



Sept. 26, 2018

To: All Potential Bidders

From: Ken Discher, Issuing Officer

Subject: RFP1219282004 – DOE School Interoperability Framework (SIF) system

Amendment One

Please amend the subject RFP to include answers to the following timely received questions. This Amendment One shall supersede, modify and/or change all requirements to the contrary in the RFP and associated documents.

1. **Question 1 (Q1):** Whether companies from Outside USA can apply for this? (like, from India or Canada.)
Answer 1 (A1): Contractors must be able to comply with all RFP requirements and with all provisions of the planned contract terms and conditions as found within the RFP document.
2. **Q2:** Whether we need to come over there for meetings?
A2: On-site meetings will be negotiated with the successful vendor.
3. **Q3:** Can we perform the tasks (related to RFP) outside USA? (like, from India or Canada.)
A3: See Answer to Question #1.
4. **Q4:** Can we submit the proposals via email?
A4: No. Proposals must be submitted in the manner prescribed in RFP Section 3.1, Instructions.
5. **Q5:** Where does IDOE expect to host this finished platform and is that part of the solution to purchase a new hardware platform?
A5: See RFP Section 4.1.7. It is a mandatory requirement that the vendor host and maintain the solution as long as a contract with the State of Iowa is in place.
6. **Q6:** Concerning RFP Sec. 4.1.4, page 21. What forms of authentication/authorization are used by the Department's security portal and the State of Iowa's Enterprise Authentication and Authorization system? If there are multiple authorization/authentication methods used, Is the vendor expected to support all the forms or just one of the forms?
A6: More information on the Authentication and Authorization system can be found at: <https://wiki.iowa.gov/xwiki/bin/view/OCIO/ENTAADeveloperGuidebook>

7. **Q7:** Concerning RFP Sec. 4.1.5, page 22. Could you please provide access to the requirements of the Iowa SIF Profile?

A7: The Iowa SIF profile is posted on the IDOE website at: <https://educateiowa.gov/data-reporting/schools-interoperability-framework-sif>

8. **Q8:** Concerning RFP Sec. 4.2.2, page 23. How are “User friendly notifications, views, and exports of error messages for [...connectivity issues and data validation issues]” currently supplied? What notification methods are expected?

A8: There is not an expected set of error messages beyond the examples listed in the RFP - the vendor should describe recommendations in its response to the RFP. Examples of notification methods may include email, text, and messages within the user interface.

9. **Q9:** Concerning RFP Sec. 4.2.3, page 23. Will external systems access the ODS data using SIF3 APIs or will they expect other means of access such as flat-file exports, or direct database access? How many external systems to you expect will be accessing the ODS data? With respect to support for transcript and student record exchange (SRE), does this refer specifically to SIF3 functional services (i.e. <http://access4learningna.github.io/sif-sre-raml/sreJobs.html>) or simply the ability to create transcript and SRE type aggregate objects containing the learner’s entire data set?

A9: The vendor should assume all three mechanisms noted in the question are possible pathways for data exchange with downstream systems. Additional data exchange mechanisms may arise in the future. The successful vendor will work with the IDOE to create a small set of standard options for data exchange, to provide a balance for flexibility and best-fit solutions.

At a minimum, it is envisioned that six systems will use data from the ODS. Three systems referenced in the RFP - Student Locator, State Reporting, and the MTSS - will directly and immediately interact with the ODS and will require a high-performance solution. Additional integrations may be added rapidly, examples include a statewide IEP/IFSP data system, statewide rostering for assessment delivery and a secure data store to be used for analysis, reporting, warehousing, and process support.

A solution featuring SIF 3 Functional Services for Student Record Exchange would align with the state's needs and will be given full consideration. Proposed solutions that leverage other technologies will be given equal consideration, assuming all system requirements are met.

10. Q10: Concerning RFP Sec. 4.2.4, page 23. Who is currently providing the state data warehouse that the vendor needs to integrate with? Is the expectation that the vendor replace the existing warehouse and reports, or only be responsible for the unit data, aggregate data, and quality of the data populating the warehouse? Could you please provide the IDOE defined state reporting tables and mappings of those tables to SIF objects? What are examples of aggregations, transformations and validations that are used to support state reporting? With respect to allowing specific edits to be accepted into frozen (static) state reporting data: Is the assumption correct that the data edits are made in the system of record (e.g. district SIS) and then moved to the static dataset on an individual basis? If so, would you expect the updates to update the static dataset via a date range? If not, would you elaborate on the expected workflow to move changes into the static dataset?

A10: There is not mention of integration with the state data warehouse in Section 4.2.4. The ODS described in this RFP does not currently exist. Replacing the existing IDOE longitudinal data warehouse is not an included requirement in this RFP.

Data edits are made in the system of record. There is not an expected workflow for how those data edits update the static dataset - the vendor should describe a recommended workflow in its response to the RFP.

