

Attachment A

to

RFP No. 4542

Mississippi Department of Education

(MDE)

Kindergarten Readiness Assessment

Technical Requirements

ITS Project No. 47540

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I. GENERAL

A. How to Respond to this Section

1. Beginning with Item 10 in this section, label and respond to each outline point in this section as it is labeled in the RFP.
2. Offerors shall read and agree to all items in this RFP. Offerors should take exception to items in which they disagree.
3. The Offeror must respond with “WILL COMPLY” or “EXCEPTION” to each point in this section. **In addition, many items in this RFP require detailed and specific responses for additional information.** Failure to provide the information requested will result in the Offeror receiving a lower score for that item, or, at the State’s sole discretion, being subject to disqualification.
4. “WILL COMPLY” indicates that the Offeror can and will adhere to the requirement. This response specifies that an Offeror or Offeror’s proposed solution must comply with a specific item or must perform a certain task. Offerors should provide additional details as needed.
5. If the Offeror cannot respond with “WILL COMPLY”, then the Offeror must respond with “EXCEPTION”. (See Section V of RFP No. 4542 for additional instructions regarding Offeror exceptions.)
6. Where an outline point asks a question or requests information, the Offeror must respond with the specific answer or information requested.
7. In addition to the above, Offerors must provide explicit details as to the manner and degree to which the proposal meets or exceeds each specification.

B. General Overview and Background

8. The Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) Office of Student Assessment, issues this Request for Proposals (RFP) to solicit offers from qualified, experienced, responsible and financially sound Offerors to provide a Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA). Proposing Offerors must have the proven ability to perform all core services requested in this solicitation. A more detailed listing of services is contained within this RFP.
9. Passed during the 2013 legislative session, the Literacy-Based Promotion Act (LBPA) places an emphasis on grade-level reading skills, particularly as students’ progress from Kindergarten through Grade 3. State statute requires that the Mississippi Department of Education shall select an early literacy and numeracy screening assessment instrument or instruments to be used throughout the state in the screening of students in Kindergarten through Grade 3. (Mississippi Code § 37-23-16; Mississippi Code § 37-177-5) This RFP seeks to identify a qualified Offeror to administer a high-quality online assessment for Pre-K and Kindergarten students from an established company that has verified success in the areas of development quality, test delivery, scoring, and reporting.

II. FUNCTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

A. The Assessment

The successful Offeror will partner with the state to operationally implement the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment for Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten students beginning in the 2024-2025 academic school year starting in mid-July. MDE requires a 15–20-minute

computer adaptive assessment developed and aligned to the Science of Reading that must address early foundational skills which include Phonological Awareness, Phonemic Awareness, Alphabetic Principles, Print Concepts, and Early Numeracy Skills. The computer adaptive assessment should be read aloud to students, include embedded progress monitoring, and include a benchmark for the beginning of the year kindergarten and 4-year-old Pre-Kindergarten students, and an end of the year kindergarten and 4-year-old Pre-Kindergarten students.

The Offeror should include details of how the following requirements will be delivered:

10. Describe how the assessment aligns to the Science of Reading.
11. Accommodated versions of the assessment should be available for all students whose Individual Education Program (IEP), Language Service Plan (LSP), or 504 Plan require accommodations; and shall also include:
 - a. A large print online and paper version for students with disabilities who are sight impaired and require a large print assessment and will describe if any specific technology that will be required to take the assessment in a larger format.
 - b. A format for students with disabilities who are hearing impaired and describe the format that will be used.
 - c. An online and paper version of the alternate screener for Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten for students with significant cognitive disabilities (SCD). Optimally, the online screener should be adaptive. If an Alternate Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten for SCD students is not currently available, describe in detail the plan (with timeline) for its development, field testing, and implementation.
12. Support manuals for online and paper testing used with the test administration must be delivered by the Offeror. These include a *Test Coordinator Manual (TCM)*, *Test Administration Manual (TAM)*, *Report Interpretive Guide*, and *Read Aloud Script*. If the Offeror has samples, these should be included with the proposal (Vendor should designate a section at the end of the proposal for samples).
13. District and school training (face-to-face, virtual, recorded online webinars, and/or learning modules) and support for the assessment must be provided by the Offeror including technology, report explanation, platform usage, etc. The Offeror must describe how and when each of the training support tasks will be accomplished.
14. Categorized Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs) including percentile ranks are needed for both the KRA and the Alternate KRA. If Alternate PLDs are not currently available, describe in detail the plan (with timeline) for its development and implementation.
15. A description must be included how all assessments and progress monitoring will be processed and scored.
16. A plan is needed for how all tasks related to resolution of data errors and quality control will be accomplished.
17. Include a description of delivery and return procedures for paper-based materials that meet the requirements necessary to provide effective control and accounting of materials. Paper based versions of the assessment will only be needed for students who require accommodations.
18. Describe the cut scores for Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten for content domain and/or composite for which scores are reported.

