

## Notice of Intent to Certify Sole Source

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**To:** Interested Parties

**From:** Craig P. Orgeron, Ph.D.

**CC:** ITS Project Number 45491

**Date:** February 11, 2020

**Re:** Sole Source Certification Number 4274 to provide SmarterProctoring™, RegisterBlast Test Center Scheduling, Licenses and Support for the Mississippi Community College Board's (MCCB) Mississippi Virtual Community College (MSVCC)

**Contact Name:** Jordan Barber

**Contact Phone Number:** 601-432-8005

**Contact E-mail Address:** [Jordan.Barber@its.ms.gov](mailto:Jordan.Barber@its.ms.gov)

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### Sole Source Certification Award Details

Regarding Information Technology Services (ITS) Sole Source Certification Number 4274 for SmarterProctoring™, RegisterBlast Test Center Scheduling, Licenses and Support for the Mississippi Community College Board's (MCCB) Mississippi Virtual Community College (MSVCC), please be advised that ITS intends to award SmarterServices™ LLC, as the sole source provider through March 31, 2023, in an amount not to exceed \$447,740.00. For an explanation regarding Mississippi state law, policy and procedures for sole source procurements, refer to Attachment C: Sole Source Procurement Overview.

### Sole Source Criteria

1. The product or services being purchased must perform a function for which no other product or source of services exist:

**SmarterProctoring, a Proctoring Process Management System™ provides a holistic, multi-modal proctoring system that facilitates the proctoring workflow for each modality for multiple institutions with varying processes. The Proctoring Process Management System allows an institution to use their own proctoring services (RegisterBlast testing center, proctoring professionals, and instructor as proctor). The customer's sole source certification request is included as Attachment A.**

2. The purchaser must be able to show specific business objectives that can be met only through the unique product or services:

**The SmarterProctoring, a Proctoring Process Management System (PPMS), is an online test management system that helps facilitate proctored exams. SmarterProctoring integrates with the Canvas Learning Management System (LMS) and allows students to schedule their exams with the community college testing services, approved online/virtual proctoring services, or approved proctors at other locations. SmarterProctoring allows for the scheduling of virtual proctoring appointments if authorized by the local community colleges. SmarterProctoring has the capacity to facilitate test center registration for cross-enrolled students (students taking courses at multiple institutions) within the MSVCC taking into consideration the process rules for both institutions.**

**SmarterProctoring:**

- **Integrates with the MSVCC's Learning Management System (LMS) which is currently Canvas**
- **Provides single sign on from the LMS**
- **Allows for scheduling reminders to be sent to students.**
- **Provides a variety of roles and functions (e.g., administrator, proctor, instructor, student)**
- **Provides robust reporting capabilities to include passwords, allowed materials, scheduling information, seats available, seats remaining, etc.**
- **Allows electronic check-in and check-out at testing centers**
- **Allows for scheduling of special events**

**RegisterBlast (test center scheduling) is specifically for MSVCC testing centers and allows testing administrators to manage how and when exams can be registered for. Test administrators are able to define test center locations, hours of operation, blackout dates, and testing seat count so that students may register.**

**The customer's sole source certification request is included as Attachment A.**

3. The product or services must be available only from the manufacturer and not through resellers who could submit competitive pricing for products or services:

**SmarterProctoring is the only Proctoring Process Management System on the market. It is the only service that was specifically designed to help an institution manage their proctoring across multiple proctoring modalities instead of just providing a singular proctoring solution. It is also the only service on the market that allows an institution to use their own proctoring services (testing centers, proctoring professionals, and instructor as proctor). SmarterServices™, LLC has certified that they are the sole source provider of the SmarterProctoring™ system. SmarterProctoring is the only Proctoring Management System that is integrated with RegisterBlast. RegisterBlast is the only test center management tool that is integrated into SmarterProctoring. The vendor's sole source certification letters are included as Attachment B.**

## Schedule

Task	Date
First Advertisement Date	02/11/20
Second Advertisement Date	02/18/20
Response Deadline From Objectors	02/26/20, at 3:00 P.M. Central Time
Notice of Award/No Award Posted	Not before 02/27/20

## Project Details

The Mississippi Virtual Community College (MSVCC) is a consortium of Mississippi's 15 community colleges that makes it possible for these colleges to leverage their distance learning resources, including faculty, courses, support services, and technology. Through MSVCC, students may take courses from community colleges anywhere in Mississippi while getting support services from a local college. All MSVCC courses require a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 3 proctored exams per semester. This requirement results in approximately 250,000 proctored exams per year. There are over 50 approved proctoring facilities within the state that must schedule these exams. There is no fee to take a proctored exam at one of the facilities and a student can select any site at which to take the exam.

