

RFP – 2015-010
 Department of Education
 Career and Technical Education Online Assessments
 QUESTIONS & ANSWERS
 VENDOR CONFERENCE ~ September 24, 2014

	Section	QUESTION	ANSWER
1.		Is the purpose of this RFP to find an off-the-shelf assessment to measure technical skills of career and technical students at the end of their studies?	Yes, though the off-the-shelf system should be adaptable enough to reflect New Hampshire’s program offerings and associated core competencies.
2.		Is this RFP focused on looking for curriculum or is it strictly for assessment software?	New Hampshire is not seeking curriculum, only web-based software with appropriate assessment content. If appropriate content does not currently exist for a particular CTE program or programs, the State would expect to work with the Vendor to develop such content.
3.		Is the Agency looking for both end-of-course and end-of-program assessments?	The NH Department of Education is looking specifically for end-of-program assessments, but would also welcome an option to provide end-of-course assessments.
4.	Attachment C2: Requirements – Business Requirements (pp.100-101)	<p>What if an assessment does not exist for a NH program? Is the vendor responsible for assessment development?</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Will the vendor be expected to develop new valid and reliable technical assessments for all NH CTE Career Clusters?</p>	<p>Per “Attachment C2: Requirements,” <u>Business Requirements</u>:</p> <p><u>Assessment Requirements</u> (p.100) B2.10: Where assessments are not already in existence, procedures shall be in place to create assessments in accordance with national standards, New Hampshire core program competencies, and established exam creation methodology.</p> <p><u>Content Requirements</u> (p. 101) B3.2: Where assessment content is not already developed for a particular CTE program, the Vendor will work with the NHDOE to identify appropriate national standards and New Hampshire program core competencies to be used by the Vendor in developing appropriate content.</p>

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5.		What is the targeted amount of the contract per year?	\$115,000 per State fiscal year through June 2019, with the possibility of a contract extension at that time.
6.		When is peak demand period?	January and May of each year.
7.		Is the state looking to own the software throughout and after the contract period?	The State will consider alternative business models for procuring this system. The state is not necessarily looking to own the software, but does expect to own the data throughout and after the contract period.
8.		Is this software intended to reside on NH servers only?	The software would be Vendor-hosted and would reside on the Vendor's server(s), not New Hampshire's.
9.		Does the system for NH have to be on separate hardware or can the data be included within the Vendor's secure platform?	The State would like further clarification of this question.

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10.		What third party certification and licensing exams are currently being used?	<p>At present, NH accepts the following third party certification and licensing exams, and skill assessments, for the purposes of federal reporting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NATEF ASE Exam: Maintenance and Light Repair • CISCO • CCNA • Network+ • A+ • CompTIA Strata IT Fundamentals • ProStart • ServSafe • Final Cut Pro • Adobe • NCHSE Health Science Assessment • EMT • LNA • Firefighter I • Project Lead the Way • American Welding Society (AWS)
11.		How are students tracked within the system – unique state ID? Or some other method?	<p>Students would be tracked with a unique ID. NH students are all assigned a unique identifier, called a SASID (State Assigned Student ID). It is possible that this SASID may be used to track students in the Vendor’s online assessment system. However, if a Vendor’s system has the capability of automatically assigning a unique identifier to students, such a capability may also be considered as a way to track students without using personally identifiable information.</p>
12.		The RFP applies to secondary students. Does NH anticipate broadening system use to postsecondary CTE centers at a later date?	<p>No, the State does not anticipate broadening the system to include postsecondary.</p>

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13.		We noticed performance assessments referenced in your program competencies. Are you looking for a vendor to provide and deliver both written and performance-based assessments?	The Vendor would not be required to provide and deliver written assessments. The performance assessments included in New Hampshire’s competency documents are intended primarily for instructors as scenarios they may use while teaching their students a particular skill or set of skills.
14.		Must third-party assessments be aligned to the common core standards for English/Language Arts/Literacy, Mathematics, Science, and Art?	It is not required that third-party assessments be aligned to the common core standards for English/Language Arts/Literacy, Mathematics, Science and Art.
15.	Section D-1, “Proposed Software Solution” Topic 1 – Description of Solution (p.33)	On Page 33, Topic 1, there is reference to NH’s accounts payable and business processes. We did not find anything in the document that spoke to the specific business processes. Can you please clarify the processes or provide a link to where this information is detailed?	The passage referenced is on page 33 of the RFP: In what ways does your proposed solution meet our accounts receivable and accounts payable business processes? This item was included in error and does not apply to the purposes of this RFP. It has been removed through the Addendum process (please refer to Addendum 2).
16.		The number of centers is indicated (28), but can you tell us the approximate number of completers each year from those centers both for end-of-program and end-of-course? AND What is the number of students to be tested (approximately) per year?	New Hampshire’s secondary CTE centers serve between 10,000 and 11,000 students per school year. Of these students, approximately one-third – 3,000 to 4,000 students – will be program completers in that school year.