19. A general description of the Offeror’s methods of scoring, data processing, reporting, and psychometric analysis for online and paper administration activities for the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment must be included.
20. A detailed plan must be included of how the psychometric analysis, research, and technical analysis activities will support the Mississippi State Board of Education’s (SBE) goals. The SBE goals can be found at <https://www.mdek12.org/MBE/StrategicPlan>.

B. Program Office Requirements

Offeror must indicate the proposed system's adherence to the following Mandatory requirements by responding to the following chart:

Requirement- Program Management, Training, Customer Support, and Reporting	Will Comply	Exception
a. Will assign a trained Program Coordinator who is solely dedicated to this project.		
b. Will track attendance and participation for all training and a copy of the final attendance/participation roster must be delivered to the designated K-3 Assessment Coordinator in the MDE/Office of Student Assessment within five (5) business days after the last date of the event.		
c. Shall work with the MDE staff detailing the content planned for training sessions prior to the delivery.		
d. Will provide a knowledgeable and appropriate representative to participate in biannual District Test Coordinator training in-person or virtually by creating a Microsoft® PowerPoint® presentation including program information and updates.		
e. Will provide a Help Desk and Technical Support Desk that will respond to e-mail or telephone queries from teachers and administrators, depending on area of inquiry during the hours of 7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Central Time (CT) on Monday-Friday during the operational test dates with a response time within one (1) business day or less.		
f. Will provide customer support for the installation and use of the online assessment software that includes phone accessible support personnel.		
g. Will provide a message system when customer service staff are not available to take a call, and their calls will be returned within one (1) business day or less.		
h. Shall notify the MDE of any communication with the field regarding urgent or sensitive issues.		

Requirement- Program Management, Training, Customer Support, and Reporting	Will Comply	Exception
i. Will have all written communication approved by the K-3 Assessment Coordinator before initiating e-mail communication to inform the district test coordinators of approaching deadlines, deliverables, and webinar information.		
j. Provide a “help” or “chat” function embedded in the assessment software and automated online or phone in support services.		
k. Will host weekly technology conference calls open to all district technology personnel and district test coordinators to discuss any tech-related questions or issues beginning two (2) weeks prior to the opening of the testing window and ending during the last week of the testing window.		
l. Will conduct bi-weekly status update meetings during the year (more frequently during the testing window) with MDE staff and provide data status updates by email daily during the testing window including number of students tested, percent of students tested, testing breakdown by district/school, etc.		
m. Will conduct a yearly planning meeting to create a project plan.		
n. Will work with the MDE to determine program topics pertinent for discussion at the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meetings. The offeror should plan for three (3) TAC meetings which will be conducted in Jackson, Mississippi each year. The offeror will assume all costs associated with sending appropriate representatives from their organization to these meetings. Additionally, representatives must be available for phone conferences with the TAC upon request from the MDE. The offeror does not pay for any costs other than for their own staff's participation in the meetings.		
o. Will send to the MDE a “Preliminary Missing Materials” report within 15-business days after the end of the testing window. A final report is due within 25-business days after the end of the testing window for each assessment.		

