
Notice of Intent to Certify Sole Source

To: Interested Parties
From: David C. Johnson
CC: ITS Project Number 46955
Date: January 24, 2023
Re: Sole Source Certification Number 4518 for Classroom Assessment Scoring System Products and Services for the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE)
Contact Name: Debbie Parker
Contact Phone Number: 601-432-8159
Contact E-mail Address: Debbie.Parker@its.ms.gov

Sole Source Certification Award Details

Regarding Information Technology Services (ITS) Sole Source Certification Number 4518 for the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE), please be advised that ITS intends to award Teachstone Training, Inc., as the sole source provider of Classroom Assessment Scoring System Products and Services through June 30, 2026, in an amount not to exceed \$348,037.30. 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 B: 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:

The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (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.

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.

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 A.

Schedule

Task	Date
First Advertisement Date	01/24/23
Second Advertisement Date	01/31/23
Response Deadline From Objectors	02/07/23 at 3:00 P.M. Central Time
Notice of Award/No Award Posted	Not before 02/08/23

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 for 3 years. In July 2020, ITS issued Sole Source Certification Number 4314 for renewal of the subscription services for an additional 3 years and to add training materials. No objections were received, and an Amendment was made to the Software as a Service Agreement and executed through June 30, 2023. The current spend to date is \$218,965.00. MDE plans to procure three additional years of CLASS® subscription services and add training programs.

Submission Instructions and Format of Response from Objecting Parties

Interested parties who have reason to believe that the Classroom Assessment Scoring System Products and 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, February 7, 2023, at 3:00 p.m. (Central Time) to Debbie Parker at Debbie.Parker@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 Debbie Parker 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. 4518-46955
Accepted until February 7, 2023 @ 3:00 p.m.,
ATTENTION: Debbie Parker**

If you have any questions concerning the information above or if we can be of further assistance, please contact Debbie Parker at 601-432-8159 or via email at Debbie.Parker@its.ms.gov.

- Attachment A: Vendor Correspondence
- Attachment B: Sole Source Procurement Overview



October 6, 2022

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. These services are not sold through distributors.

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

- CLASS® Observer Certification
- CLASS® Affiliate Trainer Program and Certification
- CLASS® 1:1 Video Coaching
- CLASS® Group Coaching
- CLASS® Master Coaching
- A CLASS® Primer for Teachers
- CLASS® Instructional Support Essentials for Teachers
- Custom Events by Teachstone
- CLASS® Observation Support: Reducing Bias
- CLASS® Observation Support: Settings with Dual Language Learners
- Instructional Support Strategies for Coaches
- CLASS® Feedback Strategies for Coaches
- Coaching with myTeachstone
- CLASS® Double Coding
- CLASS® Foundations for Teachers
- Supporting Interactions in a Socially Distanced or Virtual Classroom
- Banking Time: Investing in Relationships
- Thinking & Thriving: Interactions for Early Learning
- CLASS® Support Kit Transfer-to-Practice Webinars
- Interactions at the Heart of Healing

CLASS® On-Line Training and Professional Development Programs:

- The myTeachstone System
- myTeachstone Direct Coaching
- myTeachstone Learning Resources
- CLASS® Primer for Teachers
- CLASS® Primer for Leaders
- CLASS® Observer Calibration
- CLASS® Video Library
- Interactions at the Heart of Healing
- CLASS® Foundations for Teachers
- CLASS® Environment Observation Training
- CLASS® Environment Overview for Educators

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. 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.

Sincerely,

TEACHSTONE, INC.

Scott Guengerich | Senior Vice President of Finance and Administration

Learn More: 877.401.8007
learnmore@teachstone.com
www.teachstone.com

675 Peter Jefferson Parkway, Suite
400 Charlottesville, VA 22911



Attachment B

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).

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 A.

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 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.

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.