CT-SEDS

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) is seeking to develop a secure, Web-based special education data and IEP management system (CT-SEDS) for use across the state by those responsible for the implementation of the IDEA. Please see the Statement of Work for full details https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/RFP/Connecticut_Special_Education_Data_System.pdf?la=en. As questions are submitted to the department, this FAQ will be updated for all interested parties. If you would like to submit a question for clarification please do so to: Ajit Gopalakrishnan at: Ajit.Gopalakrishnan@ct.gov.

Bid/Submission Questions:

>>>Do you anticipate extending the bid due date?

We received requests from some of you to extend the deadline in order to facilitate a more comprehensive submission. After some consideration, we are able to extend the submission deadline for this procurement by two weeks.

The new submission deadline will be **5 pm on Monday, March 2, 2020**. I hope this gives you the necessary time to put the finishing touches on your proposals prior to submission.

>>>What additional details are you willing to provide, if any, beyond what is stated in bid documents concerning how you will identify the winning bid?

The Statement of Work contains the requisite details.

>>>Was this bid posted to the nationwide free bid notification website at www.mygovwatch.com?
>>> Other than your own website, where was this bid posted?

The announcement has been posted to both the Department of Education https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/RFP/Request-for-Proposals/2020-RFPs

and the CT Department of Administrative Services State Contracting Portal https://biznet.ct.gov/SCP_Search/BidDetail.aspx?CID=52035.

Note that the CSDE is procuring this cloud-hosted solution under an existing DAS cloud-hosting contract that was listed in the procurement announcement. This contract has 6 approved vendors. Any response to this procurement must come through one of those six approved vendors.

>>>> Can an approved reseller submit a proposal on behalf of more than one vendor?

Yes.

>>>> Do vendors (such as PowerSchool) complete the RFP on PowerSchool letterhead, templates, etc. and the reseller simply submits it on our behalf? What is the role of the approved reseller in this process? Is there an expectation from the CSDE that the reseller has more involvement not just in the submission of the RFP but throughout the implementation of the project?

Please contact DAS Procurement for contract administration questions. The contact person at DAS Procurement is Gregory Mooney. His email address is Gregory.Mooney@ct.gov and his phone number is 860-713-5755

>>> The Procurement Announcement says "The selected vendor will also need to work with the CSDE to complete the Cloud Questionnaire that is required by DAS/BEST." Does this mean we do not need to complete this as part of the initial proposal and that only if selected, we need to complete? Or, do all vendors responding to the RFP need to complete and return with the proposal?

The Cloud Questionnaire does not need to be completed as part of the initial proposal.

>>> Per the Scope of Work: "To be considered for this procurement, all work plans/proposals in PDF format must be received" – Is there a limitation on size of the PDF file to be submitted?

We recommend that the PDF file not exceed 25 MB. All proposals received by CSDE will receive an acknowledgement via reply email. To ensure that there are no technical difficulties with the transmission, we strongly recommend that proposals be submitted at least a day in advance of the submission deadline.

>>> Is there an allocated budget for this project?

The CSDE has sufficient funds to cover the expected cost of this project.

>>> What is the evaluation criteria/weightage for the winning bid for experience; qualifications; product features; price proposal; etc.?

As mentioned on page 21 of the Statement of Work, "All proposals responding to this statement of work should address each of the items detailed below." The CSDE will select the proposal that best meets its needs.

>>> Are you planning to invite the short-listed vendors for a demo?

Possibly.

>>> *What is the expected contract award date for CT-SEDS?*

This procurement is being conducted under the auspices of an existing contract – the Connecticut State Department of Administrative Services, Procurement Services, 18PSX0210 Contract Award/Supplement and Participating Addendum. Once a vendor is selected, the CSDE expects work to begin sometime in spring 2020.

>>>*The Work Plan instructions require the responder to list and identify subcontractors, if any, and delineate their role(s) in relation to the Work Plan. (page21)*
The requirement in C.d states" Provide information regarding any known subcontractors the responder anticipates utilizing, including the proposed products or services to be provided by a subcontractor and the subcontractor's related qualifications and experience.*
Please provide clarification as to what is required in each section.*

As already stated, please list the subcontractors if any, identify their roles, their proposed products or services, and the subcontractor's related qualifications and experience. If the vendor knows subcontractors will be necessary but does not know who will fill the role at this time, note that.

>>>>*The budget requirements various presentations of proposed costs for this effort including*
a-"itemized, detailed budget…with the completion of each major component…"*
b-"breakdown of all costs…"*
c-"cost...cross reference…"*
d. Upfront Costs…"*
Please provide a common format/template for responders. This will assure a common view of costs across all responders and facilitate the State's evaluation of the proposal responses*

The CSDE will not be providing a cost proposal template. The Statement of Work describes nine major components. At a minimum, the cost proposal should provide an estimate of the costs for each of the nine components. However, in addition to the cost for each of the nine components, the CSDE is interested in getting cost details as they pertain to the technical requirements – particularly to see if certain technical requirements will prove to be more costly than others.

>>>*If a vendor is selected to present an oral demonstration is there an estimated timeline that would be available?*

The CSDE will review all proposals received in an expeditious manner. The CSDE estimates that selected vendors will be invited to present sometime in the March/April timeframe though this could change based on the number of proposals received and the time it takes CSDE to thoroughly receive all proposals received.

>>> We are intending to bid on the CT-SEDS Data Management System. My question is how we can propose additions to the standard contract language to account for Intellectual Property protection, product warranties and the like. In the ordinary course of an RFP, we would attach an additions/exceptions list. Is that an acceptable way to proceed?

Yes. You may include those business terms in your response.

