reports from the assessment system?

Answer: Both capabilities are needed in the assessment and data management system.

Question 82 (same as 24,48): On page 7 of the RFP, under 3.3 Pricing, it states "proposal for up to a five (3) year term..." In section 4.0 "three (3) years" is mentioned as the contract term. Shall we assume 3 years is the correct initial term?

Answer: Initial three-year term with two, 1-year extensions totaling 5 years

Question 83 (referenced on 58): On page 7 of the RFP, in section 3.2.b, MCPS indicates that the platform must be compatible with "HP Multi- Function Printer." Can you please provide which model(s) of HP MFPs the District is currently using?

Answer: M681 Color Floorstanding, M635 Mono Floorstanding, M578 Color mid-size, 577 Color mod-size, 632 Mono Floorstanding, M680 Color floorstanding, 4345 Mono Floorstanding, 4540 Color Floorstanding, 527 Mono mid-size, M528 Color mod-size, M575 Color mid-size, 3035 Mono mid-size, 3530 Mid Color, M283 Small Color, M281 Small Color, M227 Small Mono, and M277 Small Color.

Question 84 (same as 5): On page 9 of the RFP, in section 3.3 Pricing, for the MCPS Hosted Option, can MCPS provide the current hosting architecture in the district as well as how you currently manage disaster recovery, scaling load balancing, security, etc.?

Answer: MCPS prefers a SQL-database solution that is cloud-based. Application must be written to transact optimally across internet connection and work with standard browsers and devices.

Question 85: On page 13 of the RFP, in the table 7.0 Format of Response, in the row titled "References", MCPS indicates that the "proposal must list all current school district clients." As a private organization, we value the privacy of our clients, and many of our clients are confidential. As such we do not share lists. Will providing the five (5) references requested satisfy MCPS's requirement for references or will this be considered non-compliant?

Answer: Please provide references of clients of comparable size. Five will suffice, however, if there are several that are public school districts, we would hope that those references can be shared.

Question 86: In Row 15 of the "Platform Requirements" tab of Attachment I, MCPS indicates that the platform must have a "workflow engine to allow for processes between external users, staff, students, and parents" Can clarify what type of answer you're seeking here? Do you require vendors to submit a workflow for your review?

Answer: Yes, please provide a workflow with submission. Only staff and students currently have access to the assessment and data analytics platform. While the current platform does allow parent access, at this time parents do not access the platform.

Question 87: In Row 19 of the "Platform Requirements" tab of Attachment I, MCPS indicates that the platform alerts based on data combinations." Can you please provide more information about the nature and function of these data mining tools? Who do you envision will use these tools?

Answer: Use of the data mining tools will vary based on staff role. MCPS should have local control to determine which data mining tools are assigned to users. These tools should allow users to sort, filter, color code data that can also be filtered by color, and add custom filter categories. Student Item and test performance reports that can also apply the same filters. Item and Test Statistical Analysis reports will be used to determine reliability and validity of assessments. Item analysis statistics includes, but is not limited to, item difficulty index, item discrimination index, and distractor analysis.

Question 88: In Row 28 of the "Platform Requirements" tab of Attachment I, MCPS indicates that it is seeking an established demo site/environment that allows users to simulate "a complete platform experience." Are you seeking a demo site/environment that has been set up for SFTP file transfers?

Answer: Yes, in addition to production, we would like to have a demonstration site and a training site.

Question 89 (same as 33,46): In Row 37 of the "Platform Requirements" tab of Attachment I, MCPS indicates that the platform must have "dedicated account manager(s) located in the state." Is a local account executive an acceptable alternative to an account manager living in the state?

Answer: MCPS values a high level of customer service relations for both technical and implementation support. It will be ideal to have a representative physically located in MD,

however it is not required as long as the same high level of support can be accomplished remotely. Expertise with large district implementation, and knowledgeable about local, Maryland State Department of Education, and national requirements is a must.

