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## Notice of Intent to Certify Sole Source

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**To:** Interested Parties  
**From:** Craig P. Orgeron, Ph.D.  
**CC:** ITS Project Number 45909  
**Date:** June 16, 2020  
**Re:** Sole Source Certification Number 4314 for Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS®) subscription services for the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE)  
**Contact Name:** Jay Woodruff  
**Contact Phone Number:** 601-432-8001  
**Contact E-mail Address:** [jay.woodruff@its.ms.gov](mailto:jay.woodruff@its.ms.gov)

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### Sole Source Certification Award Details

Regarding Information Technology Services (ITS) Sole Source Certification Number 4314 for the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE), please be advised that ITS intends to award Teachstone Training, Inc., as the sole source provider of CLASS® subscription services through June 30, 2023, in an amount not to exceed \$116,765.00. Please be advised that ITS will determine if additional training or licenses are within scope during the certification period and may increase the spending authority accordingly. Should Teachstone Training, Inc. change their name during this certification period, then ITS will determine if a recertification is necessary. 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:

**CLASS® is an online subscription service designed to combine CLASS® observation data with individualized professional development resources for teachers/coaches. This subscription provides a growing resource library that can be filtered by age level (infant, toddler, pre-K), dimension, language, or resource type including: 250 + videos, 100+ articles, 60+ courses, and 20+ PDFs to assist the teacher/coach to further develop their skills. This collection of information will give the MDE Office of Early Childhood the capability to produce reports on observation data, certifications, and professional development. The Office of Early Childhood has designated CLASS® as the quality observation measurement tool that will be**

used in the state in pre-kindergarten through third grade classrooms. 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 Mississippi Department of Education (MDE), through the Office of Elementary Education and Reading, is required to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the voluntary Pre-kindergarten (Pre-K) programs, as well as evaluate the effectiveness of each Early Learning Collaborative and each Pre-K provider for compliance with fiscal and program requirements. These school programs are annually evaluated to ensure effectiveness of services that determine rate of readiness and monitoring. Pre-K CLASS® assesses teachers through three domains: emotional support, classroom organization, and instructional support. These domains assess positive and negative climate, teacher sensitivity, regard for student perspective, behavior management, productivity, instructional learning formats, concept development, quality of feedback, and language modeling. The MDE uses CLASS® reliable staff to assess classrooms. 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 the product or services:

**Teachstone Training, Inc. is the sole provider of CLASS® training programs and associated certification. The services and training products are not sold through distributors. Teachstone Training, Inc. is also the sole provider of CLASS® printed and online materials. The Vendor's sole source certification letter is included as Attachment B.**

## Schedule

Task	Date
First Advertisement Date	06/16/20
Second Advertisement Date	06/23/20
Response Deadline From Objectors	06/30/20 at 3:00 P.M. Central Time
Notice of Award/No Award Posted	Not before 07/01/20

## Project Details

In July 2017, ITS issued Sole Source Certification Number 3972 for a Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS®) subscription services for the Mississippi Department of Education. No objections were received, and the award was made to Teachstone Training, LLC. A Software as a Service Agreement was executed in July 2017. The current spend to date is \$102,200.00. MDE plans to procure three additional years of CLASS® subscription services.

## Submission Instructions and Format of Response from Objecting Parties

Interested parties who have reason to believe that the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS®) subscription services 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 Teachstone Training, Inc.

### 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 Tuesday, June 30, 2020, at 3:00 p.m. (Central Time) to Jay Woodruff at [jay.woodruff@its.ms.gov](mailto:jay.woodruff@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 Jay Woodruff 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. 4314-45909  
Accepted until June 30, 2020 @ 3:00 p.m.,  
ATTENTION: Jay Woodruff**

If you have any questions concerning the information above or if we can be of further assistance, please contact Jay Woodruff at 601-432-8001 or via email at [jay.woodruff@its.ms.gov](mailto:jay.woodruff@its.ms.gov).

