

Attachment A

to

RFP No. 4642

Mississippi Department of Education

Technical Requirements

Mississippi Academic Assessment
Program (MAAP) and Mississippi
Academic Assessment Program –
Alternate (MAAP-A)

ITS Project No. 48220

MAAP and MAAP-A

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I. General

A. How to Respond to This Section

1. Beginning with Item 17 in this section F, label and respond to each outlined point in Attachment A as it is described below.
2. The state is under the impression that Vendors have read and agree to all items in the RFP. Vendors shall take exception to items on which they disagree.
3. The Vendor must respond with "WILL COMPLY" or "EXCEPTION" to each point in this Attachment A. In addition, the items in this document require detailed and specific responses to substantiate and further explain Vendor's response. Failure to provide the information requested will result in the Vendor receiving a lower score for that item or, at the State's sole discretion, being subject to disqualification.
4. "WILL COMPLY" indicates that the Vendor shall and will adhere to the requirement. This response specifies that a Vendor or Vendor's proposed solution shall comply with a specific item or shall perform a certain task. Vendors shall provide additional details as needed.
5. If the Vendor cannot respond with "WILL COMPLY," then the Vendor shall respond with "EXCEPTION." (See RFP 4642, Section V, for additional instructions regarding Vendor exceptions.)
6. Where an outlined point asks a question or requests information, the Vendor shall respond with the specific answer or information requested.
7. In addition to the above, Vendors shall provide explicit details as to the manner and degree to which the proposal meets or exceeds each specification.
8. Vendor Qualifications, found in IV. Management Factors are **MANDATORY**. If the proposing Vendor fails to meet these minimum qualifications, the proposal will be disqualified. See pages 40 through 41 for the specific qualifications.
9. Additional Requirements: ITS acknowledges that the specifications within this RFP are not exhaustive. Rather, they reflect the known requirements that must be met by the proposed system. Vendors must specify, here, what additional components may be needed and are proposed in order to complete each configuration.

B. General Overview and Background

10. Mississippi Academic Assessment Program (MAAP)

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 Vendors to provide the assessments for the Mississippi Academic Assessment Program (MAAP) which includes English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics in Grades 3-8; Science Grade 5 and Grade 8; and End-of-Course (EOC) assessments in Algebra I, English II, Biology, and U.S. History. Proposing vendors shall have the proven ability to perform all core services requested in this solicitation.

Mississippi Academic Assessment Program - Alternate (MAAP-A)

The MDE is also soliciting competitive written proposals from qualified, experienced, responsible, and financially sound Vendors to provide the assessments for the Mississippi Academic Assessment Program - Alternate (MAAP-A) which includes Alternate English Language Arts (ELA) and Alternate Mathematics in Grades 3-8;

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Alternate Science Grade 5 and Grade 8; and End-of-Course (EOC) assessments in Alternate Algebra I, Alternate English II, Alternate Biology, and Alternate U.S. History. Vendors shall have the proven ability to perform all core services requested for this solicitation or oversee a subcontractor to provide these services for this solicitation.

11. Mississippi Academic Assessment Program (MAAP)

In accordance with the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965*, as amended by the *Every Student Succeeds Act*, and the *Code of Federal Regulations* (34 CFR 200.5(a)), the State will provide for an annual assessment of the MAAP Grades 3-8 in ELA, Mathematics, and Grade 5 and Grade 8 Science. The EOC assessments will be offered twice a year, once in fall and once in spring, for Algebra I, Biology, English II, and U.S. History. An assessment in MAAP-EOC U.S. History is a requirement for graduation per the Mississippi State Board of Education. These assessments are to be criterion-referenced assessments that allow Mississippi to be in full compliance with the requirements of federal legislation, including its flexibility waiver from ESEA.

Mississippi Academic Assessment Program - Alternate (MAAP-A)

Mississippi is required under the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)* of 1965, as amended by the *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)* of 2015, and the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* of 2004 (IDEA) to provide high-quality alternate assessments for students with significant cognitive disabilities (SCD). These alternate assessments shall be aligned to academic content standards that apply to SCD students in Reading, Writing, and Mathematics in Grades 3-8 and once in high school. They shall also align to content standards for Science in at least one (1) grade in each of the 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12 grade ranges.

This large-scale assessment work for both MAAP and MAAP-A is technical in nature and demands close attention to detail in psychometrics, test design, delivery, scoring, and reporting for the Mississippi school districts. This assessment must be legally defensible, and results will be reported to the United States Department of Education.

C. General Summary

12. The MAAP and MAAP-A will be delivered on an online web-based system that will efficiently deliver tests to all schools throughout the state of Mississippi. However, some students who require accommodations may need a paper version of the test as an accommodation.
13. The MAAP and MAAP-A will be online in the fall of 2025. The assessment shall work with various devices, such as a PC, Mac, iPad, Chromebook, Windows tablet, or other online devices used by Mississippi schools.
14. Successful Vendor will partner with the State to operationally create and implement the assessments beginning in the 2025-2026 academic school year.
15. The assessment results will be included in the Mississippi Statewide Accountability System; therefore, they shall be legally defensible, valid, and reliable.
16. Vendors shall demonstrate the ability to be flexible to meet Mississippi requirements and timelines.

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II. Functional Requirements

D. The Assessment – MAAP

The successful Vendor will partner with the State to operationally implement the MAAP and MAAP-A assessments for the 2025-2026 academic school year beginning July 2025.

MAAP – The Assessment

As described earlier, this RFP is to partner with a Vendor that will assist the State in the development and administration of MAAP. All grades and courses are completely aligned to the State's adoption of the Mississippi College and Career Readiness (MSCCR) Standards for English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies, and any updates or revisions to said standards. The standards for each subject may be found on the MDE website here: [2016 Mississippi CCRS for English Language Arts](#), [2016 Mississippi CCRS for Mathematics](#), [2018 Mississippi CCRS for Science Final \(mdek12.org\)](#); the standards for U.S. History may be found here: [2022 Mississippi CCRS for Social Studies \(mdek12.org\)](#).

Test forms for MAAP shall be constructed for the spring of 2026. A previously administered test may be used for fall 2025 MAAP-EOC assessments. Students who complete the English II, Algebra I, Biology and U.S. History courses at the end of the first semester and who are on a 4x4 block schedule in the fall will be given the EOC tests in the fall. Students who complete the course(s) on a year-long regular schedule or on a 4x4 block schedule in the spring will take the test during the spring April/May administration. Any students who need to re-test on the EOC may participate in any administration. Exact testing window dates will be discussed and planned with the successful Vendor.

MDE owns an item bank for the MAAP assessments that has been developed for the new standards. While this ELA, Math, Science, and History item bank will be available to the successful Vendor, the MDE expects that the selected Vendor will continue to develop items that may be field tested in spring 2026 to expand the bank. The MDE is also open to item sharing among other states if items are aligned to the Mississippi standards and are available for use. A combination of licensed/shared items along with custom MDE-developed items will also be considered.

Test forms shall meet the MAAP Blueprints. Blueprints may be found on the MDE Student Assessment website at the links provided below:

English Language Arts:

[ela blueprints updated2021 2022 final writingtimeupdate 0.pdf](#)

Mathematics: [math blueprints updated2021 2022 final.pdf](#)

Grade 5: [maap science grade 5 blueprint.pdf](#)

Grade 8: [maap science grade 8 blueprint.pdf](#)

Biology: [maap science biology blueprint.pdf](#)

U.S. History: [maap-eoc u.s. history blueprint.pdf](#)

If adjustments are made to the standards or the blueprints, a standard-setting may be needed during the life of the contract for this RFP. Provide estimates for this in the optional area of the budget sheets in case this is needed at any time during the contract.

The MAAP EOC assessments will be online in the fall of 2025. The online assessment shall work with a variety of devices such as PCs, Macs, iPads, Chromebooks, Windows tablets, or other online devices that may be available to schools in the future. Results from

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the assessments will be included in the Mississippi Statewide Accountability System; therefore, these assessments shall be legally defensible, valid, and reliable. Student results and reports will be needed for districts, schools, teachers, parents, and other audiences in an understandable and uniform format. District and school reports will be delivered online, with one (1) individual student report and student label being mailed to the districts, organized by school. Vendors shall demonstrate the ability to be flexible to meet Mississippi requirements and timelines.

Ideally, the successful vendor may use one (1) online platform to deliver both MAAP and MAAP-A assessments even if a subcontractor is used for MAAP-A content.

E. MAAP-A – The Assessment

The MAAP-A assessments are administered to students with significant cognitive disabilities (SCD) in the areas of English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science. The Mississippi Alternate Academic Achievement Standards are based on the Dynamic Learning Maps Essential Elements (DLM EE), with additional edits and clarifications to better support the needs of Mississippi teachers and students. Mississippi offers SCD students two (2) avenues for completing high school: (1) Certificate of Completion and (2) Alternate Diploma Option. The Alternate Diploma Option is for students with SCD, and the student shall pass the high school assessments for the MAAP-A. These tests are associated with Alternate English II, Alternate Algebra I, Alternate Biology, and Alternate U.S. History.

MAAP requirements will begin below with Item 17. MAAP-A requirements will begin on Pages 16-20 with Item 73.

F. MAAP: Test Development and Alignment to Standards

17. Provide one (1) online test for fall EOC assessments (Algebra, English II, Biology and U.S. History) and one (1) online test for spring Grades 3-8 ELA , mathematics, Grades 5 and 8 science and EOC assessments (Algebra, English II, Biology and U.S. History). The fall test form may be a previously used form provided no items have been released as practice/sample items or test security breach to the public.
18. Provide tests that are custom developed for content and structure as outlined in the MAAP Assessment Blueprint requirements found on the [MAAP Student Assessment](#) website (see pages 5-6 for links). Field-test items will be embedded in the test forms. All assessments will follow the item and test specification guidelines established by MDE with the successful Vendor.
19. Outline a plan for sufficient test form rotation to prevent over-exposure to both test forms and test items. For spring assessments, price the option of having one (1) core form that has different psychometric approved arrangements of core items for test security purposes. MDE requests to have these spiraled forms delivered randomly to each testing area.
20. Propose how or if test options could be randomly arranged on the online forms.
21. Propose an online test format to capture reliable and valid data for field test items.
22. In the test designs, the Vendor will provide guidance to MDE on accessibility and fairness of the assessments. The guidance will address the following issues:
 - a. Culture, race/ethnicity, gender;
 - b. Design issues for Students with Disabilities (SWDs) who have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or a 504 Plan;

