State of Arkansas Department of Education
Online College and Career Planning
RFQ #: SP-18-0113
Template O-1 - Written Questions

Question ID	RFP Reference (page number, section number, paragraph)	Specific RFP Language	Question	Answer
1	General		Will the finalists be invited in to provide a presentation/demonstration as part of the evaluation process?	Yes. All Prospective Contractors with 400 or more preliminary technical proposal points will be contacted to schedule a demonstration.
2	General		Looking at the landscape of existing career and college planning systems, it is unlikely that any single vendor will be able to fulfill every requirement outlined in BID SP-18-0113 by January 2, 2019 as required by section 1.5. Are there any circumstances under which the Evaluation Committee would accept and review bids that have exceptions to the Requirements?	All components listed in the RFQ are necessary at this point to provide the desired level of service to schools at the inception of the program. The level and way that a Contractor meets these requirements should be addressed in their proposal. The specifics of those methods will be used by the school to select Contractors from the list.
3	General		Is there any limit on the number of contractors that the State of Arkansas will approve/add to the list of qualified contractors for an on-line College and Career Planning system?	No.
4	General		Is the price of $6 per student max all-encompassing of training and support costs? Or are training and support costs for delivery in addition to the $6 per student max?	Yes. ADE expects all costs associated with the proposal to be covered by the $6.00 per student fee. Training and supports outlined in the request must be provided. If the district chooses to make use of additional training or requests specialized training outside the scope of the request, those arrangements including additional cost will be worked out between the Contractor and the district at the district expense.
5	General		By what date do districts need to select a system? Is it the expectation that districts will begin using the system in the 2019-2020 school year.	See Addendum 1.

6	General		What is the maximum number of vendors to be placed on state-approved list?	Refer to the answer for Question 3.
7	General		If certain features are presently unavailable but will be available for the start of the following 2019-2020 school year, is this information relevant, and, if so, how and where would you like us to convey this information in our response? How will these features be scored according to the rubric provided on page 21 of the Bid Solicitation document?	Refer to the answer for Question 2 and Section 3.1.
8	General		Some of the requirements outlined in the RFP are not compliant with FERPA. How does this factor into scoring? Is there a priority on compliance with FERPA or the RFP requirements?	The State is unaware of any requirements that are "not FERPA compliant".
9	General		In the event that discrepancies in requirements between the Request for Qualification Bid Solicitation Document and the Response Packet SP-18-0113 arise, which document should we abide by? For example, past performance is part of the requirements under 1.23, however, it is not listed in the scoring rubric in the Response Packet. Which document presides?	Section 1.23 addresses the OSP Rule R5:19-11-230(b)(1) that past performance with the State can be used to determine if the Prospective Contractor is 'responsible'. This does not conflict with the Response Packet.
10	Section 1.17.B.2	If the State so chooses, negotiations may be conducted to further define contractual details. Negotiations are conducted at the sole discretion of the State.	Would the prospective contractor that OSP selects be given the opportunity to negotiate any of the terms contained within this Bid Solicitation? Can we include those exceptions in our proposal now?	Yes, per section 1.17.B.2 negotiations may be conducted at the discretion of the State. Contractors can include those points on which they would like to negotiate in their proposal. This does not guarantee acceptance of the points or replace the negotiation process by the State.
11	Section 1.2.A	OSP intends to award a contract to multiple Contractors	Could you clarify the statement in 1.2 that the "OSP intends to award a contract to multiple Contractors"? What is the long-term plan for awarding of the contract? Could you share the process for providing the schools with software after the award?	OSP intends, on behalf of ADE, to obtain a list of qualified Contractors that will provide the services listed in the RFQ. Please refer to Section 1.17 for the award process. Refer to Section 2.19 for implementation details.

