STATE OF WASHINGTON
OFFICE OF SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

RFP 2017-11 Free and Reduced Price Meal Application
Addendum 01 Questions & Answers

Note to potential respondents:

All amendments, addendums, and notifications will be posted on the OSPI web site and released via the Washington Electronic Business Solution (WEBS) web site.
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1. Is it a strict requirement that participating vendors have a "demonstrated history of implementing a web-based Free and Reduced Price Meals Application system for more than five (5) different organizations"? --- We have experience implementing various web-based applications of the same size and scope of this project however but not Free and Reduced Price Meals (COTS) specifically.
    Answer: Vendors are encouraged to bid if they have a demonstrated history of implementing web-based USDA child nutrition systems for more than five (5) different organizations.

2. "Five (5) years demonstrated experience in working with LEAs, state agency child nutrition FRPMA systems, and USDA child nutrition policies and regulations." --- Again, how strict are you on this requirement? If we have related experiences from a different industry but similar size and scope of this project, would that suffice with this requirement; meaning would that be acceptable?
    Answer: Vendors are encouraged to bid if they have Five (5) years demonstrated experience in working with child nutrition systems at the state or local level, as well as experience in understanding and interpreting USDA child nutrition policies and regulations.

3. Who is the current vendor that provides the scope of work in this RFP? How long have they been working on the systems involved in the RFP? Are you pleased with their services? If not, what are the areas that need improvement? Is the incumbent able to respond to this RFP?
    Answer: Washington State does not currently have a state-wide FRPMA system so there is no system vendor. Washington State does expect that the new system is modeled after or is similar to the USDA 2016 web-based FRPMA prototype.

4. Where will the worked be done? Would it be at the Client Agency's offices or the work will be Offsite at the Vendor office premises?
    Answer: Please refer to Section C.33.04 and C.34.03 that specifically refer to the "On-Site Presence" in the vendor technical proposal sections of the Implementation Phase and Maintenance / Operations Phase respectively. OSPI has noted suggestions and expectations for an on-site presence that may include a mix of on-site and remote options. Location plans for both phases should be included as part of the competitive bid package.

    Fluency in written and spoken English is required for on-site or remote staff directly working with OSPI and LEA staff to implement and support the project.

5. Is it acceptable for developers and other team members to work remotely on a day-to-day basis, with onsite visits for key milestones and meetings?
    Answer: Please refer to Section C.33.04 and C.34.03 that specifically refer to the "On-Site Presence" in the vendor technical proposal sections of the Implementation Phase and Maintenance / Operations Phase respectively. OSPI has noted suggestions and expectations for an on-site presence that may include a mix of on-site and remote options. Location plans for both phases should be included as part of the competitive bid package.

Fluency in written and spoken English is required for on-site or remote staff directly working with OSPI and LEA staff to implement and support the project.

6. How much documentation is available for existing systems? Is current vendor available for knowledge transfer?
Answer: Washington State does not currently have a state-wide FRPMA system so there is no system vendor. Washington State does expect that the new system is modeled after or is similar to the USDA 2016 web-based FRPMA prototype.

7. What development, testing, production environments are in place?
Answer: The new system is required to be a hosted system. The system vendor is expected to provide development, testing, and production environments as well as the ongoing processes to manage those environments.

8. Page 8 - Can you clarify the meaning/intent of "pre-screen" in each area of the diagram?
Answer: The diagram is intended to reflect that the vendor system will provide a pre-screening function at the beginning of the application process to determine if a student(s) participates in an assistance program and is therefore, directly certified. Typically the vendor system prompts the household for an assistance program case number. For this project, if confirmed with the pre-screen, the household may bypass the full application process; bypass income section. The pre-screen will be implemented using a data exchange with the OSPI Direct Certification System. The arrow from the vendor system to the OSPI Direct Certification depicts a request to check direct certification status of the student using a small number of identifiers. The arrow from the OSPI Direct Certification System to the vendor system depicts the response; student confirmed direct certified.

9. Page 10 - 7.A, 7.A.8, 7.A.11 - Can you specify what identifier will be needed in "small set"? in reference to "The pre-screening functionality provides the ability for user/households to enter a small set of student identifiers …"
Answer: A combination of some of the student identifiers below may be used in the direct certification pre-screen function. This is a preliminary draft list and not the final or complete identifier list.