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- c. Sign language format which may include an embedded video for online testers for read-aloud accommodation (optional price for the video);
 - d. Braille, non-contracted for Grades 3-8; contracted Braille for Grades 3-8 and EOC (MDE has had one case of non-contracted Braille in one grade for the past two years); and
 - e. Testing accommodations- See *Mississippi Accommodations Manual*, July 2022, located on the Student Assessment webpage on the MDE website: [Mississippi Testing Accommodations Manual \(mdek12.org\)](https://mdek12.org)
23. Accommodated versions of the assessment shall be available for all students whose Individual Education Program (IEP), Language Service Plan (LSP), or 504 Plan require accommodations and shall also include:
- a. An assessment form in braille and large print for students with visual disability who require a braille or large print assessment. Optimally, an online, refreshable braille online test is preferred for students who require a braille assessment. However, paper/tactile versions shall also be included in both contracted and non-contracted Braille format for grades 3-8. MDE is also open to other options for providing assessments for low-vision/non-vision students.
 - b. A paper version of the regular assessment for students with disabilities who cannot take a test on a computer or who are hearing impaired.
 - c. A read-aloud version of the online test using Text-to-Speech (TTS) technology and a read-aloud script for students with a disability who require an oral presentation using a human reader for the test items. The human reader script may be presented using paper or have an option for reading from an electronic device. Price both options.
 - d. Embedded speech to text for answer selection and dictation (Microphone required).
24. Develop tests in a manner that maximizes the participation of special population students (Students with Disabilities [SWDs] and English Learners [ELs]) such as, (a) speech to text for the writing section, (b) built in integrated bilingual word-to-word glossary for EL students, (c) embedded video sign language for online testers as read-aloud accommodation. Describe how the accommodations added do not interfere with the construct being measured.
25. Document and explain the quality assurance (QA) procedures for reviewing the development and revision of the test forms. All newly developed test forms shall go through a thorough internal review process by the vendor prior to sending to MDE for final approval.
- Information: The ELA tests are divided into two (2) sessions, Reading and Writing, which are passage-based. Students will be scored on each portion, but the two (2) test scores shall be merged for the overall score for accountability.
26. Propose solutions of how to include both long passages and shorter passages to measure the appropriate standards. Propose a method to set accommodation(s) separately for the two (2) sessions of the ELA/English II test (Reading and Writing). Include Lexile level information for ELA passages used on the assessments.
- Information: For the ELA assessments, the passages cannot be read to the students, but the items may be read except for Grade 3. Passing the Grade 3 reading test is

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required for promotion to Grade 4 based on the Performance Based Literacy Act (LBPA) passed during the 2013 legislative session.

However, MDE will require one form of ELA tests that can allow read-aloud for students who are new to blindness (accident, illness, etc.) Normally the ELA passages are not read to the students for the tests, but some students cannot use braille forms or braille technology to take the assessment if they have lost sight suddenly.

Information: Grade 3 reading session is taken early in the spring window and scored quickly for student feedback (preferably within two (2) weeks or less).

- a. Students who do not earn a passing score on the initial reading test will take retest one (1) before the end of the spring semester.
 - b. Students who do not earn a passing score on retest one (1) will go to a remedial reading program and take the final retest two (2) during June.
 - c. The final retest two (2) results shall be provided to the districts prior to July 20 so plans shall be made for promotion.
 - d. The Writing portion of the Grade 3 assessment is taken once (initial test) and will be merged with the initial reading portion for the accountability score.
27. Propose a solution for the Grade 3 reading assessments to ensure timely delivery of tests and scores for the grade 3 students.
 28. Propose a solution for online calculators use by students. For online mathematics and science assessments, students shall have access to an embedded calculator as a Universal Tool. The ability for students to toggle between TI products and Desmos will be preferred.
 - a. For Grades 6-7 math and Grade 8 science: Four (4) function TI-108 or <https://www.desmos.com/testing/mississippi>
 - b. For Grade 8 math or Biology: Scientific TI-30XS or <https://www.desmos.com/testing/mississippi>
 - c. For Algebra I: Graphing TI-84 CE <https://www.desmos.com/testing/mississippi>.
 29. Current Test Design for the MAAP tests are outlined in the chart below. The MDE is open to making changes (i.e., reduce number of items in all areas, reduce passages for ELA, add shorter scenarios for ELA to reduce reading load) to the current assessments, but changes may require standard setting.

Grade	# of Operational Items	# of Field Test Items	Writing Prompt	Total Items
ELA Grade 3	40	9	1	50
ELA Grade 4	40	9	1	50
ELA Grade 5	40	9	1	50
ELA Grade 6	50	10	1	61
ELA Grade 7	50	10	1	61
ELA Grade 8	50	10	1	61

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Grade	# of Operational Items	# of Field Test Items	Writing Prompt	Total Items
Math Grade 3	49	9	N/A	58
Math Grade 4	49	9	N/A	58
Math Grade 5	49	9	N/A	58
Math Grade 6	61	10	N/A	71
Math Grade 7	61	10	N/A	71
Math Grade 8	61	10	N/A	71
Science Grade 5	45	10	N/A	55
Science Grade 8	45	10	N/A	55
Algebra I	60	10	N/A	70
English II	50	10	1	61
Biology	55	10	N/A	65
U.S. History	55	10	N/A	65

30. Practice tests, both online and PDF versions for printing, are required. For cost purposes, include the costs for at least three (3) tests in each grade/subject and high school course. As an option, Price automated practice test scoring with a predicted score. MDE also needs Braille practice test for each grade/subject and course.
31. Mississippi does not have a benchmark test aligned to the statewide assessment but would like to offer one for the district use that is aligned to the standards and is comparable to the MAAP tests. Provide an optional price for the development and implementation of a MAAP benchmark assessment for all grades and subjects in the MAAP program. There will be three (3) tests per year for each benchmark. MDE will require these tests to be scored with results provided to the districts in a timely manner for remediation work.
32. Mississippi is interested in exploring a model of through-course assessment solutions within the next cycle of assessments. This will include developing smaller, modular, online assessments like the benchmark tests that will require administering these throughout the year to return results to educators more quickly. Include a brief description of experience and ability to provide this type of testing program for the future. Include in the description, potential cost differences from the traditional testing program that is being proposed in this RFP.

G. MAAP: Item Development

Information: For the purposes of this RFP, test development includes all the tasks necessary to develop assessments that are reliable, provide content-oriented evidence of validity for the high stakes assessment of schools, and are technically sound. Because of the high stakes nature of the Mississippi Statewide Assessment Program, it is essential that the assessments are legally defensible as well as reliable and valid. Item content review, bias review, and data review processes shall include Mississippi teachers. Mississippi is open to having a mixture of items proposed for this RFP. These items may be custom developed by the vendor/teachers or a combination; or the items may be

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licensed or shared for a secure item bank with other states. However, these shall match the standards and meet all cognitive requirements, and approved by Mississippi teachers for alignment, appropriateness, bias, and data reviews.

33. Develop items that align to the Mississippi standards/objectives. Items will be assigned a cognitive level (i.e., Depth of Knowledge (DOK) or other solution), be free of bias/sensitivity, and meet accessibility and universal design criteria.
34. Propose how to develop a variety of item types on the MAAP tests. These types may include multiple choice (MC) and technology-enhanced (TE). MC items may be traditional, with one (1) correct answer or with more than one (1) correct answer. TE items may require students to input responses but shall be machine-scored. TE items may also be types such as drag-and-drop, drop-down, bar graphs, predicting line graphs, plotting graphs, matching interactions, text highlights, and hot spots. Short scenarios may be used as a stimulus with at least two (2) items associated with these items.
35. Propose how to handle copyrighted materials in items. Secure all permissions for unlimited use in perpetuity. Wherever possible, the use of copyrighted materials in the development of assessment items shall be avoided, and original work or material available in the public domain shall be used. MDE is interested in measuring text complexity through Lexile level information for passages, and difficulty of math concepts through Quantile levels. Include this in optional cost in the budget sheets.
36. Ensure that all items and tests developed under this contract meet relevant professional standards found in the latest version of the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* published by the American Education Research Association. Mississippi tests shall meet major aspects of testing such as universal design, validity, reliability, setting passing standards, opportunity to learn, item development, bias reviews, equating, accommodations, scoring, reporting, and documentation.
37. Provide content specialists to lead and oversee any development of Vendor- and teacher-created items through item writer workshops.
38. Provide committees of Mississippi teachers who have been selected by the MDE to review and approve any teacher-created, Vendor-developed, or licensed/shared items that appear on these assessments. Include level of difficulty and Lexile levels for these items.
39. Develop new items or select licensed/shared items for field testing in the ELA, Math, Science and History assessments for spring 2026. If custom developed, items shall be developed using the universal design rules and be Accessible Portable Item Protocol (APIP) compliant. All item writers shall be qualified to write the content items and be trained by the Vendor. Items shall be similar in design, format, overall complexity, readability levels, and technical quality as in previous test forms. MDE expects to have a high acceptance rate of all items presented to the MDE for a pre-review and during Mississippi teacher item review meetings. The committees have the authority to reject, revise, and accept items. The final decision regarding items will rest upon the MDE.
40. Develop items utilizing Mississippi teachers in the process, with the Vendor developing a large percentage of the items agreed upon with the MDE. Propose a methodology for using teachers in item development. As a suggestion, teachers may be trained to review these items and be exposed to item writing techniques. At the

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end of the review, the teacher committee members may receive assignments to write items for the item bank. All teacher-written items will be reviewed by the Vendor, MDE, and a bias/content committee prior to being utilized as field-test items or practice test items. MDE does not want the same teachers who developed items to review the items for use on the assessment.

41. Use universal design when developing new test items with professional writers and MS teachers. Mississippi is committed to the principle that the state assessments must be inclusive and accessible to all students. The Vendor shall address the principles of universal design and accessibility to diverse populations, as articulated by the National Center on Educational Outcomes in all item-writing training.
42. Develop enough items to ensure field testing across five (5) to ten (10) test forms for spring 2026 in ELA, Mathematics, Science and History. The current MDE item banks shall contain enough items to build a new core form for spring 2026.
43. The Vendor is responsible for all administrative and logistical arrangements, as well as costs for the teacher committee meetings. See chart on Page 44 of this document. In collaboration with MDE, this support will include the creation of meeting schedules, notifying committee members of meeting details, and the production of all training, reference, and support materials. Additionally, the Vendor is responsible for making facility arrangements, including but not limited to meeting rooms (item writer and content meetings), meals, refreshments, and lodging for teachers who live more than seventy-five (75) miles from the meeting location. Financial support to committee members includes the payment of a stipend of One Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$150.00) for teachers who are not under contract the days the meetings are held or One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00) per day substitute teacher reimbursement, along with travel-related and other relevant expenses for teachers at the rates agreed upon by MDE.
44. Vendor shall keep the previously developed items that have been used on previous assessments along with test-ready field-test items that have not been used on a previous test in an online, secure item banking system. Reports on item numbers and item usage shall be updated and provided to the MDE after data review each year. Item usage shall be kept in the item bank report to avoid using items over three (3) years in a row. MDE shall have access to all information in the item banking system. At the end of the contract, the Vendor will provide the entire item bank to the MDE in an agreed-upon format.
45. Document and explain each step of the QA procedures for reviewing each step during the development and revision of items. All newly developed items shall undergo a thorough internal review process by the Vendor for correct grammar and style guide format before item submission to the MDE for review. Run checks for plagiarism from item writers and Mississippi teacher item writers. Check items thoroughly before sending them to MDE OSA for review. MDE will not tolerate reviewing materials with frequent mistakes.
46. Maintain a style guide to address all specifications necessary for item writing, test form construction, and any other consideration necessary for the delivery of products related to test development and test construction. The MDE shall review and approve any changes to the style guide. The Vendor will continue to update the style guide when MDE agrees to or initiates new content for the style guide.

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H. MAAP: Test Administrations

Information: Students who complete the EOC courses at the end of the first semester and who are on a 4x4 block schedule in the fall will be given the EOC tests in fall. Students who complete the course on a traditional schedule or on a 4x4 block schedule in the spring will take the test in spring April/May administration. Any students who need to retest the EOC may participate in any administration. Exact testing window dates will be discussed and planned with the successful Vendor.