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17.		It is assumed that the majority of the testing will occur in the spring of each year. Will there be other times of the year when students will be using the assessments?	Students may make use of the assessments during the mid-winter months, particularly January and February. It is possible for students to complete their CTE program during the first semester of the school year, and they would likely take their end-of-program assessment at that time. The same would hold true for end-of-course assessments if those are used.
18.	Section 4, “Instructions” 4.8 – “Property of the State” (p. 9)	Under property of the state, is there an opportunity to mark proposal response items as proprietary and not for future distribution of any kind?	<p>The passage referenced is on page 9 of the RFP:</p> <p>4.8 Property of the State All material received in response to this RFP shall become the property of the State and will not be returned to the Vendor. Upon Contract award, the State reserves the right to use any information presented in any Proposal.</p> <p>Please refer to Section 4.10: Confidentiality. This section more clearly describes the process used in the event of a Right to Know request.</p>
19.	Appendix A-1, “Goals and Objectives...” (p.24).	Under Goals and Objectives, in light of Perkins reauthorization occurring during the life of this contract, how will the state compensate for changes to federal accountability after the contract has been formalized?	<p>The passage referenced is on page 24 of the RFP:</p> <p>Ensure that data collected are valid and reliable, and are usable for the purposes of state and federal accountability reporting and local program improvement.</p> <p>Any changes that may need to be made to the Goals and Objectives of the Contract due to changes in federal accountability shall be carried out in accordance with the practices outlined in the Change Order process (Section H-25.7) and the Amendment process (Section 18 of the P-37), both found in Appendix H – State of New Hampshire Terms and Conditions (pp. 65-89).</p>

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20.	Appendix A-1, “Goals and Objectives...” (p.25)	Also under Goals and Objectives (added value section). What is the expected format of the illustration of technical competency (e.g., paper based; electronic; new media; or some combination)?	<p>The passage referenced is on page 25 of the RFP:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Offer added value to schools and students by providing a sound, analytically proven method for assessing career technical skill proficiency, which those students can take with them after high school to illustrate their technical competency to postsecondary institutions and potential employers.</p> <p>The expected format for illustration of technical competency would be an electronic certificate and/or report that could be printed by the school or the student, and which could be included as part of a postsecondary application or referenced as part of an employment application.</p>
21.	<p>Section 5.1, “Scoring Proposals” (p.16)</p> <p>Section 5.4.5, “Scoring the Software Solution Cost” (p.21)</p> <p>Appendix F: Pricing Worksheets (pp. 54-55)</p>	Under Scoring, are the solution costs rates based on an overall five year cost or an annual average?	Please refer to Section 5.4.5: Scoring the Software Solution Cost (p. 21) and Appendix F: Pricing Worksheets (pp. 54-55), as amended through Addendum 2.

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22.	Section H-25.8.1, "Software License Grant" (p73)	Under Licensing, the language of H-25.8.1 is confusing. Part of the language references software documentation (as does the title) and part references the software itself. Please clarify if the expectation is for proprietary software to be copied on to NH servers.	<p>The passage referenced is on page 73 of the RFP:</p> <p>H-25.8.1 Software License Grant The Software License shall grant the State a worldwide, perpetual, irrevocable, non-exclusive, non-transferable, limited license to use the Software and its associated Documentation, subject to the terms of the Contract.</p> <p>The State may allow its agents and Vendors to access and use the Software, and in such event, the State shall first obtain written agreement from such agents and Vendors that each shall abide by the terms and conditions set forth herein.</p> <p>The State will consider alternative licensing and business models to obtain the required services. We prefer a Vendor hosted solution.</p> <p>Proprietary software is not to be copied onto NH servers. The assessment system will be hosted on the Vendor's own servers. Section H-25.8.1 of the RFP provides that the State shall have full use of the Vendor's software solution and accompanying documentation per the terms of the Contract. The license does not grant the State ownership of the software.</p>
23.	Section H-25.8.4, "Title" (p.74)	Under Licensing (H-25-8.4), please clarify what is meant by providing intellectual property rights. Is it NH's intention to own the software and all IP or just the information contained in it?	<p>The passage referenced is on page 74 of the RFP:</p> <p>H-25.8.4 Title The Vendor must hold the right to allow the State to use the Software or (the Vendor must) hold all title, right, and interest (including all ownership and intellectual property rights) in the Software and its associated Documentation.</p> <p>The section means that the Vendor must have the proper authorization to allow the State to utilize the software, documentation, and other associated materials. It does not grant the State ownership of these things.</p>

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24.		The State expects assessments to be aligned with the State’s CTE program core competencies. Does the State require a one-to-one alignment with the competencies?	Assessments should track close enough to the core competencies to be an accurate measurement of New Hampshire CTE student achievement, but it does not have to be an exact one-to-one match.
25.		Does the State require the recipient of these funds to provide a document that shows one-to-one alignment between the core competencies and the assessment?	No, this is not required.
26.		Can a list of individuals or organizations in attendance at the Vendor Conference be provided to prospective contractors pursuing this RFP opportunity?	It is State policy not to share vendor information, nor to disclose a chosen vendor before a contract has been awarded and approved through Governor and Council.
27.		Do federal regulations related to small business subcontractors receiving at least 20% of government prime contract dollars apply to any subcontracts awarded through this RFP?	No.
28.		Would the NH DOE consider Career Cluster (e.g. Agriculture, Food, & Natural Resources Career Cluster Assessment), rather than program-level assessments (e.g. Animal Sciences)?	No. We need program level assessments that not only give us student data but data related to gap analysis of questions that will lead to improvements in instruction at the program level.

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29.		<p>Given the amount of programs listed on the website and the amount of programs listed during the vendor conference that already have IRC assessments, it seems as though there are approximately 42 programs in in need of assessments. Are these expected to be rolled out in May/June 2015, or is the NHDOE open to staggering the roll-out of assessments over multiple years?</p>	<p>The State's preference is to roll-out as many assessments at once as possible. However, should assessments need to be developed, the vendor may develop and roll them out over an additional one to two year span.</p>