Requirement- Program Management, Training, Customer Support, and Reporting	Will Comply	Exception
<p>p. Will provide detailed call/e-mail logs which must be compiled into one (1) Microsoft Excel spreadsheet file and delivered to the designated K-3 Assessment Coordinator in the Office of Student Assessment within ten (10) business days after the last day of the operational test. Call/e-mail log information should include caller/e-mailer name, district, school, date and time of incoming call/email, summary of issue, resolution, and date and time of resolution. This electronic record shall be in a format (e.g., a database) so that the MDE may sort by district, school, date, etc. Among other information, this will allow the MDE to determine the frequency of issues that arise before, during, or after assessments. The electronic record will also be used to produce a frequently asked questions (FAQ) document and/or to inform future trainings.</p>		
<p>q. Will conduct bias, reliability, validity, usefulness studies and include the data from those studies in the technical reports submitted to the MDE. Validity studies and supporting psychometric analyses should be conducted annually and ongoing.</p>		
<p>r. The platform must have the capability to control a predetermined testing window (enable access and disable access) when the testing window closes.</p>		
<p>s. The Offeror must be flexible to meet Mississippi requirements and timelines to have the platform ready for testing.</p>		

C. Online Platform

The Offeror will provide a secure, online web-based testing site (portal) where student information is contained prior to and after testing. This platform is required for general education and special education Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten to utilize three (3) times a year (Beginning of the Year, Middle of the Year, and End of the Year) and to monitor progress as needed. The online assessment and platform must work with a variety of devices and their operating systems. Devices included, but not limited to, PCs, Macs, iPads, Chromebooks, Windows tablets, or other online devices that may be available to schools in the future, as well as modern web browsers, such as Edge, Chrome, and Safari.

21. The Offeror's state-level portal must communicate with Mississippi Student Information System (MSIS) and local district student information systems (Central Access SAMs and PowerSchool) as well as integration packages like Clever to enroll students and provide the rostering capability for Early Learning Collaborative (ELC) students and differentiate between ELC students, public Pre-K and State Invested Pre-K (SIP) Students. The MDE is in the process of modernizing the MSIS system, with a parallel year planned for SY 2023-24 and an official launch for SY 2024-25. To the extent possible, the Offeror's state-level portal must communicate directly with the modernized MSIS via API in near-real time to facilitate rostering and results delivery, and APIs must conform to the MDE's standard which is based on the

Common Education Data Standards (CEDs). Please explain how your system will meet this requirement.

22. The Offeror shall describe its procedures for ensuring that students take the assessment under the correct credentials using the appropriate name, log-in ID and password and describe the procedures in place to monitor each administration.
23. The Offeror shall describe the process used and evidence evaluated to demonstrate how the proposed system meets interoperability standards, specifically, the items as described within this RFP.
24. This platform will also function as an online, secure reporting site for multiple level users to access, download, and print district-level, school-level, and individual student-level reports that may include Lexile levels for each student. These reports should be archived in the platform for two (2) years. Please explain the capabilities of the platform to produce student results and reports for districts, schools, teachers, parents, and other audiences including a rate of readiness report, subdomain report (class and student level), and small grouping capabilities (instructional planning report).
25. The online platform must also produce state level results and reports for Kindergarten, Literacy Support Schools, Early Learning Collaboratives, Public Pre-K, State Invested Pre-K (SIP), and other legislative mandates. Provide an example of similar reports.
26. The Offeror shall describe in detail how it will assure that all items placed in its web-based test delivery system will appear on students' computer screens as intended for the variety of types of computers, operating systems, and connectivity.
27. The Offeror shall also describe its strategy for ensuring that new systems and all interfaces function properly when releasing new versions of any software application.
28. The Offeror must describe the extent to which its system currently meets the Accessible Portable Item Protocol (APIP) standards and specifications.
29. The Offeror shall discuss how the tools and accommodations accessed by the student during testing will be tracked as well as how student profiles will be created and/or uploaded to allow for appropriate accommodation options during testing.
30. The Offeror shall discuss the extent to which its web-based test delivery system will be compatible with third-party devices and software that allow accommodations to be offered to students with disabilities for accommodations that cannot be built into the Offeror's system.
31. Describe how alternate devices can be used with the test delivery interface to include alternate keyboard, alternate mouse, refreshable Braille displays, Braille note-takers, keyboard emulators, and alternative and augmentative communication devices. Based on the Offeror recommendation and input from the field, the MDE will determine what tools and accommodations will be provided, as well as which features can be turned on or off by students.
32. Describe how the Offeror's test delivery interface includes all information and resources required to make test items accessible for students with a variety of disabilities and special needs.
33. The Offeror shall discuss how its system responds to interrupted Internet services without the loss of data, including student responses.