47. Many of the middle schools across Mississippi have moved to a block schedule and MDE may require the middle school to be included in the fall assessment window for these schools. Include the cost of having a fall and spring assessment for Grades 6-8 which will include Grades 6-8 ELA and math; Grade 8 science in the optional area of the budget sheets.

Information: Each of the test administrations for MAAP shall be completed in a one-day session unless the student has an IEP with special extended time accommodations. The only exception for the regular students is the ELA and English II writing, which may be given on a separate day from the reading portions. There will be no performance task in math, science or history that will need to be completed on a second day.

I. MAAP: Processing, Scoring, Reporting, Psychometric Work

48. Test items shall be scored according to procedures developed by the Vendor and the MDE. The Vendor and the MDE shall mutually agree upon details of the scoring procedures.
49. Explain the methodology behind the hand-scoring process for writing prompts and how many people will be utilized to read each response. As an optional process, provide the price for possible Artificial Intelligence (AI) scoring including the transition to move into AI scoring. MDE will require at least one (1) year of human scoring vs. AI scoring for comparison. Another solution option to explore is allowing MS teachers to score prompts after AI scoring is completed to validate the AI results.
50. Conduct key verification for the MC and TE items, computing the number and proportion of students selecting each response option, the p-value for the item, the item-total correlation for the key, and the item-total correlations for each of the response alternatives. Submit annual report to the MDE for each administration performance.
51. Describe the plan for accomplishing all tasks related to the resolution of data errors and quality control during scoring and reporting.
52. Immediately notify the MDE when an item error, scoring error, or reporting error is discovered. The Vendor and MDE will develop a plan to correct the error. The plan will include a description of how timely and forthright information will be communicated to all affected stakeholders. The Vendor shall indicate details in the proposal.
53. Provide full state data files to MDE and maintain the proper identification of each student and the accurate matching of the student to the test results using the identification number for each student. The data file shall contain all information gathered on each student during the test administration and scoring period, including but not limited to:
 - a. School and district name and identification number assigned by MDE designating where the student was tested;

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- b. Teacher name and identification number;
 - c. Responses to individual items.
 - d. All demographic information about the student from the MDE student database; and
 - e. All raw and derived data with performance levels.
54. Provide Mississippi assessment data files to the state for its use in preparing school and district accountability reports no later than June 20 each year. District data files may be posted electronically in the vendor system for district downloads at an agreed-upon date with the MDE.
55. Create detail logs that trace the application of quality assurance (QA) procedures to the state score reports after each administration. MDE requires procedures for maintaining quality products and services in all aspects of each assessment program component from initial development of training materials to the production of electronic data files and score reports.
- The following list of reports shall be included in the reporting system:
- a. Individual Student Report (electronic download and paper)
 - b. Student Cumulative Record Label (electronic download and paper)
 - c. Roster/Summary Reports by teacher, grade, school, district (online and electronic download)
 - d. Geographic Summary Reports (online and electronic download)
 - e. Demographic Summary Reports (online and electronic download)
56. Provide an option for adding Lexile and Quantile measures in student results for parents and for classroom use.
57. Provide a description of an online, secure reporting site for the DTC to access, download, and print district-level, school-level, and individual student-level reports for their district and schools. An ISR and a cumulative record label shall be mailed to the district. The MDE will not receive paper reports; only the electronic version of the master data file will be transmitted to the MDE via a secure site.
58. Propose a solution to having a non-English parent guide that will allow parents to understand the student's test results. This may be in the form of a video, paper version, or customer support for parents. Spanish is the most common non-English language for Mississippi.
59. Construct a new parallel test form for each content area tested. The new form will be equated to forms from the previous year by using item statistics contained in the secure item bank. Propose the use of a pre-equating or post-equating model to MDE but include support for the approach will be best to use. However, to ensure the accuracy of the equating and scaling, after each administration, a post-equating will need to be conducted.
60. Include appropriate IRT item and task parameters (the 3PL model has been used in Mississippi but other methods may be considered), distractor analysis, bias/sensitivity analysis, and fit and differential item functioning (DIF) statistics. For the test bias/sensitivity review, either an IRT model or Mantel-Haenszel and other similar statistics, depending on sample size, may be used. Describe plan for

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providing each of these item data components and the method to be used for calculations. Describe approach to item calibration, including its approach to parameter estimation. The Vendor shall not employ any proprietary or third-party software for this but use commercially available analysis software so that the estimates may be replicated by others.

61. Provide the MDE with all appropriate test statistics and information, including test information functions, differential test function information, and validity and reliability measures. Examination of performance task data from the operational assessment shall include reliability information, percentages of students in categories and any other relevant information. Provide a sample psychometric report in the proposal. See Section W. Other Requirements.
62. Include a detailed plan of how the psychometric analysis, research, and technical analysis activities will support the Mississippi State Board of Education's (SBE) goals. The SBE goals may be found at <https://mdek12.org/mbe/strategicplan/>. This should include development, testing, execution, and maintenance of psychometric-related activities, including calibration, scaling, equating, and item analysis.
63. Provide a plan for conducting the studies necessary to meet all technical requirements of the most current edition of the U.S. Department of Education's (ED's) *Peer Review of State Assessment Systems*, especially Sections 3 and 4, Technical Quality. The Vendor shall describe its plan for providing the best and most cost-effective studies to meet the peer review requirements. Included in these studies, the Vendor shall describe in detail how it will conduct studies to verify and support the validity of interpretations drawn from test scores. The Vendor shall also propose its strategy for developing studies that investigate the intended and unintended consequences of the Mississippi assessment components, including alignment studies, student privacy, validity, reliability, and accommodations. The Vendor shall indicate how the studies will support the MDE's response to each critical element of the MAAP peer review.
64. Provide details of how reporting of standard errors (a requirement per the AERA/APA/NCME joint standards) will be provided. This report may include error band graphics (such as a bar chart displaying student scale score, school scale score mean, and district scale score mean) and explanatory narrative desirable on all reports where appropriate. MDE is open to innovations in reporting approaches, so Vendor may propose new ideas for the score reports and parent interactions. Include an option to add validating Lexile and Quantile levels.
65. Provide an Equating Report to the MDE that discusses scaling procedures, linking sets, test construction curves, raw score-to-scale score conversions tables, and other processes involved with the scaling and equating procedures.
66. Deliver a technical report (manual) annually that provides details of the test development process, validity and reliability of the assessments, standard-setting information (if done), and all other information necessary to support the MDE's compliance with the U.S. Department of Education's *Standards and Assessment Peer Review Guidance*. Specifically, the contractor will provide a Technical Report that addresses each content area tested. The Technical Report will include all relevant psychometric information for each test. The report will be completed within five (5) months of the operational administration. The report shall be revised annually and given to the Technical Advisory Committee for review. An existing outline for a technical manual is in place for Mississippi and shall be the basis for technical

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documentation. Support for Mississippi's Peer Review submissions during the period of this contract shall also be included.

67. A Standard Setting meeting may be required at some point during this contract for MAAP. Provide a price in the optional part of the budget summary sheet for these meetings. Include an estimate of materials preparation, travel costs, stipends for participating educators, written reports upon conclusion of the meeting.

J. MAAP: Test Security

Information: Test security violations and other breaches of test security can impact the fairness of testing. To ensure fairness of the administration of statewide assessments, the Offeror shall agree to the process to secure items during test development, and assist MDE in responding to and conducting investigations of material breaches of test security. MDE has experienced exposure of items for the past two years from cell phone pictures appearing on Artificial Intelligence solution sites. We have AI GPT being used to type in the writing prompt for an essay and student's copying. We have a strict cellular device policy, yet we still have issues.

68. Describe in detail the process where the vendor can monitor the fidelity with which the test administration and security procedures are being applied. This shall include a plan for on-site monitoring of device sign-in during hours of testing and any off-hour attempts to access test materials. Additional electronic monitoring of security procedures may be included.
69. Describe how communication may be captured for any possible security breaches before, during, and after the administration of statewide assessments.
70. MDE plans to contract with a testing forensic company to analyze web-based sites for items that are found on the MDE high-stakes tests (Grade 3, EOC). Vendor shall comply and communicate with this forensic company.
71. The successful vendor shall provide final data files in a precise format to this 3rd party forensic company for detailed analysis after testing has been completed. MDE plans to have this data forensic company to analyze data files for patterns of student sharing answers or receiving answers during testing.
72. Propose a plan for maintaining a sufficient item bank to prepare for potential security breach of items during each assessment.

K. The Assessment – MAAP- A

The MAAP-A assessments are administered to students with significant cognitive disabilities (SCD) in the areas of English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science. The Mississippi Alternate Academic Achievement Standards are based on the Dynamic Learning Maps Essential Elements (DLM EE), with additional edits and clarifications to better support the needs of Mississippi teachers and students. Mississippi offers SCD students two (2) avenues for completing high school: (1) Certificate of Completion and (2) Alternate Diploma Option. The Alternate Diploma Option is for students with SCD, and the student shall pass the high school assessments for the MAAP-A. These tests are associated with Alternate English II, Alternate Algebra I, Alternate Biology, and Alternate U.S. History.

L. MAAP-A REQUIREMENTS

Information: The MDE requests that this work may be done by the Vendor or a subcontractor if the Vendor cannot meet the requirements detailed below. The MAAP-A is required in Grades 3-8 in ELA and Mathematics and Grade 5 and Grade 8 in science. The

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high school assessments are offered when the SCD student takes the course in Alternate Biology, Alternate English II, Alternate Algebra I, and a new test will be the Alternate U.S. History, an End-of-Course (EOC) test to mirror MAAP. The standards for each subject may be found on the MDE website here:

ELA: [2019 Mississippi Alternate Academic Achievement Standards for English Language Arts](#);

Math: [2019 Mississippi Alternate Academic Achievement Standards for Mathematics](#)

Science: [2018 Mississippi Alternate Academic Achievement Standards for Science](#)

U.S. History: [2019 Mississippi Alternate Academic Achievement Standards – Alternate History](#)

Note that the ELA and Math standards are based on the Dynamic Learning Maps Essential Elements (DLM EE), with additional edits and clarifications to better support the needs of Mississippi teachers and students. The Science and History standards are not based on DLM standards. The MDE is willing to utilize tests that are currently developed for SCD students even if it means tweaking Mississippi standards for the grades and subjects.

The current MAAP-A assessments are paper-based assessments and have been custom developed. MDE currently owns passages, scenarios, and task questions that are scaffolded from 4 points for a more advanced answer to 1 point for a basic response. For the first year of the contract, the current item bank may be utilized as needed.

For future years, MDE desires an online, web-based testing platform for MAAP-A; however, some students may not be able to utilize an online assessment and may require a paper-based test in which answers will be transcribed into the system. Items shall be scored in the online system rather than teacher judgements.

In the past, we have not had the U.S. History test as part of the MAAP-A assessments. The U.S. History test does not have previously developed materials and items in the current item bank. This test may be developed, field-tested, and added in year 2 of the contract. An online adaptive test is an option.

Standard Setting may be required to transfer from paper-pencil to online presentations. It will also be required for the addition of the U.S. History MAAP-A test. Provide a price for these meetings in the optional areas. It is also MDE's desire to share an item bank with other states that utilize online Alternate Assessments.