12	Section 1.2.B	The anticipated starting date for any resulting contract is January 2, 2019	Please clarify what will take place on January 2, 2019; will the contract start, the system will go live, or both? If the system is to go live on January 2, 2019, please clarify item 2.20 A, which states that contractors shall attend 3-5 regional fairs in the spring of 2019 *prior to school selection of systems* .	See Addendum 1. Once an approved list is available, the State is willing to pay the second semester fees for any district who is CURRENTLY using a Contractor on the APPROVED LIST. Districts will not start new contracts or change Contractors at this time, rather they will have the option for ADE to pay the remaining fee for the existing contract. All new contracts and changes of Contractors will happen at the start of the new fiscal year in July 2019. The Contractor Fairs in the Spring are for schools to have exposure to all approved Contractors to make informed choices for their district. They may choose to go with a company they have been using or change companies if desired.
13	Section 1.7.A.2.a		Section 1.7 A.2.a requires vendors to submit EO 98-04 Disclosure Form with their bid submission. A copy of this form has not been included with the Response Packet. Please provide the current, acceptable version of this Form.	Refer to the Contract and Grant Disclosure Form 98-04 that is posted with the solicitation.
14	Section 1.23		How many, if any, references are required to demonstrate the Prospective Contractor is "responsible"?	Refer to the Response Packet for any references that are required.
15	Section 1.25	Destination of hyperlink within section.	On the page from the link provided, there are links to two separate pages of terms and documents: https://www.dis.arkansas.gov/standards and http://dis.publishpath.com/policies-standards. Is it your request that we adhere to every document, and the provisions therein, labeled "promulgated" or "approved" on both of these pages?	Yes.
16	Section 2.2	Currently schools in Arkansas are using multiple tools with varying components and reporting features.	What tools are currently in use?	At this time there is not a standardization of tools or systems being used. Schools have used their discretion to select a career interest component. The State does not have an accurate count or distribution of these tools, however we are aware that Navince, Kuder, and Career Cruising are actively in use in some schools.
17	Section 2.6.C	Browsers: IE8 and higher, Firefox 26 and higher, Chrome 31 and higher, and Safari 7 and higher.	Did ADE mean to include IE8, as it is no longer supported?	IE8 is still a common browser used by schools. Contractors should address the browsers they support.

18	Section 2.6.F	The system must minimize the bandwidth required to administer and utilize the system.	Please clarify this.	The Contractors shall ensure that the system uses the minimum bandwidth possible to utilize the features.
19	Section 2.6.K		What assessments is the State looking to import specifically?	At this time we consider ACT/SAT, Aspire and PSAT common assessments that are preferred at this time. Career Readiness Certificates and ELPA21 are additional assessments that are valuable. Proposals should address which assessments are possible to be incorporated now and a timeline of when additional assessments could be loaded. We would expect Contractors to be flexible for incorporating additional needs based on the schools that select their product.
20	Section 2.6.K		Please provide details regarding the type of Student Assessment information which is required.	Individual student scores (composite and subset) should be available to the student, cut levels of comparison to others (school, state, nation when possible and appropriate), other analytical data based on student scores.
21	Section 2.6.K.1	Automation must include but not be limited to the import of the following data elements: • Master schedule/course information • Student demographics • Student assessment information	• Please provide an example of a master schedule. • Please define "student assessment."	School districts use a variety of tools to develop a master schedule. Contractors would need to work with individual clients. Contractors should include description of their ability to incorporate master schedule data in the use of their system. Assessment would be defined in 19 above.
22	Section 2.6.M		Please provide specifics regarding how the data extract must meet/comply with O*Net.	O*Net is a standardized set of categories for job codes, occupational titles, and skill sets. Systems should align to these categories for state data or be able to cross walk their information to the O*Net categories.
23	Section 2.6.P.3		What is the goal behind requiring SSN as part of the collected data? Is there a way the State intends to collect this data and the entry point in the event a student does not have an SSN?	Actual SSNs can be removed from data, but the field needs to remain in the file layout for standard file delivery (even if SSN is blank for all students). The State assigns a 900# to students without a SSN.