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34. The Offeror shall describe the overall approach to security in its proposed system and all cyber security exceptions to state policies and standards in response to this RFP. Please describe challenges that the Offeror may encounter for meeting cyber security standards during this project and how those challenges can be identified and mitigated.
 35. The Offeror shall discuss the features of its system which prevent infiltration and describe the issues/challenges and any problems that arose in its history with online test administrations including the level of impact to school personnel, students, scores, and timeline for reporting. The description shall include the steps taken by the Offeror to resolve those issues.
 36. The Offeror's online data collection system must have a time-out or similar locking mechanism to prevent unauthorized access in the event that a student, while entering data, must immediately evacuate the area due to an emergency such as a fire or tornado. This must also include an auto-save feature in order for the student to resume where they left off when the emergency or the time-out occurred.
 37. The MDE will have access to and oversight of all aspects of online performance during the data collection windows and access to captured data after the data collection windows close. The Offeror will propose how this can be accomplished.
 38. The Offeror will ensure the reliability of information technology used in the transmission and function of computer-based assessments. Include a draft plan detailing the deployment and operation of information technology and contingencies for the failure of information technology systems. The Offeror must identify its metrics for system performance.
 39. The Offeror will provide the MDE with a detailed Infrastructure Plan, which will incorporate all components required to meet industry standard best practices, and at a minimum include the following: hardware; software; network; active directory services; database; caching capabilities; configuration; Offeror resources for implementation; timeline segment in accordance with the Project Plan; and testing and validation. The Offeror will review and update the Infrastructure Plan as needed throughout the project; however, the MDE will have final approval of the Infrastructure Plan and any modifications.
 40. The state desires for the system to be interoperable based on the standards being developed for the common state assessments. The technology system proposed with this project for delivery, scoring, reporting, banking etc. should comply with industry interoperability standards including the Common Educational Data Standards (CEDS) and the Assessment Interoperability Framework (AIF) (see: <https://ceds.ed.gov/aif.aspx>) Question and Test Interoperability (QTI) and Accessible Portable Item Protocol (APIP). The Offeror shall describe how they can work with MDE to ensure that the data submission will be efficient, accurate and interoperable with MDE data standards.
 41. The Offeror's system must provide real-time online testing status and statistics by school and district. This status will be available to the MDE and districts. (For example, number of students testing by district and school and total who have not started testing.) Daily status reports will be available for viewing on a dashboard, in the testing system, or emailed.

42. Describe how the Offeror’s system has the ability to collect test codes, accommodation codes, and other demographic information by administration for online assessments before, during, and after testing.

D. Functional/Technical Requirements

Offeror must indicate the proposed system's adherence to the following Mandatory requirements by responding to the following chart:

Requirement- Technology	Will Comply	Exception
a. Shall provide the MDE and selected technical advisors with a secure, password-protected, web-based system for the purposes of analyzing the assessment processes and the resultant data.		
b. Web-Based Online Test Delivery should conform to all required elements in the Accessible Portable Item Protocol (APIP) core standards in order to provide for seamless exchange of digital content and to allow for tagging of accessibility information.		
c. Must provide for delivery on wireless networks with comparable performance to wired networks. Documentation must support this performance comparability. Application must be delivered within a secure browser that restricts access to the desktop and Internet, based on the requirements of the MDE.		
d. The offeror’s online data collection system must have a time-out or similar locking mechanism to prevent unauthorized access in the event that a student, while entering data, must immediately evacuate the area due to an emergency such as a fire or tornado. This must also include an auto-save feature in order for the student to resume where they left off when the emergency or the time-out occurred.		
e. It is the expectation of the MDE that all students will be tested online except for students testing on paper for accommodation reasons.		
f. The offeror’s test delivery interface shall include all of the information and resources required to make a test item accessible for students with a variety of disabilities and special needs.		
g. Shall adhere to and meet the evolving expectations of industry standards in online accommodations (i.e. Question and Test Interoperability (QTI)).		
h. The online data collection system design must be flexible so that software modifications, database changes, and reporting requirements can be made efficiently and cost effectively.		
i. Must be prepared to support and update all releases of the platform.		