The Vendor shall include details of how the following requirements for MAAP-A will be delivered:

73. Provide one (1) online test for fall EOC assessments (Alternate Algebra I, English II, Biology I, and U.S. History) for 4x4 block students and retest SCD students; and one (1) online test for spring for SCD students in Grades 3-8, Grades 5 and 8 science, and EOC assessments (Alternate Algebra I, English II, Biology I, and U.S. History).
74. The administration of the alternate assessments for each subject area shall be concise in duration, and untimed for students, in the context of adequate technical rigor and quality necessary to meet federal or other applicable standards.
75. The test window for paper-based testing has been open for approximately five (5) weeks for the spring assessment, but only two (2) weeks for the fall assessments. The fall assessments are only for high school students taking the EOC assessments to meet the Alternate Diploma requirements or the few districts who utilize 4x4 block

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schedules with SCD students. Propose solutions on the length of test windows for MAAP-A for online testing for both fall and spring assessments.

76. Provide a solution and price for creating an Alternate U.S. History test (i.e., stand-alone field test/cognitive labs).
77. Eventually, the format of the alternate assessment shall enable electronic administration and scoring. Provide a comparable solution to make items available for a small population of students that cannot assess items directly online such as a paper form, paper-based presentation of test items or specific instructions for the teacher to administer the items using manipulatives.
78. Provide an online and paper version of the MAAP-A assessment for Grades 3-8 ELA, mathematics; Grade 5 and Grade 8 science, and the EOC tests. As an option, submit the cost of an online, adaptive MAAP-A test. This product may be a pre-created assessment (shelf product).
79. Describe online alternate assessments that the Vendor has developed and delivered electronically in other states. This requirement may be provided by the subcontractor but at least five (5) years of successful experience with alternate assessments are required.
80. Describe an online system for MAAP-A. Provide a plan for training districts and schools, including the technology coordinators. Training shall provide support, tools, installation on devices, along with the administration of testing using the online technology platform.
81. Provide a comprehensive plan for the timely support of schools and districts who encounter issues with the testing solution. Test delivery platforms shall allow for content to be delivered in both secure (test administration) and non-secure (practice test) sessions.
82. Describe how the test delivery platforms shall allow for testing to be paused and resumed securely, based on the student needs. Most SCD students may take the test in multiple sessions.
83. Include a plan for the licensure or lease of items developed by the Vendor or subcontractor and used by the state for the duration of the contract. The current MDE alternate item bank will be available to be used and reworked for additional items. The Vendor may supplement licensed or leased items as needed. Items developed specifically for alignment to Mississippi standards will be owned by Mississippi at the end of the contract.
84. The MDE will consider using a pre-created alternate assessment that has been vetted by other states. Provide documentation that reasonable and technically sound procedures were used to develop test items for the pre-created test. A subcontractor may be used for this work, but the MDE would prefer the online test be delivered using the same platform as the MAAP testing program, if possible.
85. If using pre-created items, outline a plan for sufficient test form rotation to prevent over-exposure to both the test forms and test items.
86. Braille forms and large print paper version are required. See charts on pages 44 through 46 detailing what has been used in the past two (2) years. Online refreshable Braille tests are preferred.

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87. Develop a plan and timeline for the MAAP-A that will meet the alternate assessment requirements of the United States Department of Education (USDOE) Peer Review.

Information: Status meetings shall be held weekly or bi-weekly for the MAAP-A program. The Mississippi MAAP-A program coordinator will meet with the key personnel for the planning and implementation of the MAAP-A program.

88. Planning meetings will be held twice a year for future planning and implementation.

M. MAAP-A: Processing, Scoring, Reporting, Psychometric Work

89. Describe the scoring processes of the MAAP-A assessments. The Vendor and the MDE shall mutually agree upon details of the scoring procedures. Make sure key verification is included in the process.
90. Describe the plan for accomplishing all tasks related to the resolution of data errors and quality control during scoring and reporting.
91. Immediately notify the MDE when an item error, scoring error, or reporting error is discovered. The Vendor and MDE will develop a plan to correct the error. The plan will include a description of how timely and forthright information will be communicated to all affected stakeholders. The Vendor shall indicate details in the proposal.
92. Provide full state data files to MDE and maintain the proper identification of each student and the accurate matching of the student to the test results using the identification number for each student. The data file shall contain all information gathered on each student during the test administration and scoring period, including but not limited to:
 - a. School and district name and identification number assigned by MDE designating where the student was tested;
 - b. Teacher name and identification number;
 - c. All demographic information about the student from the MDE student database; and
 - d. All raw and derived data with performance levels.
93. Provide Mississippi assessment data files to the state for its use in preparing school and district accountability reports no later than June 20 each year. District data files may be posted electronically in the vendor system for district downloads at an agreed-upon date with the MDE.
94. Create detail logs that trace the application of quality assurance (QA) procedures to the state score reports after each administration. MDE requires procedures for maintaining quality products and services in all aspects of each assessment program component from initial development of training materials to the production of electronic data files and score reports.

The following list of reports shall be included in the reporting system:

- a. Individual Student Report (electronic download and paper)
- b. Student Cumulative Record Label (electronic download and paper)
- c. Roster/Summary Reports by teacher, grade, school, district (online and electronic download)

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- d. Geographic Summary Reports (online and electronic download)
 - e. Demographic Summary Reports (online and electronic download)
95. Provide a description of an online, secure reporting site for the DTC to access, download, and print district-level, school-level, and individual student-level reports for their district and schools. An ISR and a cumulative record label will be mailed to the district. The MDE will not receive paper reports; only the electronic version of the master data file will be transmitted to the MDE via a secure site.
 96. Propose a solution to having a non-English parent guide that will allow parents to understand the student's test results. This may be in the form of a video, paper version, or customer support for parents. Spanish is the most common non-English language for Mississippi.
 97. Provide the MDE with all appropriate test statistics and information, including test information functions, differential test function information, and validity and reliability measures. Examination of performance task data from the operational assessment shall include reliability information, percentages of students in categories and any other relevant information. Provide a sample psychometric report in the proposal. See Section W. Other Requirements.
 98. Provide a plan for conducting the studies necessary to meet all technical requirements of the most current edition of the U.S. Department of Education's (ED's) *Peer Review of State Assessment Systems*, especially Sections 3 and 4, Technical Quality. The Vendor shall describe its plan for providing the best and most cost-effective studies to meet the peer review requirements. Included in these studies, the Vendor shall describe in detail how it will conduct studies to verify and support the validity of interpretations drawn from test scores. The Vendor shall also propose its strategy for developing studies that investigate the intended and unintended consequences of the Mississippi assessment components, including alignment studies, student privacy, validity, reliability, and accommodations. The Vendor shall indicate how the studies will support the MDE's response to each critical element of the MAAP-A peer review.
 99. Provide details of how reporting of standard errors (a requirement per the AERA/APA/NCME joint standards) will be provided. This report may include error band graphics (such as a bar chart displaying student scale score, school scale score mean, and district scale score mean) and explanatory narrative desirable on all reports where appropriate. MDE is open to innovations in reporting approaches, so Vendor may propose new ideas for the score reports and parent interactions.
 100. Provide an Equating Report to the MDE that discusses scaling procedures, linking sets, test construction curves, raw score-to-scale score conversions tables, and other processes involved with the scaling and equating procedures.
 101. Deliver a technical report (manual) annually that provides details of the test development process, validity and reliability of the assessments, standard-setting information (if done), and all other information necessary to support the MDE's compliance with the U.S. Department of Education's *Standards and Assessment Peer Review Guidance*. Specifically, the contractor will provide a Technical Report that addresses each content area tested. The Technical Report will include all relevant psychometric information for each test. The report will be completed within five (5) months of the operational administration. The report shall be revised annually and given to the Technical Advisory Committee for review. An existing outline for a

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technical manual is in place for Mississippi and shall be the basis for technical documentation. Support for Mississippi's Peer Review submissions during the period of this contract shall also be included.

102. If the solution for MAAP-A is not a pre-designed and developed assessment, a Standard Setting meeting may be required at some point during this contract for MAAP-A. Provide a price in the optional part of the budget summary sheet for these meetings. Include an estimate of materials preparation, travel costs, stipends for participating educators, written reports upon conclusion of the meeting.
103. Practice tests, both online and PDF versions, are required. For cost purposes, include the costs for at least three (3) tests in each grade/subject and high school course. As an option, price automated practice test scoring with a predicted score. MDE also needs Braille practice test for each grade/subject and course.

N. Test Security – MAAP-A

104. Describe in detail the process where the vendor can monitor the fidelity with which the test administration and security procedures are being applied. This shall include a plan for on-site monitoring of device sign-in during hours of testing and any off-hour attempts to access test materials. Additional electronic monitoring of security procedures may be included.

O. Online Platform and Technology - MAAP and MAAP-A

Information: The Vendor will provide a secure, online web-based testing site (portal) where student information is contained before, during, and after testing. The online assessment and platform shall work with a variety of devices and their operating systems. Devices include but are 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. Note that if using a subcontractor for MAAP-A assessments, this section's requirements may need to be submitted twice. Ideally, the successful vendor may use one (1) platform to deliver both MAAP and MAAP-A assessments even if the subcontractor is used for MAAP-A content.

105. The Vendor's state-level portal must communicate with Mississippi Student Information System (MSIS) that will receive local district student information from systems (Central Access SAMs and PowerSchool) as well as integration packages like Clever to enroll students and provide the rostering capability for MAAP students. The MDE modernized the MSIS system in July 2024 for school year 2024-25. The new MSIS system prioritizes the transmission of data over JSON Application Programming Interface (API). The transmission of data through APIs will be required beginning in the 2024-2025 school year. This shift to using APIs will create two (2) critical expectations for the state's assessment vendors:

For assessment rostering, it is expected that MDE will transmit roster data through an API to the vendor in a mutually agreed upon format. MDE and the vendor will also agree upon the dates and frequency for which this data transmission will take place relative to – and ideally as close as possible to – the beginning of any assessment window. If roster updates are needed in a timeframe that cannot be accommodated through MSIS, such as day-of-exam updates, the vendor shall provide a mechanism for districts to make those updates in the vendor's platform.

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For assessment results, it is expected that MDE will receive the state level data file through an API in a mutually agreed upon format. Explain how your system will meet this requirement.

106. Describe 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. This process may vary for MAAP-A.
107. Describe the process used and the evidence evaluated to demonstrate how the proposed system meets interoperability standards, specifically, the items as described within this RFP.
108. The online 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. These reports shall be archived on the platform for five (5) years.
109. The online platform shall also produce state-level results and reports for MAAP and MAAP-A programs. Provide an example of a state-level report.
110. Describe in detail how the QA process will ensure 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.
111. Describe its strategy for ensuring that new systems and all interfaces function properly when releasing new versions of any software application.
112. Describe the extent to which its system currently meets the Accessible Portable Item Protocol (APIP) standards and specifications.
113. 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.
114. The online 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. Explain how its system will accommodate students who have moved in and out of a school or district since the rosters were created.
115. 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 online platform system.
116. Describe how alternate devices may be used with the test delivery interface including alternate/virtual keyboard, alternate mouse, translation tools, refreshable Braille displays, Braille note-takers, keyboard emulators, and alternative and augmentative communication devices. Based on the Vendor's recommendations and input from the field, the MDE, in conjunction with the successful vendor, may determine what tools and accommodations will be provided, as well as which features may be turned on or off by students.
117. Describe how the test delivery interface includes all information and resources required to make test items accessible for students with various disabilities and special needs. These include but are not limited to speech-to-text, voice controls for

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answer selection, sign language and sign system presentation, built in word-to-word bilingual glossary in minimum of the top five (5) languages in the state.