In November 2015, ITS issued Notice of Intent to Certify Sole Source Number 3817 to purchase the Proctoring Process Management System (PPMS) through March 31, 2017, and received no objections. MCCB purchased the PPMS to manage the proctoring process across all testing centers. The system integrates with MCCB's LMS and manages all aspects of the proctoring process including instructor, proctor, and student functions.

In February 2017, ITS issued Notice of Intent to Certify Sole Source Number 3976 for Proctored Process Management and SmarterMeasure™ Learning Readiness Indicator licenses and support through March 31, 2020, and received no objections. However, and as an oversight, this sole source certification did not include years two and three of licensing and support.

In May 2017, ITS issued Notice of Intent to Certify Sole Source Number 3993 to provide Proctored Process Management, Test Center Scheduling, licenses, and support through March 31, 2020 and received no objections.

MCCB has spent-to-date a total of \$682,159.99 and wishes to extend the Smarter Proctoring, RegisterBlast Test Center Scheduling, licenses and support for three years (April 1, 2020 through March 31, 2023).

## Submission Instruction and Format of Response from Objecting Parties

Interested parties who have reason to believe that the SmarterProctoring, RegisterBlast Test Center Scheduling, Licenses and Support should not be certified as a sole source should provide information in the following format for the state to use in determining whether or not to proceed with awarding the Sole Source contract to SmarterServices™, LLC.

### 1.1 Interested Party Information

#### 1.1.1 Contact Name, Phone Number and email address

#### 1.1.2 Company Website URL, if applicable

1.2 Objection to Sole Source Certification

1.2.1 Interested parties must present specific objections to the Sole Source certification using the criteria listed above.

1.2.2 A statement regarding the Interested Party's capabilities as related to this Sole Source Certification Request.

1.3 Comments will be accepted at any time prior to Wednesday, February 26, 2020, at 3:00 p.m. (Central Time) to Jordan Barber at [Jordan.Barber@its.ms.gov](mailto:Jordan.Barber@its.ms.gov) or at the Mississippi Department of Information Technology Services, 3771 Eastwood Drive, Jackson, Mississippi 39211. Responses may be delivered by hand, via regular mail, overnight delivery, e-mail, or by fax. Fax number is (601) 713-6380. ITS WILL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR DELAYS IN THE DELIVERY OF RESPONSES. It is solely the responsibility of the Interested Parties that responses reach ITS on time. Interested Parties may contact Jordan Barber to verify the receipt of their Responses. Responses received after the deadline will be rejected.

1.4 Interested Party responses should include the following information:

**SUBMITTED IN RESPONSE TO**  
**Sole Source Certification No. 4274-45491**  
**Accepted until February 26, 2020 @ 3:00 p.m.,**  
**ATTENTION: Jordan Barber**

If you have any questions concerning the information above or if we can be of further assistance, please contact Jordan Barber at 601-432-8005 or via email at [Jordan.Barber@its.ms.gov](mailto:Jordan.Barber@its.ms.gov).