Requirement- Technology	Will Comply	Exception
j. The offeror's system must be able to communicate with local student information systems to upload student rosters or similar information from schools and districts and eventually the pre-ID data file provided by the MDE/OTSS. The offeror must explain how its system will accommodate for students who have moved in and out of a school or district since the rosters were created.		
k. The MDE shall have access to and oversight of all aspects of online performance during the data collection windows and access to captured data after the data collection windows close. The offeror shall propose how this can be accomplished.		
l. Must provide to the designated K-3 Assessment Coordinator in the Office of Student Assessment (OSA) state administrator access to the online platform and Early Learning Collaborative Coordinators (ELC) in the Office of Early Childhood must have designated access to ELCs.		
m. Shall ensure the reliability of information technology used in the transmission and function of computer-based assessments. The offeror shall provide a draft plan detailing the deployment and operation of information technology and contingencies for the failure of information technology systems. The offeror must identify its metrics for system performance.		
n. Shall always agree to maintain network system and application security that, at minimum, conform to current cyber security standards. The offeror must agree to document all cyber security expectations to the State of Mississippi Policies and Standards (Information Security and Data Privacy The Mississippi Department of Education (mdek12.org)) in response to this RFP. Special consideration must be made to ensure the security of Personally Identifiable Information (PII) stored or processed by the system.		
o. Mississippi does not have established minimum technology standards for schools within the state. Support from the offeror must include the following technical standards at a minimum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. The offeror must provide proof of Fed Ramp Low compliance. B. The offeror must encrypt data in transit and at rest. C. The offeror must meet Authenticator Assurance Level 1 from NIST Publication 800-63B D. The offeror must support modern web browsers including Chrome, Safari, and Edge. 		

Requirement- Technology	Will Comply	Exception
<p>p. The state desires for the system to be interoperable based on the standards being developed for the common state assessments. The technology system proposed with this project for delivery, scoring, reporting, banking etc. should comply with industry interoperability standards including the Common Educational Data Standards (CEDS) and the Assessment Interoperability Framework (AIF) (see: https://ceds.ed.gov/aif.aspx) Question and Test Interoperability (QTI) and Accessible Portable Item Protocol (APIP). The Offeror will work with MDE to ensure that the data submission will be efficient, accurate and interoperable with MDE data standards.</p>		
<p>q. The MDE must approve the online delivery system to be used for the online test including, but not limited to, a review of the KRA within the system, security of the system, validation procedures for students to participate in the online KRA, the school-/district-level management of the system, and the procedures in place by the offeror to monitor each administration.</p>		
<p>r. The offeror shall provide the MDE with a detailed Infrastructure Plan, which will incorporate all components required to meet industry standard best practices, and at a minimum include the following: hardware; software; network; active directory services; database; caching capabilities; configuration; offeror resources for implementation; timeline segment in accordance with the Project Plan; and testing and validation. The offeror shall review and update the Infrastructure Plan as needed throughout the project; however, the MDE shall have final approval of the Infrastructure Plan and any modifications.</p>		
<p>s. The offeror's system must show real-time online testing status and statistics by school and district. This status will be available to the MDE and districts. (For example, number of students testing by district and school and total who have not started testing.) Daily status reports shall be available for viewing on a dashboard, in the testing system, or emailed.</p>		
<p>t. The offeror's system shall have the ability to collect test codes, accommodation codes, and other demographic information by administration for online assessments before, during, and after testing.</p>		

Requirement- Technology	Will Comply	Exception
u. The offeror must demonstrate their online systems on site at the MDE in Jackson, Mississippi, at the offeror’s expense. The offeror will come on site and demonstrate their online test delivery systems to the MDE staff to enable said staff to understand what is being offered from a systems standpoint, what features and functionality have already been developed, and what features are yet to be developed. The offeror should address how the proposed system meets the interoperability criteria defined by the Common Educational Data Standards (CEDS) Assessment Interoperability Framework (AIF). https://ceds.ed.gov/aif.aspx .		