118. Discuss how its system responds to interrupted Internet services without the loss of data, including student responses.
119. 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. Describe challenges the Vendor may encounter in meeting cyber security standards during this project and how those challenges may be identified and mitigated.
120. Discuss the features of its system that 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 to resolve those issues.
121. The online data collection system shall have a time-out or similar locking mechanism to prevent unauthorized access if a student, while entering data, shall immediately evacuate the area due to an emergency such as a fire or tornado. This will also include an auto-save feature for the student to resume where they left off when the emergency or the time-out occurred.
122. The MDE requires access to the testing dashboard during the test administration to monitor testing progress by district and school. Propose how this may be accomplished.
123. 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. Identify the metrics for system performance.
124. 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; resources for implementation; timeline segment per the Project Plan; and testing, validation, and security. Review and update the Infrastructure Plan as needed throughout the project; however, the MDE will need to be notified of any major modifications.
125. The state desires the system to be interoperable based on the standards developed for the common state assessments. The technology system proposed with this project for delivery, scoring, reporting, banking, etc., shall 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 Vendor shall describe how they may work with MDE to ensure the data submission will be efficient, accurate, and interoperable with MDE data standards.
126. Provide how real-time online testing status and statistics may be tracked for school and district. This status will be available to the MDE and districts. (For example, the number of students testing by district and school and the total who have not started testing.) Daily status reports will be available for viewing on a dashboard, in the testing system, or by email.

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127. Describe how the system may collect test codes, accommodation codes, and other demographic information by administration for online assessments before, during, and after testing.

P. Technical Requirements- MAAP and MAAP-A

Additional detail and specific responses are not required for this section. Vendor shall only indicate their adherence with a checkmark in the appropriate response box. Should a Vendor mark "Exception", a description of their Exception must be included in Section V, Proposal Exception Summary Form.

Indicate the adherence to the following 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 to analyze the assessment processes and the resultant data.		
b. Web-based online test delivery must conform to all required elements in the Accessible Portable Item Protocol (APIP) core standards to provide seamless digital content exchange and allow for tagging of accessibility information.		
c. Delivery will be provided on wireless networks with comparable performance to wired networks. Documentation shall support this performance comparability. The application will be delivered within a secure browser that restricts access to the desktop and Internet, based on the requirements of the MDE.		
d. The test delivery interface will include all the information and resources required to make a test item accessible for students with various disabilities and special needs.		
e. The online system must adhere to and meet the evolving expectations of industry standards in online accommodations (i.e., Question and Test Interoperability [QTI]).		
f. The online data collection system design must be flexible so that software modifications, database changes, and reporting requirements will be made efficiently and cost-effectively.		
g. The system must be equipped to support and update all platform releases.		
h. The Vendor will provide the designated MDE representatives from the Office of Student Assessment (OSA) state administrator access to the online platform.		

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Requirement - Technology	Will Comply	Exception
<p>i. Vendor will always agree to maintain network system and application security that, at minimum, conform to current cyber security standards. The Vendor will agree to document all cyber security expectations to the State. Vendor must adhere to the Mississippi Enterprise Security Policy and standards Enterprise Security Policy. Special consideration shall be made to ensure the security of Personally Identifiable Information (PII) stored or processed by the system.</p>		
<p>o. Mississippi does not have established minimum technology standards for schools within the state. Support from the Vendor will include the following technical standards at a minimum:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The Vendor will provide proof of Fed Ramp Low compliance. 2) The Vendor shall encrypt data in transit and at rest. 3) The Vendor shall meet Authenticator Assurance Level 1 from NIST Publication 800-63B. 4) The Vendor shall support modern web browsers, including Chrome, Safari, and Edge. 		
<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., shall 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 Vendor will work with MDE to ensure that the data submission will be efficient, accurate, and compatible 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 test items within the system, security of the system, validation procedures for students to participate in the online MAAP assessments, the school-/district-level management of the system, and the procedures in place by the Vendor to monitor each administration.</p>		

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Requirement - Technology	Will Comply	Exception
<p>r. 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; Vendor resources for implementation; timeline segment per the Project Plan; and testing and validation. Review and update the Infrastructure Plan as needed throughout the project; however, the MDE will need to be notified of any major modifications.</p>		
<p>s. The online system shall show real-time online testing status and statistics by school and district. This status will be available to the MDE and districts. (For example, the number of students testing by district and school and the total who have not started testing.) Daily status reports will be available for viewing on a dashboard, in the testing system, or by email.</p>		
<p>t. The online system will be able to collect test codes, accommodation codes, and other demographic information by administration for online assessments before, during, and after testing.</p>		
<p>u. Vendor will demonstrate their online systems on-site or virtually at the MDE in Jackson, Mississippi, at the Vendor's expense or agree to appear virtually. The Vendor will demonstrate their online test delivery systems to the MDE staff to enable them 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 Vendor will 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.</p>		

Cloud or Offsite Hosting Requirements	Will Comply	Exception
<p>a. Data Ownership: The State shall own all right, title and interest in all data used by, resulting from, and collected using the services provided. The Vendor shall not access State User accounts, or State Data, except (i) in the course of data center operation related to this solution; (ii) response to service or technical issues; (iii) as required by the express terms of this service; or (iv) at State 's written request.</p>		

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Cloud or Offsite Hosting Requirements	Will Comply	Exception
<p>b. Data Protection: Protection of personal privacy and sensitive data shall be an integral part of the business activities of the Vendor to ensure that there is no inappropriate or unauthorized use of State information at any time. To this end, the Vendor shall safeguard the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of State information and comply with the following conditions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All information obtained by the Vendor under this contract shall become and remain property of the State. • At no time shall any data or processes which either belong to or are intended for the use of State or its officers, agents, or employees be copied, disclosed, or retained by the Vendor or any party related to the Vendor for subsequent use in any transaction that does not include the State. 		
<p>c. Data Location: The Vendor shall not store or transfer State data outside of the United States. This includes backup data and Disaster Recovery locations. The Vendor will permit its personnel and contractors to access State data remotely only as required to provide technical support.</p>		
<p>d. Encryption:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Vendor shall encrypt all non-public data in transit regardless of the transit mechanism. • For engagements where the Vendor stores non-public data, the data shall be encrypted at rest. The key location and other key management details will be discussed and negotiated by both parties. Where encryption of data at rest is not possible, the Vendor must describe existing security measures that provide a similar level of protection. Additionally, when the Vendor cannot offer encryption at rest, it must maintain, for the duration of the contract, cyber security liability insurance coverage for any loss resulting from a data breach. The policy shall comply with the following requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The policy shall be issued by an insurance company acceptable to the State and valid for the entire term of the contract, inclusive of any term extension(s). ○ The Vendor and the State shall reach agreement on the level of liability insurance coverage required. ○ The policy shall include, but not be limited to, coverage for liabilities arising out of premises, operations, independent contractors, products, completed operations, and liability assumed under an insured contract. 		

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Cloud or Offsite Hosting Requirements	Will Comply	Exception
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ At a minimum, the policy shall include third party coverage for credit monitoring, notification costs to data breach victims, and regulatory penalties and fines. ○ The policy shall apply separately to each insured against whom claim is made or suit is brought subject to the Vendor's limit of liability. ○ The policy shall include a provision requiring that the policy cannot be cancelled without thirty (30) days written notice. ○ The Vendor shall be responsible for any deductible or self-insured retention contained in the insurance policy. ○ The coverage under the policy shall be primary and not in excess to any other insurance carried by the Vendor. ○ In the event the Vendor fails to keep in effect at all times the insurance coverage required by this provision, the State may, in addition to any other remedies it may have, terminate the contract upon the occurrence of such event, subject to the provisions of the contract. 		
<p>e. Breach Notification and Recovery: Unauthorized access or disclosure of non-public data is considered to be a security breach. The Vendor will provide immediate notification and all communication shall be coordinated with the State. When the Vendor or their sub-contractors are liable for the loss, the Vendor shall bear all costs associated with the investigation, response and recovery from the breach including but not limited to credit monitoring services with a term of at least 3 years, mailing costs, website, and toll-free telephone call center services. The State shall not agree to any limitation on liability that relieves a Vendor from its own negligence or to the extent that it creates an obligation on the part of the State to hold a Vendor harmless.</p>		
<p>f. Notification of Legal Requests: The Vendor shall contact the State upon receipt of any electronic discovery, litigation holds, discovery searches, and expert testimonies related to, or which in any way might reasonably require access to the data of the State. The Vendor shall not respond to subpoenas, service of process, and other legal requests related to the State without first notifying the State unless prohibited by law from providing such notice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Termination and Suspension of Service: In the event of termination of the contract, the Vendor shall implement 		

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Cloud or Offsite Hosting Requirements	Will Comply	Exception
<p>an orderly return of State data in CSV or XML or another mutually agreeable format. The Vendor shall guarantee the subsequent secure disposal of State data.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suspension of services: During any period of suspension of this Agreement, for whatever reason, the Vendor shall not take any action to intentionally erase any State data. • Termination of any services or agreement in entirety: In the event of termination of any services or of the agreement in its entirety, the Vendor shall not take any action to intentionally erase any State data for a period of 90 days after the effective date of the termination. After such 90-day period, the Vendor shall have no obligation to maintain or provide any State data and shall thereafter, unless legally prohibited, dispose of all State data in its systems or otherwise in its possession or under its control as specified below. Within this 90-day timeframe, Vendor will continue to secure and back up State data covered under the contract. • Post-Termination Assistance: The State shall be entitled to any post-termination assistance generally made available with respect to the Services unless a unique data retrieval arrangement has been established as part of the Service Level Agreement. • Secure Data Disposal: When requested by the State, the provider shall destroy all requested data in all of its forms, for example: disk, CD/DVD, backup tape, and paper. Data shall be permanently deleted and shall not be recoverable, according to National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) approved methods. Certificates of destruction shall be provided to the State. 		
<p>g. Background Checks: The Vendor warrants that it will not utilize any staff members, including sub-contractors, to fulfill the obligations of the contract who have been convicted of any crime of dishonesty. The Vendor shall promote and maintain an awareness of the importance of securing the State's information among the Vendor's employees and agents.</p>		
<p>h. Security Logs and Reports: The Vendor shall allow the State access to system security logs that affect this engagement, its data, and/or processes. This includes the ability to request a report of the activities that a specific user or administrator accessed over a specified period of time as</p>		