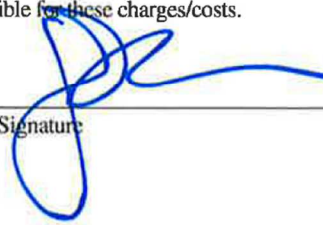
- Attachment A: Customer Sole Source Certification Request
- Attachment B: Vendor Correspondence
- Attachment C: Sole Source Procurement Overview

## Sole Source Certification Request

<b>Project Title: Teachstone Subscription Services</b>		<b>Stimulus (ARRA) Funds? Yes_ No_ <u>X</u></b>	
<b>Customer Contact Information</b>			
<b>Agency/Public University: MS Department of Education</b> Address: 359 North West Street Central High School Building Jackson, MS 39205		<b>Contact Person: Teresa Washington</b> <b>Phone: 601-359-2228</b> <b>Email Address: twashington@mdek12.org</b>	
<b>MAGIC Customer Number</b> (only required from state agencies): <b>7000000096</b>		<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): Schools providing services to Pre-k aged children will receive an annual evaluation to ensure the effectiveness of services on improving children's learning and well-being. Evaluation occurs for the Early Learning Collaboratives and other Pre-K classrooms (e.g. Title I, local-funded, tuition-based) in Mississippi public schools. Evaluation consists of two parts: rate of readiness and monitoring. The MDE will use CLASS® reliable staff to assess classrooms annually. Classrooms can provide MDE with their CLASS® observation ratings, if the assessment for the current teacher is not older than six weeks and was conducted by an external, reliable evaluator not a part of the collaborative/school district.			
<b>ITS Acquisition Approval (CP-1) should be effective through this date</b> (Please allow time for all vendor invoices to be paid):			
<b>Cost Estimates</b> <i>Fiscal Year</i>	<b>Initial Costs</b>	<b>Ongoing Costs</b>	<b>Time Constraints</b> Item Needed by: Funds Expire:
2020 -2023		\$116,765.00	<b>Anticipated Lifecycle of Products/System:</b> (i.e. estimated years of effective use): 3 years  <b>Discuss Funding</b> (e.g. how much of needed funding is definite; total project budget; any matching or other non-state funds)
<b>Total</b>		\$116,765.00	
<b>Acquisition Details</b>			
<b>Items Requested</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Building Location(s)</b>
<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 of the State Data Center, attach justification: Web-based solution, no infrastructure required			
<b>Progress to Date:</b> What has been done related to this project, including any communication with ITS staff (data/voice/procurement/other)?			
<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 Mississippi Department of Education (MDE), through the Office of Elementary Education and Reading, is required to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the voluntary Pre-kindergarten (Pre-K) programs, as well as evaluate the effectiveness of each Early Learning Collaborative and each Pre-K provider for compliance with fiscal and program requirements. These school programs are annually evaluated to ensure effectiveness of services that determine rate of readiness and monitoring. Pre-K CLASS® assesses teachers through three domains: emotional support, classroom organization, and instructional support. These domains assess positive and negative climate, teacher sensitivity, regard for student perspective, behavior management, productivity, instructional learning formats, concept development, quality of feedback, and language modeling. The MDE uses CLASS® reliable staff to assess classrooms.			
<b>Explain why these products or services are the only ones that can meet your needs</b> (include unique features/special functionality): CLASS® is an online subscription service designed to combine CLASS® observation data with individualized professional development resources for teachers/coaches. This subscription provides a growing resource library that can be filtered by age level (infant, toddler, pre-K), dimension, language, or resource type including: 250+ videos, 100+ articles, 60+ courses, and 20+ PDFs to assist the teacher/coach to further develop their skills. This collection of information will give the MDE Office of Early Childhood the capability to produce reports on observation data, certifications, and professional development. The Office of Early Childhood has designated CLASS® as the quality observation measurement tool that will be used in the state in pre-kindergarten through third grade classrooms.			
<b>Explain why the source is the only entity that can provide the products or services</b> (Include other products/vendors researched or evaluated): Teachstone Training, Inc. is the sole provider of CLASS® training programs and associated certification. The services and training products are not sold through distributors. Teachstone Training, Inc. is also the sole provider of CLASS® printed and online materials.			
<b>Vendor's Certification of Sole Source attached:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<b>Vendor's proposal submitted:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
<b>MAGIC Vendor Code(s)</b> Vendor must be in MAGIC before a CP-1 can be issued.			
<b>Place Order To</b> <b>Vendor Name: Teachstone Training, Inc.</b> <b>Vendor Address: 105 Monticello Avenue Suite 201</b> <b>Charlottesville, VA 22902</b>		<b>Remit To</b> <b>Vendor Name: Teachstone Training, Inc.</b> <b>Vendor Address: 105 Monticello Avenue Suite 201</b> <b>Charlottesville, VA 22902</b>	