E. Procurement Goals and Objectives

- 43. The Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) must be a computer adaptive assessment aligned to the Science of Reading, be valid, reliable, and yield accurate results and be readily available for implementation.
- 44. The assessment will be given online in all Mississippi School Districts.
- 45. The successful Offeror will partner with the State to operationally create and implement the assessment beginning in the 2024-2025 academic school year. The Offeror must provide a detailed plan for development, implementation, and achievement that include the summary of the key requirements for the processes below.
- 46. All contract awards are at the discretion of the State Board of Education (SBE). The contract will be awarded for a project period up to five (5) years; four (4) years with a one (1) year option to renew the contract. Each year of the contract will be reviewed to ensure services will be continued annually and shall be contingent upon successful completion of the services in the preceding year’s contract, availability of funding and a performance-based evaluation.

F. Vendor Qualifications

The following minimum qualifications are mandatory. If, in the opinion of the MDE, the Offeror fails to prove that the proposing company meets any of these minimum qualifications, the proposal will be disqualified from further evaluation. It is the responsibility of the Offeror to submit a complete proposal on or before the submission deadline. The MDE expects to receive the same or better quality of work throughout the contract, including any extensions, as the examples that are provided in the proposal.

- 47. The Offeror must provide:
 - a. the total number of years in business and the company’s years of experience related to the scope of work ,

- b. the average number of employees for the past five (5) years,
 - c. the abilities, qualifications, and experiences of all persons who would be assigned to provide required services,
 - d. the resumes for the key personnel that will work on the program detailing their qualifications and experiences ,
 - e. the company's location(s), including any presence in Mississippi.
48. The Offeror shall provide all services directly related to this contract from an office(s) located in the United States. Indicate your agreement with this requirement and identify any locations outside the State of Mississippi in which you propose to provide the services described in this solicitation.
49. Awarded Offeror must agree to secure a performance bond for 100% of the awarded fiscal year contract amount or the total value of a multiple year contract for services. The performance bond shall not be waived or negotiated.
50. The Offeror must disclose any company restructurings, mergers, and acquisitions over the past three (3) years and/or any planned, future restructures or mergers.
51. The Offeror must ensure that major customer facing team members assigned to this project are able to communicate clearly in the English language both verbally and in written form.

G. Deliverables

MDE will manage vendor award timelines to ensure sufficient time is provided to meet the July 21, 2024 deliverable deadline for testing. The offeror shall be responsible for all tasks and deliverables required to complete the project as described in the Scope of Work. It is anticipated that this shall include but not be limited to the following:

Deliverable	Deliverable Date
State level platform review	Prior to July 15, 2024
State level platform approval	Prior to July 15, 2024
Kindergarten Readiness Assessment item examples review	Prior to July 15, 2024
Kindergarten Readiness Assessment item examples approval	Prior to July 15, 2024
Review and finalize manuals for online and paper testing (<i>Test Coordinator Manual (TCM), Test Administration Manual (TAM), Report Interpretive Guide, Read Aloud Script</i>)	On or before July 1 st each year
Technology survey to ensure minimum tech requirements and technology training	On or before July 1 st each year
State and District level Training	On or before July 15 th each year

Deliverable	Deliverable Date
Vendor uploads student data from student information systems	Starts approximately July 21 st each year
Paper test materials delivered to districts	The start date of each window
KRA Beginning of Year (BOY) test window (first 30 days of school by state law; each district has a different start date)	Starts approximately July 21 st each year
KRA Middle of Year (MOY) test window winter	December /January each year
KRA End of Year (EOY) test window	mid-March-April
Create 2-3 recorded webinars to post on the MDE site	May 1 st each year
Data file available to MDE for review	5 business days after the window closes
Final data file available to MDE	5 business days after MDE returns the corrected file
Final reports available to MDE	5 business days after the final data file is given to MDE
Invoice sent to MDE	October 30 th and June 10 th each year
Student Cumulative Record Label	No later than June 30th each year

Meeting Type	# of Annual Meetings	# of SEA Staff Attending	Vendor Attendance
Mississippi Technical Advisory Committee	Three (3) (April, August, and November in Jackson, Mississippi)	Open to MDE Personnel	Yes, if KRA is on the agenda (virtual meeting)