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Cloud or Offsite Hosting Requirements	Will Comply	Exception
<p>well as the ability for an agency customer to request reports of activities of a specific user associated with that agency. These mechanisms should be defined up front and be available for the entire length of the agreement with the Vendor.</p>		
<p>i. Contract Audit: The Vendor shall allow the State to audit conformance including contract terms, system security and data centers as appropriate. The State may perform this audit or contract with a third party at its discretion at the State’s expense.</p>		
<p>j. Sub-contractor Disclosure: The Vendor shall identify all of its strategic business partners related to services provided under this contract, including but not limited to, all subcontractors or other entities or individuals who may be a party to a joint venture or similar agreement with the Vendor, who will be involved in any application development and/or operations.</p>		
<p>k. Sub-contractor Compliance: The Vendor must ensure that any agent, including a Vendor or subcontractor, to whom the Vendor provides access agrees to the same restrictions and conditions that apply through this Agreement.</p>		
<p>l. Processes and Procedures: The Vendor shall disclose its non-proprietary security processes and technical limitations to the State so that the State can determine if and how adequate protection and flexibility can be attained between the State and the Vendor. For example: virus checking and port sniffing — the State and the Vendor shall understand each other’s roles and responsibilities.</p>		
<p>m. Operational Metrics: The Vendor and the State shall reach agreement on operational metrics and document said metrics in the Service Level Agreement. At a minimum the SLA shall include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advance notice and change control for major upgrades and system changes • System availability/uptime guarantee/agreed-upon maintenance downtime • Recovery Time Objective/Recovery Point Objective • Security Vulnerability Scanning 		

III. Support Materials and Training

Q. MAAP Manuals and Training

128. Develop and deliver the following support materials (manuals, guides, ancillaries, etc.) to be used with the specific test administrations:

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- a. **Test Coordinator Manuals (TCM)** for the District Test Coordinators (DTCs) and School Test Coordinators (STCs) will be prepared and provided electronically in PDF downloadable format annually for each test administration. The TCM must contain detailed information which includes but is not limited to the following:
 - 1) Setting up local school and district user accounts;
 - 2) Tasks to complete before, during, and after testing;
 - 3) Ordering accommodated testing materials;
 - 4) Setting up testing sessions and printing of student testing tickets;
 - 5) Entering appropriate test accommodations for special population students;
 - 6) Delivery, storage, inventory, and return for any paper materials;
 - 7) Monitoring testing sessions; and
 - 8) Appropriate steps for closing online test administrations.

The instructions in the TCM will be presented in a user-friendly manner and include graphics/screenshots and visual aids to illustrate the steps that shall be followed. The Vendor will revise and update these manuals annually based on discussions with the MDE and then submit the revised documents to the MDE for approval before electronic posting. A sample of a TCM must be included in the sample materials that accompany the proposal. See Section W. Other Requirements.

- b. **Test Administration Manuals (TAM)** will be prepared and revised annually based on input from the MDE. TAMs shall include screenshots of what the test administrator will see on the student screen as the student logs into the testing platform as well as scripts that the test administrator will use to start and stop the test sessions. TAMs will be electronic in format and will be available for download. The Vendor will submit the TAMs to the MDE for approval before posting. A sample TAM must be included in the materials that accompany the proposal. See Section W. Other Requirements.
 - c. **Interpretive Guides** to assist teachers, administrators, and parents in interpreting assessment results will be prepared and posted electronically to all DTC/STCs for the MAAP tests. The Vendor will submit these guides to the MDE for approval before posting. The Interpretive Guides will be posted online for districts with the final reports. If the Vendor has a current Interpretive Guide, it shall be included with the sample materials that accompany the proposal. See Section W. Other Requirements.
129. Provide all support and training materials to include but not be limited to portal guides, TCMs, TAMs (including online ancillaries), and PowerPoint presentations in electronic format for MDE use. Formats shall be appropriate for the development of presentation slides, publications, and Internet website use.
 130. Provide training (face-to-face and/or virtual, recorded online webinars and/or learning modules) and support for the assessment DTCs, STCs, test administrators (TAs), and technology coordinators (TCs) for the assessment component. The following support and training are required:
 - a. **Technology Training:** TC Training sessions will be provided to district IT personnel on the setup, operation, and features of the Vendor's online system for participating schools. It will include training on the physical and electronic

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security of assessments, system requirements for implementing the online assessment, and troubleshooting of technology issues at the school or district site. Training shall include a visual and oral presentation and may include other types of interactive technology. The technology training sessions shall be recorded and archived as a potential future training or reference resource. This training will occur five to eight (5-8) weeks before the opening of the testing window.

- b. DTC Training: This training will be either in person or online (recorded) for the district personnel that will focus on operating the online assessment portal for ordering materials, setting up online vendor portal users, accessing testing documents, and reports for the online test administration. This training will occur 4 to 6 weeks before the opening of the testing window. This will be done with the MDE training twice a year (fall and spring) for all DTCs.
 - c. STC Training: This training will be online (recorded) for the school personnel that will focus on how to manipulate the general test administration activities (i.e., assigning classes/sessions, entering students, entering accommodations, printing student testing tickets) for the online testing portal. This training will occur after the portal opens for testing setup and before the testing window officially begins. MDE will participate in the online training to answer MDE policy questions.
131. Include in the proposal a detailed plan of action and timeline that describes how and when each of the training and support tasks will be accomplished based on the information provided in this RFP. Vendors may also include other beneficial training materials in their response, such as e-learning modules and online tutorials for users.
 132. Propose 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.) for delivery to schools. Mississippi is interested in using technology to the best extent possible.
 133. 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. All paper test materials, Individual Student Reports, and Student Record Labels shall be sent to the shipping address for the respective districts with a brightly colored label on the shipping box stating ATTENTION: DISTRICT TEST COORDINATOR, SECURE MAAP TEST MATERIALS. Include a statement of when and where to return the box if it cannot be delivered.
 134. Describe how technical and logistical customer support will be provided in a responsive manner that minimizes school personnel and student burden, disruption, and inconvenience.
 135. The Vendor shall provide unlimited email and toll-free telephone technical support in the operation of the Software Products twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week. Vendor shall respond by telephone within one (1) hour to requests for support services. shall also provide a Help Desk and Technical Support Desk that will respond to e-mail, web-based chat or telephone queries from teachers and administrators, depending on the area of inquiry. The hours of operation must be 7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Central Time (CT) on Monday-Friday during the operational test dates. Vendors must respond to queries within one (1) business day or less. All telephone customer support shall originate in the Continental United States, and all

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support staff shall be able to communicate clearly in English. Districts shall be given priority placement in the support queue for all system locking situations or problems claimed by districts to be a mission critical process. Upon receipt of district’s call, Vendor will (a) create an error report, (b) assign a severity level and (c) attempt to resolve the Software problem in accordance with the procedures and processes for problem resolution. It is understood by the parties that the MDE and the vendor must mutually agree on whether an error is classified as a Severity Level 1, 2, or 3 error.

- 136. The Vendor shall keep the appropriate MDE management and technical support staff updated on the status of trouble resolution.
- 137. Vendor agrees to provide always-updated documentation of all customer support calls during testing and resolutions provided.

R. MAAP Customer Support and Maintenance

Additional detail and specific responses are not required for this section. Vendor shall only indicate their adherence with a checkmark in the appropriate response box. Should a Vendor mark “Exception”, a description of their Exception must be included in Section V, Proposal Exception Summary Form.

Vendor shall indicate the adherence to the following requirements by responding to the following chart:

Requirement – Program Management, Training, Customer Support, and Reporting	Will Comply	Exception
a. Assign a trained Program Coordinator/Manager who is solely dedicated to this project.		
b. Track attendance and participation for all training. A copy of the final attendance/participation roster with completed participant signatures (actual or electronic) shall be delivered to the designated MAAP assessment coordinator in the MDE/Office of Student Assessment within five (5) business days after the last date of the event.		
c. Work with the MDE staff detailing the content planned for training sessions before the delivery. The Vendor shall describe its plan to create the materials for each training session and webinar, providing the MDE with at least three (3) weeks to preview the materials and make any necessary changes to be incorporated into the training materials before they are to be used		
d. Provide a knowledgeable and appropriate representative to participate in biannual District Test Coordinator training the first year of the contract in Mississippi. The MDE MAAP Assessment Coordinator, in conjunction with the successful Vendor’s program manager or representative, shall develop a training for the future DTC training sessions held twice a year. The presentations will provide program information and updates on the Fall and Spring MAAP assessments. These trainings may be virtual after the first year of the administration.		

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Requirement – Program Management, Training, Customer Support, and Reporting	Will Comply	Exception
e. Have all written communication approved by the MDE MAAP Assessment Coordinator before initiating e-mail communication to inform the district test coordinators of approaching deadlines, deliverables, and webinar information. The MAAP assessment coordinator shall be copied on all e-mail communication between the Vendor and the districts.		
f. Provide access to districts for the manuals and other reference materials for test administrations in the Vendor's online portal.		
g. Provide a toll-free Help Desk and Technical Support Desk that will respond to e-mail, web-based live chat, or telephone queries from teachers and administrators, depending on the area of inquiry during the hours of 7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Central Time (CT) on Monday-Friday during the operational test dates with a response time within one (1) business day or less.		
h. Provide customer support for the installation and use of the online assessment software, which includes phone-accessible support personnel.		
i. 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.		
j. Shall notify the MDE of any communication with the field regarding urgent or sensitive issues.		
k. Provide a “help” or “chat” function embedded in the assessment software and automated online or phone-in support services.		
l. Compile detailed call/e-mail logs into one (1) Microsoft Excel spreadsheet file and deliver to the designated MAAP 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 shall 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 training.		

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Requirement – Program Management, Training, Customer Support, and Reporting	Will Comply	Exception
m. Host technology conference calls open to all district technology personnel and district test coordinators to discuss any tech-related questions or issues beginning at least four (4) weeks before the opening of the testing window and ending during the last week of the testing window.		
n. Conduct weekly status update meetings during the year (more frequently during the testing window, if needed) 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.		
o. Conduct a yearly planning meeting to create a project plan with timelines for upcoming testing windows.		
p. Work with the MDE to determine program topics pertinent for discussion at the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meetings. The Vendor shall plan for three (3) TAC meetings, which will be held in Jackson, Mississippi. The Vendor will assume all costs associated with sending appropriate representatives from their organization to these meetings. Additionally, representatives shall be available for phone conferences with the TAC upon request from the MDE. The Vendor does not pay for any costs other than for their own staff’s participation in the meetings.		
q. Provide sealed and serialized paper copies of online tests for special accommodation requests to be sent directly to District Test Coordinators (DTCs).		
r. Allow the MDE to pre-approve procedures for the distribution and return of materials, as well as instructions for packaging all testing materials for return, to ensure consistency with procedures followed with other assessments administered through the Mississippi Statewide Assessment System.		
s. Send to the MDE a “Preliminary Missing Materials” report within fifteen (15) business days after the end of the testing window. A final report for each assessment is due within twenty-five (25) business days after the end of the testing window.		
t. Ensure that all data operations are subject to multiple checks for accuracy before data, files, and reports are released. Include in its proposal a complete description of its quality control (QC) procedures used in the reporting process for MDE review. The goal is to demonstrate that the scoring and reporting system is error-free.		