An example of an aggregation process applied to record-level data in current collection processes is one of storing a simple count of enrollments of students in sections of courses directly on the outbound course record itself, as a convenience for further operational needs. An example of a current transformation process is to collapse the more-normalized SIF object structure for courses and grades and sections and students, the outcome being storage of the final grade value directly on the student-section-enrollment relationship table. Current validation processes examine a wide range of business rules, from data format and codeset adherence to gross measures such as ensuring all buildings are represented in a district's data submission and ensuring that students are not actively enrolled in a full-time arrangement at more than one organization simultaneously.

Detailed documentation of state reporting tables and mappings from SIF objects to those tables will be provided to the successful vendor during contract execution.

11. Q11: Concerning RFP Sec. 4.2.5, page 24. Is there currently a choreography in place for Uniq-ID assignment and write back? If so, please describe the choreography and the delineation between the vendor and the Uniq-ID provider for this process. Does the state or Uniq-ID provider currently have a process for identifying near-matches and assigning IDs, is the vendor expected to replace these processes?

A11: Student Information System (SIS) SIF agents provide student and enrollment data through both request / response and event-driven messages to the SIF data collection system. Student and enrollment data is transferred to the Uniq-ID product. The data elements and values required by Uniq-ID for State Student ID management are documented in Iowa's State SIF Profile.

The respondent should propose a solution that connects the student and enrollment data acquired via SIF to the state's Uniq-ID implementation, and communicates with district staff to ensure appropriate process engagement.

State Student ID matching and near-match identification is handled by Uniq-ID. In the existing implementation, near-match resolution is an end-user-guided resolution and

assignment process completed using the Uniq-ID user interface. Upon assignment of an ID to a student by Uniq-ID, that fact and the value of the ID itself must be communicated, using the SIF data system, back to the SIS. The SIS will consume the message and write the ID back to its internal data store.

12. Q12: Is the State going to require every district and charter school to use the SIF solution for data collection?

A12: The State will expect that all entities legally required to participate in data collections have data populated into the ODS. This may happen directly through SIF or through other means such as those mentioned in the last bullet in Sec. 4.2.1. The State prefers SIF as the data collection method of choice; data collection through other means will be considered only after full consideration has eliminated a possible SIF-based solution.

13. Q13: In RFP Att #3, Page 33 # 2, It states “(1) fully complete and sign Part 2 of Form 22, (2) conspicuously mark the outside of its Proposal as containing confidential information, (3) mark each page upon which the Respondent believes confidential information appears and CLEARLY IDENTIFY EACH ITEM for which confidential treatment is requested; MARKING A PAGE IN THE PAGE MARGIN IS NOT SUFFICIENT IDENTIFICATION, and (4) submit a “Public Copy” from which the confidential information has been excised.” For this requirement, should confidential information be marked in the Original copy, or should it be marked/removed only in the Public Copy?

A13: Items (2) and (3) of the Question Q13 should be applied to the Original copy and copies. Item (4) concerns submittal of a “Public Copy”. Additional information about submitting such a “Public Copy” is found within RFP Att. #3.

14. Q14: Terms and conditions of the RFP are referenced on page 18 “Acceptance of the Terms and Conditions.” Does this refer to Section 6 Contract Terms and Conditions on pages 28-29 as well as Attachment 6 Terms and Conditions Iowa Department of Education SIF System only, or are Attachments 7 – 9 also part of the terms and conditions?

A14: It refers to all Terms and Conditions of the RFP which includes but is not limited to RFP Section 6 and RFP Attachments 6 – 9.

15. Q15: Page 88 of Attachment #9 includes a signature line. Does this form need to be signed? If so, where should it be included in the response?

A15: No, it does not need to be signed.

16. Q16: Please clarify the question 3.2.5.1. Does IDOE want to know if the vendor’s state has a preference for in-state vendors?

A16: Yes.

17. Q17: Under 4.2.4 State Reporting, are the state reporting data tables housed in the Ed Insight Data Warehouse (i.e., the eScholar Complete Data Warehouse)?

A17: No.

- 18. Q18:** What data elements does IDOE expect to move through SIF and into the ODS?
In addition to the current data that's being loaded into the state reporting tables, does the IDOE anticipate expanding what is stored in the state reporting tables?
A18: See the Answer to Question #Q7 for information on the state's required data elements. The IDOE may expand operations to include additional data needed for transcript exchange and IEP/IFSP in the near future.
- 19. Q19:** The RFP refers to expanded data collection in several areas. What are some examples or use cases of these expansions?
A19: See the Answer to Question #7 for information on the state's required data elements. The IDOE may expand operations to include additional data needed for transcript exchange and IEP/IFSP in the near future.
- 20. Q20:** Does IDOE have a learning management system (LMS) to distribute professional development/training materials to staff?
A20: No.
- 21. Q21:** How many individuals will require training, including staff and administrators?
A21: See RFP Section 4.2.8. It is expected that the vendor train IDOE staff and not district/school staff. The IDOE staff training may include approximately 30 people.
- 22. Q22:** What is the funding source for this project? Does IDOE have a budget for both initial implementation and maintenance/support in subsequent years?
A22: The IDOE has planned funding for initial implementation and ongoing maintenance and support in subsequent years.