Planning Meeting	One (1) June/July – (virtual or face-to- face)	Eight (8) State Staff	Yes
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H. Other Requirements

52. Must include sample materials of the following in the response

- a. Features of the portal.
- b. Categorized Performance Level Descriptors to measure student abilities in determining intervention for review.
- c. Reports for districts, schools, teachers, parents, and other audiences including a rate of readiness report, subdomain report (class and student level), and small grouping capabilities for instructional planning. Student level reports must include Lexile levels.
- d. State level sample reports.
- e. Documentation to demonstrate alignment of the KRA to the Science of Reading and address early foundational skills including Phonological Awareness, Phonemic Awareness, Alphabetic Principles, Print Concepts, and Early Numeracy Skills.
- f. Documentation that reasonable and technically sound procedures are used to develop test items.
- g. Other beneficial training materials in their response such as e-learning modules and online tutorials for users. The state is interested in using technology to the best extent possible; therefore, other types of technology-based assistance for students and/or school personnel (such as training videos, online testing training, electronic materials, automated online practice tests, etc.) shall be proposed by the Offeror for delivery to schools.

I. Reports and Dashboards

53. Will provide Individual Student Report, Parent Report, and Teacher Report which must include (at a minimum) the scale score and proficiency level for each domain tested including Phonemic Awareness, Phonological Awareness, Alphabetic Principles, Print Concepts, and Early Numeric Skills.
54. Offeror will work with MDE to develop custom student reports in an understandable and uniform format and written in language that the parents and guardians can understand.
55. Offeror will ensure that all reports are accessible to parents, regardless of their disability or native language. Describe the format in which the reports will be provided to all parties in comparison to the alternate format.
56. The Offeror will describe levels of report access including state level, district level, school level and teacher level.
57. In accordance with MDE's retention schedule requirements, the Offeror portal must retain and make accessible all reports for 2 years.

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58. The Offeror will provide a Data File after each administration to the MDE in an agreed upon format.
 59. The Offeror will provide a state report after each administration of an assessment to the MDE in an agreed upon custom format.
 60. Portal must be capable of exporting reports into file formats including but not limited to PDF and MS Excel.

III. SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE

A. Customer Support

61. The Offeror must provide a continual, around the clock, manned network operating center (NOC) support and monitoring. This includes but is not limited to network monitoring and health performance, network availability, and network security reporting. These services must be offered within the continental United States.
62. Offeror must provide a toll-free telephone number for MDE staff to call and an always-accessible website for trouble reporting. All telephone customer support must originate in the Continental United States and all support staff must be able to communicate clearly in the English Language. In addition to live, telephone support, other acceptable formats for technical support are web-based live chat and email.
63. Offeror must disclose instances where a third party or sub-contractor is being used for any portion of customer support services, including the intake of reported problems.
64. Offeror must keep the appropriate MDE management and technical support staff updated on the status of trouble resolution.
65. Offeror agrees to provide adequate training for the effective access and use of support services as requested by the State.
66. Offeror agrees to provide always-updated documentation of all support processes.

B. Issue Tracking

67. The Offeror shall use an industry standard tracking system to thoroughly document issues and requests for MDE.
68. Describe how operational trouble issues are submitted, prioritized, tracked, and resolved.
69. Describe how software performance issues are submitted, prioritized, tracked, and resolved.
70. Describe how user support issues are requested, prioritized, tracked, and resolved.
71. Detail your escalation procedures for responding to trouble tickets, software performance, and user support issues.
72. The Offeror shall provide a customer portal for MDE to track help desk ticketing and incident resolution.
73. Details of MDE environments must be readily available to any authorized support personnel of the provider, including but not limited to architecture diagrams, network connectivity diagrams, service level agreements (SLA), contacts, backups, and monitoring alerts.
74. The Offeror must provide a monthly issue tracking report as defined by MDE. For example, the report must detail and comment on any open tickets at month's end, all

issues opened and closed within the past month, and other details as required by MDE.

