

Information being requested:

This RFI requests that vendors provide brief descriptions and cost estimates for any existing vendor products or systems or any customized products they have developed with state(s) or other entities which meet the criteria of one or more of the components described below. This RFI is being issued to obtain information only and is not intended to result in contracts or vendor agreements with any respondent. Respondents to this RFI will not be excluded from eligibility to participate in any future requests for proposals (RFPs) based on their decision to respond to this RFI or on the content of their responses to this RFI.

While we are interested in responses that encompass all functional components, we are also interested in responses that cover discrete functional components of the entire system.

Please provide answers to the questions in the prescribed format and supporting materials that describe the proposed assessment and related issues.

1. Background

- a. Provide a brief history of the organization and its governance structure.
- b. Identify the individuals from the organization that will be working with Arizona officials on all aspects of the assessments' implementation.

2. Overview of assessment

- a. Describe the assessments, the grades assessed, the subject areas included, and the formative, diagnostic and summative components. Also describe available end-of-course assessments for grades nine through eleven.
- b. Describe the timeline for the development of the assessments to ensure full implementation by the 2014 – 2015 academic year.
- c. Describe how, and the degree to which, the assessments are specifically aligned to Arizona's academic standards in mathematics and English language arts (reading and writing), include any alignment studies, if available.
- d. Describe how the assessments' results can be compared to other states' criterion-referenced assessments expected to be in use beginning in the 2014-2015 academic year.
- e. Describe how the assessments are aligned to college / career expectations. Describe the validation process, including the role of post-secondary education in establishing the readiness expectations. Include any alignment studies, if available.
- f. Describe the available accessibility features, as well as assessment accommodations for individuals with disabilities and English Language Learners.
- g. Describe any practice and/or sample assessments that are available.

3. Computer-based assessments

- a. If applicable, describe the computer-based option(s) for the administration of the assessments.
- b. If applicable, describe the technological specifications for the administration of the assessments. This should include specifications for computer hardware, input devices, security requirements, bandwidth, web browser requirements, and platform software.

- c. Describe any available training and technical support that is available for the computer-based assessments.
- d. If the assessment is computer-based is there a paper / pencil option?

4. Assessment administration

- a. Describe the total anticipated testing time for each assessment (mathematics, reading, and writing) by grade level. If computer-based, include the calculated student to device ratio.
- b. Identify the anticipated testing window for each assessment by grade level.
- c. Describe the training needs and available training for teachers and administrators pertaining to the administration of the assessments.

5. Assessment standards setting and scoring

- a. Describe the standards setting process.
- b. If already established, describe the performance levels and the performance level descriptors for each category.
- c. Describe the score reports available to teachers, students and parents. The description should include:
 - i. How the reports illustrate a student's progress on the continuum toward college and career readiness, grade by grade, and course by course; and
 - ii. How the reports are instructionally valuable, easy to understand by all audiences, and are delivered in time to provide useful, actionable data to students, parents, and teachers.
- d. Describe the process and timelines for scoring the assessments. Include computer-based and pencil / paper processes and timelines, as applicable.
- e. Describe how scores on the assessments will be comparable to other common college/career ready assessments.

6. Assessment development

- a. Describe how the development of the assessments will adhere to the principles of universal design, so that the testing interface, whether paper- or technology-based, does not impede student performance.
- b. Describe any comparability studies between the paper/pencil and computer-based assessments.
- c. Describe the processes for item development. The description should include:
 - i. How the reading and writing items will require students to demonstrate a range of higher-order, analytical thinking and performance skills in reading, writing and research based on the depth and complexity of the standards, allowing robust information to be gathered for students with varied levels of achievement; and
 - ii. How the mathematics items will require students to demonstrate a range of performance based on the depth and complexity of the standards, allowing robust information to be gathered for students with varied levels of achievement.
- d. Describe the procedures used to ensure all test items are properly aligned to applicable standards and avoid bias. Include the role of state representatives in these processes.

- e. Describe the procedures for ongoing assessment item development, including procedures to accommodate any future modifications to the relevant academic standards.
- f. Describe field testing procedures and timelines for the assessments. Include information regarding field testing of Arizona students, if applicable.

7. Assessment Cost

- a. Describe the pricing structure including the cost per student.

Instructions

Any submitted materials considered by the respondent to be proprietary or confidential shall be clearly marked as such and provided as a separate section in your response. In response to such requests, the State will make reasonable efforts to maintain confidentiality of these materials to the extent permissible by law. However, should the State be required to release these materials, the State will provide the respondent reasonable notice in advance of doing so in order to allow the respondent time to take any action to prevent these materials from being released.

CLARIFICATION OF SOLICITATION REQUIREMENTS

It is the responsibility of all Offerors to examine the RFI and seek clarification of any item or requirement that may be clear or unclear to them and to check all offers for accuracy before submittal to SBE/ADE.

Any questions regarding this solicitation can be answered by emailing the contact person listed on the title page of this solicitation. All questions must be in writing. The Chief Procurement Officer is the only authorized person to give information as to the requirements of the solicitation in addition to that contained in the written documents.

Questions should be emailed and received by Chief Procurement Officer no less than seventy-two hours before the RFI due date and time.

All questions must reference the page and item that is to be addressed.

All addendums should be acknowledged using the Addendums Acknowledgement Form included in this document. No verbal or written information, which is obtained other than by information in this document or by Addendum to this solicitation, will be binding on the Arizona Department of Education.

I/We _____ the undersigned, do hereby submit this response for information with regard to the Standards-Based Competency Assessments in accordance with ARS §41-2555 Request for Information specification contained herein.

Name

Date

Company Name

Title

Address

Telephone Number