- First Name
- Middle Name
- Last Name
- Birthdate
- TANF ID
- Basic Food ID
- Zip Code
- State Student ID
- School Name

10. Page 63 - 49 table header says "RFP Checklist (example)" - is this the final list or will there be more questions?
Answer: There will not be another version of this checklist. This checklist is not a comprehensive list. It is intended to provide a convenient checklist for evaluation across bidders. It also succinctly captures many of the requirements identified in other RFP sections. The RFP notes that top bidders may be asked to do a presentation. It is possible that questions will come up during the presentations.

11. Page 6 - Reference was made regarding developing a custom interface to provide real-time integration with OSPI's existing Direct Certification System. Will OSPI provide APIs for this integration?
Answer: OSPI technical staff will work with the successful vendor to define the interface technology to be used.

The following questions were asked during the Pre-Proposal Conference Call on Friday, June 16, 2017. The PowerPoint presentation as a separate attachment is included for reference as well.

12. The OSPI timeline shows system Go live in September but parents can submit applications in July. Usually households start submitting applications in July.
Answer: Our plan is to open and go live with a pilot group in August, rather than statewide.

13. Will the system diagram in the presentation be available to all participants? Is it in the RFP?
Answer: The presentation will be posted with all pre-bid questions / answers on WEBS. The diagram is also in the RFP.

14. How many districts will be in the pilot beta group?
Answer: Most likely up to 10 in the first group.

15. The RFP notes that Washington has 250 total school districts. How many will use the new system? How many per year after the beta group?
Answer: Washington State has 295 public schools. Of those, 280 currently participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). Residential Child Care Institutions (RCCIs), Charter Schools, Private Schools, Tribal Compacts, and Educational Service Districts (EDS) also participate in the NSLP, for a total of 350 participating Local Education Agencies (LEAs). Although we will not mandate use of the new system, we will highly encourage all LEAs to use it. Currently, we believe less than 25% use an electronic application; therefore, we think many LEAs will take advantage of the new system. We expect many of the school districts to join in the first couple of years, although we do think that many will wait to see success of their peers using the system prior to making the commitment themselves. We also expect that using the pilot group will help encourage other LEAs to use the new system and we will publish best practices of proven results.

16. Most districts have a system that produces eligibility. Is there a separate system that passes the eligibility information to an electronic Point of Service / Sale (POS)? Will this system be part of the requirements in the RFP or is it a district requirement?
Answer: As stated in the answer to Question #4, many of the LEAs are using paper free and reduced price meal applications, as well as the data for direct certification that they download from OSPI's Direct Certification System. Most LEAs already have some form of POS system that they then upload the direct certification list into. We are thinking that they will conduct a similar process to download a list of those students who have a free and reduced price application approved in the FRPMA system that we are building into their POS system. The integration of new system with their processes and POS will be up to the local level and not in scope for this project. However, OSPI will look for file formats that are widely compatible or easily modified to fit the systems we know are already in use by the LEAs. Some common file formats used for uploads to LEA POS' are Comma Separated Values (CSV) files, tab delimited files, and Excel.

17. Will your districts need access to all the data in the new system?
Answer: LEAs will need access to data to run reports. LEAs need access to approve eligibility and enter paper application information when a household uses a paper application.

18. If a household is pre-screened and directly certified will you still have them continue on with any of the remaining application process for any reason?
Answer: No, not if they are confirmed as directly certified.

19. Are you firm on RFP requirement: "demonstrated history of implementing a web-based Free and Reduced Price Meals Application system for more than five (5) different organizations".
Answer: Vendors are encouraged to bid if they have a demonstrated history of implementing web-based USDA child nutrition systems for more than five (5) different organizations.

20. Are you firm on RFP requirement: "Five (5) years demonstrated experience in working with LEAs, state agency child nutrition FRPMA systems, and USDA child nutrition policies and regulations."
Answer: Vendors are encouraged to bid if they have Five (5) years demonstrated experience in working with child nutrition systems at the state or local level, as well as experience in understanding and interpreting USDA child nutrition policies and regulations.