Attachment A: Customer Sole Source Certification Request

Attachment B: Vendor Correspondence

Attachment C: Sole Source Procurement Overview

## Attachment A



3771 Eastwood Drive  
Jackson, Mississippi 39211  
Phone 601-432-8000 Fax 601-713-6380

## Sole Source Certification Request

<b>Project Title: SmarterServices LLC Renewal</b>		<b>Stimulus (ARRA) Funds? Yes    No X</b>	
<b>Customer Contact Information</b>			
<b>Agency/Public University:</b> MS Community College Board <b>Address:</b> 3825 Ridgewood Road, E&R Center, Room 519 Jackson, MS 39211		<b>Contact Person:</b> Dr. Krista LeBrun <b>Phone:</b> 601-432-6106 <b>Fax:</b> <b>Email Address:</b> klebrun@mccb.edu	
<b>MAGIC Customer Number</b> (only required from state agencies): 7000000104		<b>Division/Dept:</b> <b>Handmail:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
<b>Project Summary Narrative Description of Project</b> (include details of original acquisition if applicable): This project is a request for 3 year renewal (amendment 7) to amend the original Software License & Application Service Provider Agreement executed on April 26, 2007 and amended on March 28, 2011, May 23, 2011, March 31, 2014, March 13, 2017, and June 12, 2017.			
<b>ITS Acquisition Approval (CP-1) should be effective through this date</b> (Please allow time for all vendor invoices to be paid): 03/31/2023			
<b>Cost Estimates Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Ongoing Costs</b>	<b>Time Constraints</b> Item Needed by: 0201/2020 Funds Expire:	<b>Anticipated Lifecycle of Products/System</b> (i.e. estimated years of effective use): 3 years
FY 20	\$144,960.00	<b>Discuss Funding</b> (e.g. how much of needed funding is definite; total project budget; any matching or other non state funds)  This project is funded utilizing MSVCC assessment fees.	
FY 21	\$149,230.00		
FY 22	\$153,550.00		
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$447,740.00</b>		
<b>Acquisition Details</b>			
<b>Items Requested</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Building Location(s)</b>
Register Blast Test Center Scheduling	3	15 Colleges and 39 testing centers	Online
Smarter Proctoring	3		Online
<b>Describe platform &amp; infrastructure</b> (connectivity; software/hardware platforms; utilization of State Data Center resources: mainframe, eGovernment portal, payment engine, document management, hosting). For equipment or hosting outside the State Data Center, attach justification: A multi-modal proctoring management system SmarterProctoring is a system for managing the workflow for all modalities of proctoring. The system manages the following workflow tasks for the following proctoring modalities. They system integrates within the consortium adopted LMS, Canvas by Instructure. This product allows for leveraging and sharing of resources for a seamless user experience.			
<b>Progress to Date:</b> What has been done related to this project, including any communication with ITS staff (data/voice/procurement/other)? A project request has been submitted to ITS.			
<b>Sole Source Certification</b> Note: Certification must be renewed for each revision or continuation of previous Sole Source Approvals.			
<b>Specific business requirements to be met by the requested products or services:</b> The SmarterProctoring, a Proctoring Process Management System (PPMS), is an online test management system that helps facilitate proctored exams. SmarterProctoring integrates with the Canvas Learning Management System (LMS) and allows students to schedule their exams with the community college testing services, approved online/virtual proctoring services, or approved proctors at other locations. SmarterProctoring allows for the scheduling of virtual proctoring appointments if authorized by the local community colleges. SmarterProctoring has the capacity to facilitate test center registration for cross-enrolled students (students taking courses at multiple institutions within the MSVCC taking into consideration the process rules for both institutions).  <b>SmarterProctoring:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrates with the MSVCC's Learning Management System (LMS) which is currently Canvas</li> <li>• Provides single sign on from the LMS</li> <li>• Allows for scheduling reminders to be sent to students.</li> <li>• Provides a variety of roles and functions (e.g., administrator, proctor, instructor, student)</li> <li>• Provides robust reporting capabilities to include passwords, allowed materials, scheduling information, seats available, seats remaining, etc.</li> <li>• Allows electronic check-in and check-out at testing centers</li> <li>• Allows for scheduling of special events</li> </ul>			





# SmarterServices™

FULL SPECTRUM ASSESSMENT SERVICES COMPANY

SmarterAssessments™ SmarterMeasure™ SmarterProctoring™ SmarterID™

January 15, 2020

Dr. Krista LeBrun  
Assistant Executive Director for eLearning & Instructional Technology  
Mississippi Community College Board  
3825 Ridgewood Road  
Jackson, MS 39211

Dr. LeBrun,

Please accept this letter as documentation of the fact that SmarterServices, LLC is the sole source provider of the SmarterProctoring™ Proctoring Process Management System™. SmarterProctoring is designed to be used for courses that require students to take at least one proctored exam. It is a system that allows an institution to manage and organize multiple modalities of proctoring (i.e. local testing centers, distant testing centers, proctoring professionals, instructor as proctor, attended virtual proctoring, unattended virtual proctoring, and record & review virtual proctoring). It is made available within the Learning Management System using LTI integration. From the within the LMS the instructor and/or administrator can access SmarterProctoring to set up their exams, see exception reports, see which students have scheduled, and more. Also, from within the LMS students can learn about all modes of proctoring which their school approves and act as a well-informed consumer selecting which modality is the best fit for them. The student may then register for all modes of proctoring and all communication between the student, instructor, proctor and school is securely contained and archived within SmarterProctoring.