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Requirement – Program Management, Training, Customer Support, and Reporting	Will Comply	Exception
u. Agree that MDE shall own the raw and final data generated through the contract awarded from this solicitation. The Vendor 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 of this RFP without prior written approval from the data owners. Student PII shall be protected, and the selected Vendor shall sign a Data Sharing Agreement with the MDE for the contract.		
v. 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 shall be conducted annually.		
w. Utilize Data Forensics that analyzes the results of each test administration for the MAAP by content area and grade. The analysis is used to manage the security risks by identifying statistical inconsistencies and testing irregularities. MDE will provide the Data Forensics company to submit data files. Successful Vendor may be asked to invalidate tests in the data file prior to release (after thorough analysis).		
x. Provide an online web-based platform with the capability to efficiently deliver the tests by computer to all schools throughout the state. The platform will control a predetermined testing window (enable access and disable access) at the end of each testing day and when the testing window closes.		
y. Be flexible to meet Mississippi requirements and timelines to have the online platform ready for testing.		
z. Agree to assist MDE in the process to secure items during test development and assist MDE in responding to and conducting investigations of material and online breaches of test security.		

S. MAAP-A Manuals and Training

138. Provide support to include but not be limited to portal guides, TCMs, TAMs (including online ancillaries), and presentations in electronic format for MDE use. Formats must be appropriate for the development of presentation slides, publications, and Internet website use.

- a. **Test Coordinator Manuals (TCM)** for the District Test Coordinators (DTCs) and School Test Coordinators (STCs) shall be prepared and provided electronically in PDF downloadable format annually for each test administration. The TCM must contain detailed information which includes but is not limited to the following:
 - 1) Setting up local school and district user accounts;
 - 2) Tasks to complete before, during, and after testing;
 - 3) Ordering paper testing materials;

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- 4) Setting up testing sessions and printing of student testing tickets;
- 5) Monitoring testing sessions;
- 6) Transcribing any student answers into the testing system;
- 7) Delivery, storage, inventory, and return for any paper materials; and
- 8) Appropriate steps for closing online test administrations.

The instructions in the TCM will be presented in a user-friendly manner and include graphics/screenshots and visual aids to illustrate the steps that shall be followed. The Vendor will revise and update these manuals annually based on discussions with the MDE and then submit the revised documents to the MDE for approval before electronic posting. A sample of a TCM for alternate assessments must be included in the sample materials that accompany the proposal. See Section W. Other Requirements.

- b. **Test Administration Manuals (TAM)** will be prepared and revised annually based on input from the MDE. TAMs shall include screenshots of what the test administrator will see on the student screen as the student logs into the testing platform as well as scripts that the test administrator will use to start and stop the test sessions. TAMs will be electronic in format and will be available for download. The Vendor will submit the TAMs to the MDE for approval before posting. A sample TAM for an alternate assessment shall be included in the materials that accompany the proposal. See Section W. Other Requirements.
 - c. **Interpretive Guides** to assist teachers, administrators, and parents in interpreting assessment results will be prepared and posted electronically to all DTC/STCs for the MAAP tests. The Vendor will submit these guides to the MDE for approval before posting. The Interpretive Guides will be posted online for districts with the final reports. If the Vendor has a current Interpretive Guide, it shall be included with the sample materials that accompany the proposal. See Section W. Other Requirements.
139. Provide training (face-to-face, virtual, recorded online webinars and/or tracked training modules) and support for the DTCs, STCs, Special Education Directors, test administrators (TAs), and technology coordinators (TCs) for the MAAP-A assessment components. Propose training modules for the following:
- a. **Technology Training: Technology Coordinator Training** sessions shall be provided to district IT personnel on the setup, operation, and features of the Vendor's online system for MAAP-A assessments. It must include training on the physical and electronic security of assessments, system requirements for implementing the online assessment, and troubleshooting of technology issues at the district or school site. Training shall include a visual and oral presentation and may include other types of interactive technology. The technology training sessions must be recorded and archived as a potential future training or reference resource. This training will occur five to eight (5-8) weeks before the opening of the first testing window.
 - b. **DTC Training:** This training will be either in person or online (recorded) for the district personnel that will focus on operating the online assessment portal for ordering materials, setting up online vendor portal users, accessing testing documents, and reports for the online test administration. This training will occur

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4 to 6 weeks before the opening of the testing window. This will be done with the MDE training twice a year (fall and spring) for all DTCs.

- c. STC Training and TA training: This training will be online (recorded) for the school personnel that will focus on how to manipulate the MAAP-A test administration activities (i.e., assigning classes/sessions, entering students, printing student testing tickets) for the online testing portal. This training will occur after the portal opens for testing setup and before the testing window officially begins. MDE will participate in the online training to answer MDE policy questions.
140. Include in the proposal a detailed plan of action and timeline that describes how and when each of the training and support tasks will be accomplished based on the information provided in this RFP Attachment A. Vendors may also include other beneficial training materials in their response, such as e-learning modules and online tutorials for users.
141. Propose other types of technology-based assistance for SCD students and/or school personnel (such as training videos, online testing training, electronic materials, automated online practice tests, etc.) for delivery to schools before taking the MAAP-A assessment. We have had requests for Braille ancillaries to accommodate blind teachers that would like to assist with the testing administration. Mississippi is interested in using technology to the best extent possible.
142. 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. All paper test materials, Individual Student Reports, and Student Record Labels shall be sent to the shipping address for the respective districts with a brightly colored label on the shipping box stating ATTENTION: DISTRICT TEST COORDINATOR, SECURE MAAP-A TEST MATERIALS. Include a statement of when and where to return the box if it cannot be delivered.
143. Describe how technical and logistical customer support will be provided in a responsive manner that minimizes school personnel and student burden, disruption, and inconvenience.
144. The Vendor shall provide unlimited email and toll-free telephone technical support in the operation of the Software Products twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week. Vendor shall respond by telephone within one (1) hour to requests for support services. shall also provide a Help Desk and Technical Support Desk that will respond to e-mail, web-based chat or telephone queries from teachers and administrators, depending on the area of inquiry. The hours of operation must be 7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Central Time (CT) on Monday-Friday during the operational test dates. Vendors must respond to queries within one (1) business day or less. All telephone customer support shall originate in the Continental United States, and all support staff shall be able to communicate clearly in English. Districts shall be given priority placement in the support queue for all system locking situations or problems claimed by districts to be a mission critical process. Upon receipt of district's call, Vendor will (a) create an error report, (b) assign a severity level and (c) attempt to resolve the Software problem in accordance with the procedures and processes for problem resolution. It is understood by the parties that the MDE and the vendor must mutually agree on whether an error is classified as a Severity Level 1, 2, or 3 error.
145. The Vendor shall keep the appropriate MDE management and technical support staff updated on the status of trouble resolution.

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146. Vendor agrees to provide always-updated documentation of all customer support calls during testing and resolutions provided.

T. MAAP-A Customer Support and Maintenance

Additional detail and specific responses are not required for this section. Vendor shall only indicate their adherence with a checkmark in the appropriate response box. Should a Vendor mark "Exception", a description of their Exception must be included in Section V, Proposal Exception Summary Form.

Vendor shall indicate the adherence to the following requirements by responding to the following chart:

Requirement – Program Management, Training, Customer Support, and Reporting	Will Comply	Exception
a. Assign a trained Program Coordinator/Manager who is solely dedicated to this project.		
b. Track attendance and participation for all training even if using tracked training modules. A copy of the final attendance/participation roster with completed participant signatures (actual or electronic) shall be delivered to the designated MAAP-A assessment coordinator in the MDE/Office of Student Assessment within five (5) business days after the last date of the event.		
c. Work with the MDE staff detailing the content planned for training sessions before the delivery. If this is a shelf product, training may be pre-scripted that are non-state specific. MDE would still like to review prior to the training. The Vendor shall describe its plan to create the materials for each training session and webinar, providing the MDE with at least three (3) weeks to preview the materials and make any necessary changes to be incorporated into the training materials before they are to be used		
d. Provide a knowledgeable and appropriate representative to participate in biannual District Test Coordinator training. The MDE MAAP-A Assessment Coordinator, in conjunction with the successful Vendor's program manager or representative, shall develop a presentation for the DTC/Special Education training sessions for the spring assessments. The presentations will provide program information and updates on the Spring MAAP-A assessments. These trainings may be virtual.		
e. Have all written communication approved by the MDE MAAP-A Assessment Coordinator before initiating e-mail communication to inform the district test coordinators of approaching deadlines, deliverables, and webinar information. The MAAP-A assessment coordinator shall be copied on all e-mail communication between the Vendor and the districts.		

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Requirement – Program Management, Training, Customer Support, and Reporting	Will Comply	Exception
f. Provide access to districts for the manuals and other reference materials for test administrations in the Vendor’s online portal. Allow the MDE to put documents on the MAAP-A web page on the Student Assessment/MDE page.		
g. Provide a toll-free Help Desk and Technical Support Desk that will respond to e-mail, web-based live chat, or telephone queries from teachers and administrators, depending on the area of inquiry during the hours of 7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Central Time (CT) on Monday-Friday during the operational test dates with a response time within one (1) business day or less.		
h. Provide customer support for the installation and use of the online assessment software, which includes phone-accessible support personnel		
i. Provide a “help” or “chat” function embedded in the assessment software and automated online or phone-in support services.		
j. Host technology conference calls open to all district technology personnel and district test coordinators to discuss any tech-related questions or issues beginning at least four (4) weeks before the opening of the testing window and ending during the last week of the testing window.		
k. Conduct weekly status update meetings during the year (more frequently during the testing window, if needed) 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... Communication between vendor and MDE personnel is essential. Minutes of these meetings will be provided to the MDE.		
l. Provide MDE with documentation as part of the evaluation process. The technical documentation should include, but is not limited to, the supported purposes, test development procedures, validity, reliability, and testing of students with significant cognitive disabilities (SCD) in the areas of English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and U.S. History.		
m. Maintain security of all individual test results. Individually identifiable student information will be made available only to the MDE, authorized school personnel, and other authorized entities and appropriated by the MDE.		
n. Agree to assist MDE in the process to secure items during test development and assist MDE in responding to and conducting investigations of material and online breaches of test security.		

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Requirement – Program Management, Training, Customer Support, and Reporting	Will Comply	Exception
o. The Offeror shall provide a status report of all work completed during the months that invoices are submitted to the MDE. Receipt and approval of the status report by the MDE shall be required prior to the payment of each invoice.		

IV. Management Factors

147. In this section of the RFP, information is provided on MDE’s expectations and requirements for program management of the Mississippi Academic Assessment Program and the Mississippi Academic Assessment Program – Alternate. The following tasks and responsibilities shall be addressed in the management plan:

- a) Program management plan (key activities)
- b) Project Schedules and timeline management of deliverables
- c) Management meetings (weekly, planning)
- d) Invoices with Status Reports
- e) Deliverables and Enrollment information

Specific examples of the Vendor’s management work products, such as management plans, project calendars, schedules, risk management strategies, etc., should be identified under the relevant requirements and specifications and provided in attachments as appropriate. MDE expects to receive the same or better quality of work throughout the contract, including any extensions, as the examples provided in the proposal.

U. Vendor Qualifications

148. The following minimum qualifications are **MANDATORY**. If, in the opinion of the MDE, the Vendor 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 Vendor 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 provided in the proposal.

149. **MANDATORY:** The Vendor shall provide:

- a. The total number of years in business and the company’s years of experience related to the scope of work;
- b. The age of the Vendor’s business and average number of employees for the past five (5) years;
- c. The capabilities and experiences of the company that will perform the scope of work of required services;
- d. The résumés for the key personnel that will work on the program detailing their qualifications and experiences;
- e. The required references are noted in the RFP – Section IX – References; and
- f. The company’s location(s) of the principal office, including any presence in Mississippi.