IEP / Special Education Questions:

>>>Do you know if the draft IEP document demonstrated on your site in a video will be the required format?

The most current version of the draft IEP is included in the Statement of Work. The IEP will not be "finalized" until work with a selected contactor commences. However, the adaptive nature of the document described in the posted video is the ultimate goal.

>>>How many Special Ed Students are currently enrolled in the State of Connecticut?

82,336 (ages 3-21) in 2018-19.

>>>Does CSDE want a SEDS system that accommodates Part C Data Collection (0-3 years) also or just to be integrated with the existing Part C application to get nightly Birth to Three Notification Reports?

The Part C System is in a completely different state agency in Connecticut. CT-SEDS only needs to integrate the B23 Notification Reports.

Scope of Work Questions:

>>>Are you expecting to build the entire system from the scratch or are you open to a proposal for customizing an existing off-the shelf product?

We are open to customizing an off-the-shelf product so long as the adaptive nature of the system outlined in the Statement of Work can be accomplished.

>>>Are you interested in the Early-On/Intervention system component as well?

If by "Early-On/Intervention" you're referring to systems such as Response-to-Intervention (RTI), Scientific Research Based Intervention (SRBI), or Multi-Tier System of Supports (MTSS), then yes, we would like such components to be available in CT-SEDS for districts to purchase at their own cost. This is addressed in item 18 in the Scope of Services section on page 5 of the c.

>>>*How many years of legacy data are you planning to bring into the new system? If yes, in what format will the data be provided?*

Since there will be a new IEP, the CSDE is currently expecting minimal migration of legacy data (e.g., primary disability, most recent annual review, re-evaluation dates); these data can be provided in a mutually agreeable format. However, please note that the CSDE is expecting a robust "document repository and retention module to archive records, allow for storage of historical information in an electronic "file cabinet" and auto-delete upon established official dates"; this module is expected to "Facilitate the migration of documents into the repository to retain required historical records" (see page 4 of the Statement of Work). The document repository and retention module is a required component. To reiterate, the CSDE is expecting that this document repository will migrate legacy IEPs and related documents (PDF versions are sufficient). Please review other references to the documentary repository module in the Statement of Work for a fuller understanding of the expectations of CT-SEDS.

Vendor Follow up Question:

>>>*We would like to know if the Legacy IEPs and related documents are available in soft copies (PDFs) or are they simply available on Paper with the different Districts. The answer to this question would help us determine the scope of training and the scope of work for data migration.*

They should be available as soft copies (PDFs).

>>>*Would you like the end users (case workers and service providers) to be able to upload the IEPs and related documents into the new system or will they be uploaded per district/LEA?*

Combination of both approaches.

>>>*If not, will CSDE be scanning them and providing them to the vendors in an electronic format to be uploaded into the system during data migration to ensure that they are tied to the correct corresponding student using their unique Student/State ID?*

No. CSDE does not have access to these documents.

>>>*How many years of legacy data – IEPs and related documents – are you planning to bring over into the new system/document repository? This will help determine the current and future capacity of the system.*

The answer to this question will be different for each district depending upon how long the students have been in their current system. Some districts have a document repository, others don't. We would like to be able to have all of the archived information that a district has transferred over. For some students that would be 1 year….for high school students it could be 9 or more years of archived data.

>>>Apart from the Student Identifier System, Student Information System, and State Medicaid, how many other systems is the proposed SEDS expected to integrate with?

All systems with which CT-SEDS is expected to integrate are noted in the Statement of Work.

>>>Please confirm that the following counts are accurate as posted on EDSight. Total Districts: 205 Total Schools: 1,511

They are accurate but can change as schools/programs open and close. Only 170 of those districts are Nexus districts. The counts also do NOT include the approximately 92 Approved Private Special Education Programs (APSEPs) that will need access to the system.

>>>For the pilot - How many districts will be included?

We anticipate seeking volunteers. Since the pilot will require double work by the districts, we don't anticipate more than 10-12 volunteers. We however wouldn't want to exclude any district that is interested in participating in the pilot.

>>>Is language translation a requirement for the software applications? If so what languages?

Under Title VI "vital written material" must be translated. An IEP is considered vital. IDEA requires the district to ensure that the parent understands the proceedings of the IEP meeting (PPT) including interpreters…and for certain notices to be in the parent's native language. Ultimately, the responsibility for presenting information to the parent in a manner that is understandable is a district's responsibility; however, the CSDE is interested in supporting districts by having a CT-SEDS system that has the capability to translate the IEP form in a parent's native language. The top 10 most common languages in CT are Spanish, Portuguese, Polish, Arabic, Albanian, Chinese, Haitian Creole, Vietnamese, Urdu, and Bosnian.

>>>Technical Requirement number TR.26 says to "Guarantee" the CT-SEDS is interoperable on a "Nearly real-time basis" - can CSDE clarify "Guarantee" and "Nearly real-time" as these terms are vague.

Real-time means a system in which input data is processed within milliseconds so that it is available virtually immediately. By "nearly" real-time, the CSDE means a system that will be interoperable with CSDE data systems not on a "real-time" basis, but pretty close to it. By guarantee, the CSDE expects that the vendor will provide a formal assurance that their system will be interoperable on a nearly real-time basis with CSDE data systems.

>>> ***Item 20 includes the following requirement: "Online parent/guardian training guide should also be included?" Please provide additional information or expectations relative to this guide.***

We're expecting a basic downloadable PDF document with simple step-by-step instructions on how to navigate the parent portal. E.g., how to sign in, how to see old IEPs, where to find most current IEP, etc. Since this is intended for parents, we expect this to be brief, succinct, and parent friendly.