To date, SmarterProctoring is the only Proctoring Process Management System on the market. It is the only service that was specifically designed to help an institution manage their proctoring across multiple proctoring modalities instead of just providing a singular proctoring solution. It is also the only service on the market that allows an institution to use their own proctoring services (testing centers, proctoring professionals, and instructor as proctor).

SmarterProctoring is the only Proctoring Management System that is integrated with RegisterBlast and RegisterBlast is the only test center management tool that is integrated into SmarterProctoring.

Kind Regards,

Dr. Mac Adkins, Founder  
Chief Academic Officer  
334 491 0416

[mac@smarterservices.com](mailto:mac@smarterservices.com)

[SmarterServices.com](http://SmarterServices.com) A Full-Spectrum Assessment Services Company

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## Attachment C

The acquisition of information technology for all state agencies and institutions of higher learning (IHLs) is within the scope of the ITS law, found in Mississippi Code Section 25-53-1, et seq., and the policies and procedures established in accordance with this statute, found in the ITS Procurement Handbook posted on the ITS website ([www.its.ms.gov](http://www.its.ms.gov)).

ITS enabling legislation requires that information technology hardware, software and services be acquired in a manner that insures the maximum of competition among all manufacturers and suppliers of such equipment and services. Accordingly, ITS promotes full and open competition through the issuance of open specifications and the objective evaluation of Interested Party proposals to determine the lowest and best offering to meet an agency's or public university's business requirements. True competition protects the integrity and credibility of purchasing in the public sector and is essential in providing best value and adequate contractual protection for the purchasing entity. In certain limited situations, information technology acquisitions may be sole-sourced.

ITS utilizes the provisions of Public Purchasing Law for Sole Source and Emergency procurements of information technology. Mississippi Public Purchasing Law (Mississippi Code Section 31-7-13) specifies that noncompetitive items available from one source only be exempted from bid requirements (sole-sourced). ITS statute, in Section 25-53-5 (p), permits ITS to utilize provisions in Public Purchasing Law or regulations, when applicable.

Per Public Purchasing law, acquisitions must meet the following criteria to be authorized as sole source:

1. The product or services being purchased must perform a function for which no other product or source of services exists,
2. The purchaser must be able to show specific business objectives that can be met only through the unique product or services, AND
3. The product or services must be available only from the manufacturer and NOT through resellers who could submit competitive pricing for the product or services. The vendor's correspondence regarding this criterion for this project is included as Attachment B.

By policy as documented in the ITS Procurement Handbook, acquisitions of IT services must include the following information to be authorized as sole source:

1. An explanation about why the amount to be expended is reasonable, and
2. An explanation regarding the efforts by the purchaser to obtain the best possible price.

For state agencies, approval of all technology purchases with a lifecycle cost of \$5,000 or less, including sole source purchases, has been delegated to the agency. The ITS Procurement Limits Policies for Agencies (a section in the ITS Procurement Handbook) require a minimum of two competitive written bids or proposals for technology purchases with a lifecycle cost over \$5,000 but not over \$50,000 (not over \$25,000 for projects funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act). Since, for single source items, the procuring agency will be unable to obtain two written bids, ITS must certify all sole source acquisitions of information technology with a lifecycle cost greater than \$5,000.

Institutions of Higher Learning (IHLs) or public universities have been delegated the authority to certify sole source procurements up to \$250,000 lifecycle cost under the ITS Procurement Limits Policies for IHLs (a section in the ITS Procurement Handbook). For the certification of sole source procurements delegated to the CIOs at public universities, the public university must follow ITS' Sole Source Procedure, including advertisement of the intent to award as sole source. Institutions certifying a sole source purchase must ensure the criteria listed above are met and documented in writing by the institution and the Interested

## Attachment C: Sole Source Procurement Overview



Party prior to certifying a product or service as sole source. Sole source documentation must be reviewed and approved by the IHL's CIO for any sole-source certification above \$5,000. All sole source documentation should be retained in the public university's procurement file. Sole source requests above \$250,000 lifecycle cost require ITS approval.

Other than the delegations outlined above, all sole source technology procurements must be certified by ITS. The customer's Sole Source Certification Request for this project is included as Attachment A.

ITS thoroughly reviews Sole Source Certification Requests, determining if competing products and/or services exist. If so, ITS conducts a competitive procurement. If ITS' review confirms the sole source, then a Sole Source advertisement is issued, giving other Interested Parties an opportunity to identify competing products and/or services. Based upon the results of the Sole Source advertisement, ITS will either certify the request as a sole source or conduct a competitive procurement.