Question 90: In Row 45 of the "Platform Requirements" tab of Attachment I, MCPS indicates that the platform is required to have the ability "for secure Data Exports/Imports including feeds to and from other key platforms? Can you tell us where you plan to export the data to? Can you provide a list of all "other key platforms" we might be required to establish a connection to?

Answer: Answer: Azure MIM, Synergy Student Information System, MCPS SQL Data Warehouse, NWEA, and iReady. Assuming data exports are flat files (like CSVs), they can be exported anywhere.

Question 91: In Row 87 of the "Platform Requirements" tab of Attachment I, MCPS indicates that the platform must be able to integrate with the current SIS and LMS. Can you identify for vendors what SIS and LMS you are currently using?

Answer: Edupoint is the vendor for Synergy Student Information System and Instructure, Inc is the vendor for Canvas LMS.

Question 92 (same as 4, 8, 98, 111): In Row 88 of the "Platform Requirements" tab of Attachment I, MCPS indicates that the platform must be able to integrate with the current student assessment and data analytics platform. Can you identify for vendors what assessment and data analytics platform is currently in use?

Answer: The current student assessment and data analytics platform is PowerSchool: Performance Matters.

Question 93 (same as 94): Is it a requirement that the winning bidder supplies both the assessment platform and aligned assessment platform and aligned assessment items on the platform?

Answer: MCPS is seeking a centralized student assessment and data analytics platform at this time. MCPS is interested in K - 12 standard-aligned item banks in various contents the vendor can provide. Multiple languages for items is also preferred. Vendors should list the number of items in their current product/platform.

Question 94 (same as 93): Will submissions be considered for just the assessment platform aspect of the requirements with supply of assessment items from another procurement?

Answer: MCPS is seeking a centralized student assessment and data analytics platform at this time. MCPS is interested in K - 12 standard-aligned item banks in various contents the vendor can provide. Multiple languages for items is also preferred. Vendors should list the number of items in their current product/platform.

Question 95(same as 20, 41, 74): Part viii of requirement (g) mentions “Predictive Analytics Reporting Capability” for data and reporting would you provide additional details on what the district is looking for to help us better address the requirement?

Answer: Capabilities that allow the platform to use current data to make predictions about future outcomes based on historical data and analytics techniques such as statistical modeling, ex. on track for graduation, on track for year’s growth, on track to meet growth targets, on track to meet Maryland College and Career Readiness standards, at-risk predictors.

Question 96: Section 6.0 asks “Offerors shall include a list of all current school district clients.” Does that mean schools within the Montgomery County District? Or all clients globally? If the latter, would you accept a demonstrative list, or a list of clients of similar scope and size?

Answer: We would prefer a list of clients of similar scope and size.

Question 97: Is agreement to the MAPT Cooperative Rider Clause mandatory for award? Or can institutions sign at their own discretion?

Answer: You would be acknowledging that this is an option, however, if you entered into a contract with an entity on this list, the purpose is to bridge the contract that was competed through a formal process by MCPS. You and that entity would enter into your own contract.

Question 98 : The RFP describes functional requirements of what the future is to look like however, can you describe what your environment is today and why MCPS desires to move away from the environment instead of updated/enhancing the environment to meet those future requirements?

Answer: When a contract expires, MCPS then goes through a new RFP process for the next contract.

Question 90: As used in the RFP “item development”, can you please provide descriptions of any items beyond stem and distractor and the like.

Answer: Please see section 3.1(j) for a list of item creation description.

Question 100 (similar to Q31 & Q34 & 35): In follow-up to this Item Bank Requirement – does MCPS expect the awardee to provide content for the 10,000 items, and to pre-populate it, or simply have the capacity to hold that many items in the solution?

Answer: MCPS is interested in K - 12 standards-aligned item banks in various contents the vendor can provide. Multiple languages for items is also preferred. Vendors should list the number of items in their current product/platform.

Question 101 (similar to Q28): As it relates to MTSS and RTI, beyond the common elements and understanding in the Industry, does MCPS have an expanded vision and/or requirement to support a more robust MTSS and RTI that are unique to MCPS?