Attachment A

By my signature, I certify that, to the best of my professional knowledge: the requested product or services are a sole source as outlined in the ITS Procurement Handbook, Rule 207.2:013-030 Procurement Types: Sole Source, and as outlined in Mississippi Code annotated Section 31-7-13. In addition, I acknowledge that there is a charge for ITS procurement services associated with this request which will be billed to the requestor by ITS and that my agency/public university is responsible for these charges/costs.

John Kraman/CIO                                            5/15/2020  
Name (Agency Head or Institution CIO)/ Title                      Signature                      Date



April 16, 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is to confirm that Teachstone Training, Inc. is the sole provider of CLASS® (Classroom Assessment Scoring System) training programs and associated certifications including, but not limited to, those listed below and described at [www.teachstone.com](http://www.teachstone.com). These services are not sold through distributors.

**CLASS® Training and Professional Development Programs (either delivered in-person or virtually/online):**

- CLASS® Observation Training and Recertification
- CLASS® Train-the-Trainer Program and Recertification
- MyTeachingPartner™ (MTP™)
- Making the Most of Classroom Interactions (MMCI)
- A CLASS® Primer for Teachers
- Instructional Support Essentials for Teachers
- Instructional Support Strategies for Coaches (ISS)
- Feedback Strategies for Coaches (ISS)
- Introduction to the CLASS®
- Coaching with myTeachstone
- CLASS® Double Coding services
- CLASS® Foundations for Teachers

**CLASS® ONLINE-ONLY Training and Professional Development Programs:**

- CLASS® Instructional Support Strategies for Coaches Online (ISS)
- CLASS® Calibration
- CLASS® Video Library
- CLASS® Feedback Strategies for Coaches Online (ISS)
- myTeachstone System
- Learn About Infant CLASS® Dimensions

Teachstone is the sole source provider of the authorized training/affiliate license program that allows individuals to provide licensed Teachstone training outside of their identified organization.

Teachstone is also the sole provider of CLASS® printed and online materials including, but not limited to, those listed in Attachment A and described at [www.teachstone.com](http://www.teachstone.com). This list is attached if applicable.

The services and products listed above are not sold through distributors and may include printed and online materials as part of the service. Current prices on Teachstone CLASS® services and products are found at [www.teachstone.com](http://www.teachstone.com).

Sincerely,

**TEACHSTONE, INC.**

Scott Guengerich  
Vice President of Finance and Administration

Learn More: 877.401.8007  
[learnmore@teachstone.com](mailto:learnmore@teachstone.com)

[www.teachstone.com](http://www.teachstone.com)

675 Peter Jefferson Parkway, Suite 400  
Charlottesville, VA 22911



**Attachment A: Printed Materials**

Teachstone is also the sole provider of the following CLASS® printed materials including, but not limited to, those listed below described at [www.teachstone.com](http://www.teachstone.com).

- CLASS® Dimensions Guide for K-3 in Spanish
- CLASS® Dimensions Guide for Upper Elementary in English
- CLASS® Dimensions Guide for Secondary in English
- CLASS® Manual for Upper Elementary in English
- CLASS® Manual for Secondary in English
- CLASS® Score Sheets for Upper Elementary in English
- CLASS® Score Sheets for Secondary in English
- CLASS® Justifications Booklet
- CLASS® Video Library Companion
- Affiliate CLASS® Observation Training Materials
- CLASS® Strategy Cards
- A CLASS® Primer for Teacher Dictionary

Learn More: 877.401.8007  
[learnmore@teachstone.com](mailto:learnmore@teachstone.com)

[www.teachstone.com](http://www.teachstone.com)

675 Peter Jefferson Parkway, Suite 400  
Charlottesville, VA 22911

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



## Attachment C

in writing by the institution and the Interested 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 requires 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.