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- 150. **MANDATORY:** The Vendor shall provide all services and store data directly related to this contract from an office(s) in the United States. Indicate your agreement with this requirement and identify any locations outside the State of Mississippi where you propose to provide the services described in this solicitation.
- 151. **MANDATORY:** Successful Vendor shall 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.
- 152. **MANDATORY:** The Vendor must disclose any company restructurings, mergers, and acquisitions over the past three (3) years and any planned, future restructures or mergers.
- 153. **MANDATORY:** The Vendor shall ensure that major customer-facing team members assigned to this project shall communicate clearly in the English language, both verbally and in written form.

V. Deliverables

- 154. The Vendor will be responsible for all tasks and deliverables required to complete the project as described in the proposal submitted. It is anticipated that this shall include but not be limited to the following deliverables.

Note: Fall and spring testing dates are not set for the 2025-2026 school year. The following are tentative dates:

MAAP (specific dates will be agreed upon at first planning meeting)

Test	Testing Window
MAAP – Fall 2025 EOC English II, Algebra I, Biology & U.S. History	November – December 2025; to create maximum flexibility (schools will be closed Nov. 25-29 for a holiday), MDE shall have the right to alter these dates, as necessary.
MAAP – Spring 2026 Grades 3-8 ELA, Mathematics, Grade 5 and Grade 8 Science; EOC Algebra I, English II, Biology and U.S. History	March – May 2026; to create maximum flexibility (schools will be out April 18 and 21 or longer), MDE shall have the right to alter these dates, as necessary.
MAAP: Graduating Students Retest Opportunity (EOC)	March -April 2026; to create maximum flexibility, MDE shall have the right to alter these dates, as necessary.
Deliverable	Deliverable Date
Non-secure materials in the District (e.g., TAM and TCM)	No later than two (2) months prior to testing
Secure materials in the District	No later than two (2) weeks prior to testing
Online tutorials available for District use	No later than eight (8) weeks prior to testing
Online test delivery system demonstration	No later than three (3) months prior to testing

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Online test delivery system available for District installation/download	No later than four (4) weeks prior to testing
Test forms loaded in online test delivery system and online test delivery system ready for testing	No later than four (4) weeks prior to testing
Reporting: MAAP Fall Testing – Data File for MDE	No later than January 15, 2026 (4:00 p.m. CT)
Reporting: MAAP Fall Testing – Score Reports	February 2026 (4:00 pm CT)
Reporting: MAAP Fall Testing – Final Data File	February 2026 (4:00 pm CT)
Deliver EOC Spring Retest Scores for Seniors	No later than May 2026 (4:00 pm CT)
Reporting: MAAP Spring Testing – Data File for MDE review	No later than June 15, 2026 (4:00 pm CT)
Reporting: MAAP Spring Testing – Score Reports	No later than July 8, 2026, (4:00 pm CT)
Reporting: MAAP Spring Testing – Final Data File	No later than July 8, 2026, (4:00 pm CT)
Reporting: District Electronic Reports Posted	No later than July 8, 2026, (4:00 pm CT)
Reporting: School Electronic Reports Posted	No later than July 8, 2026, (4:00 pm CT)
Reporting: Individual Student Paper Reports and Student Labels in District	July 25, 2026
Technical Report—Final Version to MDE	October 31, 2026, (4:00 pm CT) – Lagged deliverable due to technical properties of the report.

MAAP-A (specific dates will be agreed upon at first planning meeting)

Test	Testing Window
MAAP-A – Fall 2025 EOC Alternate tests for 4 x 4 block students and re-test students	November – December 2025; MDE shall have the right to alter these dates, as necessary.
MAAP- A – Spring 2026 Operational (Grades 3-8 Alt ELA, Mathematics, Grade 5 and Grade 8 Science; EOC alternate tests)	March 2026 – May 2026; MDE shall have the right to alter these dates, as necessary.
MAAP-A: Graduating Students Retest Opportunity (EOC)	March 2026; to create maximum flexibility, MDE shall have the right to alter these dates, as necessary.
Deliverable	Deliverable Date

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Core Test Forms and field test items approved	No later than four (4) months prior to testing
Non-secure materials in the District (e.g., TAM and TCM)	No later than two (2) months prior to testing
Secure materials in the District	No later than two (2) weeks prior to testing
Online training video/tutorials available for District use	No later than eight (8) weeks prior to testing
Test forms loaded in online test delivery system and online test delivery system ready for testing	No later than four (4) weeks prior to testing
Reporting: MAAP-A Fall Testing – Data File for MDE Reporting : MAAP-A Fall Testing – Data File for Districts	No later than January 2026 (4:00 p.m. CT) No later than January 2026 (4:00 p.m. CT)
Reporting: MAAP-A Fall Testing – Score Reports	February 2026 (4:00 pm CT)
Deliver MAAP-A EOC Spring Retest Scores for Seniors	No later than May 10, 2026 (4:00 pm CT)
Reporting: MAAP-A Spring Testing – Data File for MDE review MAAP-A Spring Testing – Data File for Districts	No later than June 20, 2026 (4:00 pm CT) No later than June 30, 2026 (4:00 pm CT)
Reporting: MAAP- A Spring Testing – Score Reports	No later than June 30, 2026, (4:00 pm CT)
Reporting: MAAP-A District Electronic Reports Posted	No later than June 30, 2026, (4:00 pm CT)
Reporting: MAAP-A School Electronic Reports Posted	No later than June 30, 2026, (4:00 pm CT)
Reporting: MAAP-A Individual Student Paper Reports and Student Labels in District	July 26, 2026
MAAP-A Technical Report—Final Version to MDE	October 31, 2026, (4:00 pm CT) – Lagged deliverable due to technical properties of the report.

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MAAP and MAAP-A Meeting References

Meeting Type	# of Annual Meetings	# of Educators Attending	# of SEA Staff Attending	Vendor Attendance
MAAP Bias Review	Yes	10	1-2	Yes
MAAP Content Review	Yes	8-10 per content area	1-4	Yes
MAAP Data Review (may be virtual)	Yes	8-10 per content area	1-2	Yes
MAAP-A Bias Review	Yes	10	1-2	Yes
MAAP-A Content Review	Yes	8-10 per content area	1-4	Yes
MAAP-A Data Review (may be virtual)	Yes	8-10 per content area	1-2	Yes
MS Technical Advisory Committee	3 (April, August, and November in Jackson, MS)		Open to MDE OSA Personnel	Yes, Program Manager, Content Director, Psychometrician for MAAP and MAAP-A
Planning Meeting (May be virtual) Separate MAAP and MAAP-A on different days	1 August for Year 1		2-4 State Staff	Yes

155. Because of the scope of this project, we believe it shall be possible for different Vendors to arrive at vastly differing estimates of resources required. The table below provides the approximate 2021-2022, 2022-2023, and 2023-2024 students who have tested for the MAAP (fall, spring, no EOC retesters included).

Grade/EOC	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	Braille/LP
Grade 3 ELA/Math	31,353	31,830	32,072	5 Braille/30 LP
Grade 4 ELA/Math	31,979	29,618	30,268	5 Braille/30 LP
Grade 5 ELA/Math	33,200	31,669	29,683	5 Braille/30 LP

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Grade 6 ELA/Math	31,622	32,870	31,541	5 Braille/30 LP
Grade 7 ELA/Math	35,755	31,652	32,752	5 Braille/30 LP
Grade 8 ELA/Math	35,686	34,190	31,471	5 Braille/30 LP
Grade 5 SCI	33,169	31,679	29,631	5 Braille/30 LP
Grade 8 SCI	35,646	34,201	31,329	5 Braille/30 LP
English II	31,069	32,875	30,765	5 Braille/30 LP
Algebra I	30,404	33,343	27,137	5 Braille/30 LP
Biology	31,883	33,844	25,052	5 Braille/30 LP
U.S. History	28,622	29,085	23,238	5 Braille/30 LP

156. For MAAP-A: Because of the scope of this project, we believe it shall be possible for different Vendors to arrive at vastly differing estimates of resources required. The table below provides the approximate 2021-2022, 2022-2023, and 2023-2024 students who have tested for the MAAP-A (fall, spring, no EOC retesters included).

Grade/EOC	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
MAAP-A Grade 3 ELA/Math	1,040	1,157	1,194
MAAP-A Grade 4 ELA/Math	1,083	1,195	1,255
MAAP-A Grade 5 ELA/Math	1,140	1,173	1,226
MAAP-A Grade 6 ELA/Math	1,210	1,200	1,225
MAAP-A Grade 7 ELA/Math	1,201	1,258	1,158
MAAP-A Grade 8 ELA/Math	1,219	1,255	1,295
MAAP-A Grade 5 SCI	563	620	607
MAAP-A Grade 8 SCI	608	580	645

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MAAP-A English II	590	622	577
MAAP-A Algebra I	563	542	538
MAAP-A Biology	803	669	728
U.S. History	N/A	N/A	N/A
MAAP-A Braille			8 [6 – Grade 5, 1 – Grade 6, 1 – Grade 12 Algebra I]
MAAP-A Large Print			17 [1- Alg, 2-Bio, 1-Eng II, 7- ELA (Grades 3, 4, 6, 7, 8), 5-Math (Grades 3, 6, 7, 8), 1-Science (Grade 8)]

W. Other Requirements

157. Vendor shall include sample materials of the following in their proposal:
- a. Samples of the testing portal features.
 - b. Categorized Performance Level Descriptors to measure student abilities in determining intervention for review (samples for MAAP-A)
 - c. Sample Reports for districts, schools, teachers, and parents, for MAAP and MAAP-A (psychometric item parameter reports, item bank, etc.).
 - d. Samples of ancillaries (Test Coordinator Manual, Test Administrator Manual, Score Report Interpretive Guides)
 - e. Sample training materials for MAAP and MAAP-A 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 Vendor for delivery to schools.

X. Reports and Dashboards

158. In accordance with MDE's retention schedule requirements, the Vendor portal shall retain and make accessible all reports for five (5) years.
159. The Vendor will provide a Data File to the MDE after each administration in an agreed upon format and timeline.
160. The Vendor will provide a state report after each administration of an assessment to the MDE in an agreed-upon custom format.

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161. Portal shall be capable of exporting reports into file formats, including but not limited to PDF and MS Excel.
162. MDE shall be notified to any downtime for the reporting dashboard.

Y. Issue Tracking

163. The Vendor shall use an industry-standard tracking system to thoroughly document issues with the portal for MDE.
164. Describe how operational trouble and software performance issues are submitted, prioritized, tracked, and resolved.
165. Describe how support issues are requested, prioritized, tracked, and resolved.
166. Detail the escalation procedures for responding to trouble tickets, software performance, and user support issues.

Z. Data Management for MAAP and MAAP-A

167. Vendor shall not store or transfer State data outside of the United States. This included backup data and disaster recovery locations. The Vendor will permit its personnel and contractors to access State data remotely only as required to provide technical support.
168. The MDE shall own the raw and final data generated through the contract awarded because of this solicitation. The Vendor 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.
169. A Data Sharing Agreement shall be signed between the Vendor and the MDE Data Sharing Governance board to collect and protect student personally identifiable information from educational records.