Answer: MCPS has an expanded vision of using the data platform to look at intervention data centrally, school wide, and drilled down to the student level. MTSS and/or RTI data should have the ability to create intervention groups using platform filter capabilities (student names, grades), formative and diagnostic data (points), baseline and target goals, attendance, and anecdotal notes. The data should also have the ability to link platform data and migrate data from third-party platforms to the intervention reports.

Question 102: As used in the RFP “scan form-based assessment”, with the changes of scan methodologies, can you describe your preferred scan methodology if any beyond the HP MFP?

Answer: Currently MCPS uses HP MFP. The expectation is the vendor would work to support any future hardware updates made by MCPS.

Question 103 (same as 30) (ADM will also add): As used in the RFP “historical data”, can you share how many years of data, current formats(s) volume of data and what service is currently being used to manage this data?

Answer: The current student assessment and data analytics platform houses student data from school year 2017 to present. Synergy is the current Student Information System. Data is exported in the following formats: text, tab-delimited, excel, and CSV formats, and API integrations.

Question 104: The RFP notes that the requirements shown within are extensive. Of these requirements, how many of them are implemented in your current environment today vs. those that are aspirational?

Answer: Many of the requirements listed are currently implemented in the current student assessment and data analytics platform. MCPS is always seeking to enhance users’ experience. Vendors should list which requirements are in their current product/platform.

Question 105: To better understand your entire environment, can you please share all components that our platform will be required to integrate with?

Answer: MCPS currently uses Edupoint: Synergy (SIS), Canvas, and PowerSchool: Performance Matters, SQL-based MCPS Data Warehouse, Go-Guardian proctoring system. Potentially MCPS will integrate with a test/test item vendor.

Question 106: Please provide details around your student information system.

Answer: MCPS uses Edupoint’s Synergy Student Information System. It is a SQL database product and is vendor hosted. MCPS uses the platform for student demographics, enrollment history, grades, discipline tracking, attendance tracking, etc. MCPS uses Synergy’s parent, student and administrator portals.

Question 107: Can MCPS provide a technical architecture diagram illustrating the authentication between the examination solution, google, and active directory (for outlook logins) for students and teachers?

Answer: MCPS cannot supply that at this time. MCPS utilizes both Active Directory (on prem and in the cloud) as well as Google authentication.

Question 108: The RFP references 167k students and 20k staff. What is your expectation for parent Logins? Are there any other personas that will need to access the system in an administrative governing, auditing manner?

Answer: Only staff and students have access to the assessment and data analytic platform. There is no auditing access needed.

Question 109: Please provide information on the system in which we are to build an SSO from.

Answer: MCPS uses Microsoft Azure and Google for students.

Question 110: In attachment 1, MCPS references “The platform shall provide single sign-on for product modules using any MCPS authentication services: Active Directory (LDAP), AD/LDS.” Can MCPS elaborate on the authentication methods being used currently in the county for students and parents? Is there a need to authenticate via Google classroom as well?

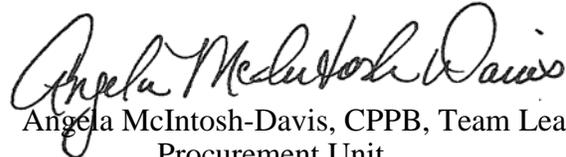
Answer: Students have Google accounts that are used to integrate with Canvas and Synergy.

Question 111 (same as 4, 8, 92, 98): Which student assessment platform is MCPS using currently?

Answer: The current Student Assessment and Data Analytics Platform that MCPS is using is PowerSchool: Performance Matters.

Question 112: Does MCPS have a vision that can be shared specific to the student User Interface (UI)?

Answer: User interfaces must be accessible by windows and apple-based devices, and industry standard browsers, such as Google and Edge. Students should be able to access the system from computers, Chromebooks and other devices using windows and apple operating systems. A system that meets ADA requirements for websites is preferable.


Angela McIntosh-Davis, CPPB, Team Leader
Procurement Unit

AMD

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: _____