75. For issue tracking, solution must be capable of on demand as well as auto-run reporting.

IV. SYSTEM/SOLUTION DESIGN

A. Data Management

76. Offeror shall not store or transfer State data outside of the United States. This includes backup data and disaster recovery locations. The Offeror will permit its personnel and contractors to access State data remotely only as required to provide technical support.
77. The MDE shall own the raw and final data generated through the contract awarded from this solicitation. The Offeror is not allowed to utilize data generated through any of the Mississippi assessments for its own purposes. Any usage of the data generated through activities related to this RFP may not be used for purposes outside this RFP without prior written approval from the data owners. MDE may choose to report the data in additional reporting layouts.

B. Liquidated Damages

78. The parties to this agreement recognize the importance of a timely and accurate assessment system for the MDE, districts, schools, students, and parents of students. The parties further agree that if nonperformance were to occur, it would be difficult to determine damages. Based on what the parties presently know, the parties agree that the amount of liquidated damages as set forth below are fair and reasonable and would not act as a penalty to the breaching party. MDE shall notify Contractor in writing of any claim for liquidated damages.

Parties agree to the following liquidated damages for Contractor's nonperformance:

- a. Interrupted or slowed test administration such as issues pertaining to outages and/or slowed responsiveness shall be assessed liquidated damages in an amount up to or equal to **\$10,000** per day not to exceed **7%** total value of the contract for the fiscal year in which the nonperformance occurs.
- b. Test content during administration such as issues with item rendering, item versioning, item selection/ordering shall be assessed liquidated damages in an amount up to or equal to \$5,000 per day not to exceed 5% total value of the contract for the fiscal year in which the nonperformance occurs.
- c. Test security such as unauthorized access and/or unauthorized exposure to assessment content shall be assessed liquidated damages in an amount up to or equal to 5% total value of the contract for the fiscal year in which the nonperformance occurs.
- d. Data privacy and/or security such as unauthorized access and/or unauthorized exposure of personal identifiable information of student, teacher, the MDE staff, or other individuals shall be assessed liquidated damages in an amount up to or equal to 5% total value of the contract for the fiscal year in which the nonperformance occurs.

- e. Unrecoverable data loss and/or corruption such as orphaned data, missing data and/or mis-linked data shall be assessed liquidated damages in an amount up to or equal to 7% total value of the contract for the fiscal year in which the nonperformance occurs.
- f. Score validity (after reports are released) such as inaccurate item scores, inaccurate scale scores, and/or inaccurate performance levels shall be assessed liquidated damages in an amount up to or equal to 7% total value of the contract for the fiscal year in which the nonperformance occurs.

79. The "Deliverables" pursuant to the table below shall be subject to liquidated damages of **\$10,000** per day per Deliverable if the Contractor fails to provide the deliverable by the deliverable date. If the MDE requests changes to the following deliverables that cause delays, the contractor shall be held harmless from the liquidated damages.

Deliverable	Deliverable Date
Review and finalize manuals for online and paper testing (<i>Test Coordinator Manual (TCM), Test Administration Manual (TAM), Report Interpretive Guide, Read Aloud Script</i>)	On or before July 15th each year
Technology setup to ensure minimum tech requirements and technology training	On or before July 15t each year
State and District level Training (virtual, recorded, etc.)	On or before July 15th each year
Vendor uploads student data from student information systems	On or before July 15th each year
KRA Beginning of Year (BOY) test window (first 30 days of school by state law; each district has a different start date)	Starts approximately July 21st each year
KRA Middle of Year (MOY) test window winter	December /January each year
KRA End of Year (EOY) test window	mid-March-April
Create 2-3 recorded webinars to post on the MDE site	May 1st each year
Data file available to MDE for review	5 business days after the window closes

Final data file available to MDE	5 business days after MDE returns the corrected file
Final reports available to MDE	5 business days after the final data file is given to MDE
Invoice sent to MDE	October 30th and June 10th each year
Student Cumulative Record Label	No later than June 30th each year

80. To the extent that Contractor's nonperformance is excused, liquidated damages shall not be assessed.

81. To the extent that failure to timely and correctly complete a key deliverable is caused by or would not have occurred but for acts or failures to act by the State, the MDE, Local Education Agency, or by actions of a third party outside the control of the parties, liquidated damages shall not be assessed.

82. In the event of complete failure of performance, the liquidated damages provisions shall not apply and MDE may pursue any other legal or equitable remedies available to it.