24	Section 2.6.P.3	Required student demographic fields for proper data mapping include: Student State ID, Student Local ID, SSN, First Name, Middle Name, Last Name, DOB, District LEA, District Name, School LEA, and School Name.	• Why are SSNs required? • Will vendors be eliminated/rejected if using SSNs is against their security/privacy best practices?	Refer to the answer for Question 23.
25	Section 2.6.P.4	The order of files should always start with the following and then other elements from Left to Right. The first five columns of each file **must** be ordered and named exactly as follows: FirstName|MiddleName|LastName|SSN|DOB		
26	Section 2.7.B.2		In what formats are the exports required?	CSV with '|' pipe character as the field delimiter (if related to the file export)
27	Section 2.7.B.2	Individual student exports with student level information.	By "exports" do you mean "reports?" Will these "exports" be done by Level 2 and 3 users only?	Level 1 and Level 2 users will do Reports, Level 3 users will do Reports and accepted exported data from the Contractors to import into State analytic systems.
28	Section 2.7.B.3		What functionality or ability is required as "follow-up" on student progress in the system?	The ability to check progress of the student in using the system. If a district requires students to upload Resumes as part of a Capstone or Advisory program then the Level 2 (District) users need to be able to verity the Level 1 (student) has complied.
29	Section 2.7.B.5		Please provide clarification or an example of what is meant by "Parent data is a directory".	The ability of a parent to log in and view their child's information. What information is available should be defined by the Contractor in their proposal. How parent's can access and what information is necessary for parent accounts to be created should be addressed with schools. What features are available for schools to use parent data should also be addressed with the schools. The State is asking that Contractors have the ability to support parent level accounts, the features and functionality of those accounts are what the schools will use to make their determination of which Contractor to select.

30	Section 2.7.B.5		Could you please define "parent data" and the type of account information required?	Refer to the answer for Question 29.
31	Section 2.8	Access to local, state and regional labor market data at least quarterly	Would you be able to specify the sources for local and regional labor market data that would be desired and provide additional details/specs on how the information needs to be presented and provide use cases?	The State is asking that Contractors have the ability to incorporate this type of data, the sources and features from that information is what the schools will use to make their determination of which Contractor to select. The primary provider of State and regional data in Arkansas is the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services. discover.arkansas.gov
32	Section 2.8.A.2		Please provide clarification or an example of "Users' knowledge" that is intended to be measured.	This is referring to the ultimate functionality of the system to assess student interest, skills, and ability as related to the 16 career clusters and national occupational data. The functionality of the system should be leading students to explore self interest, ability, and aptitude to aid in developing a plan for after high school for either a career path or post secondary education or both.
33	Section 2.8.A.3	Integration of assessment programs into customized student learning plans.	Please provide examples of, or explain the difference between:	Refer to the answer for Question 32.
34	Section 2.9.A.2	Ability to build college lists and create personalized readiness plans.	•Customized student learning plan •Personalized readiness plan	
35	Section 2.9.A.3	Ability to incorporate secondary and post-secondary academic plans.	• Secondary and post-secondary academic plan • Individual study plan	
36	Section 2.11.A.8	Allow Level 2 Users the ability to create lessons, individual study plans, and course plans for Level 1 Users based on their college and career readiness needs.		Refer to the answer for Question 28.
37	Section 2.8.A.4.c		Could you please define the user level for "job seekers"?	Students who plan to leave high school and go directly into the workforce.
38	Section 2.8.A.5	Access to local, state, and regional labor market data at least quarterly	Should this read, "Access to local, state, and regional labor market data *updated* at least quarterly?"	Yes, please see Addendum 1. Data is released on different cycles however the system should be updated quarterly to include any new information from that time period.
39	Section 2.8.A.5		Could you please clarify the specifications around "access to local, state, and region labor market data at least quarterly"?	Refer to the answer for Question 31.

40	Section 2.8.A.6	Provide Users with feedback on individual education and skill deficiencies in comparison to desired career pathway	Could you offer more clarity with the requirement to "provide Users with feedback on individual education and skill deficiencies in comparison to desired career pathway? What type of feedback is the State looking for?	This is the schools (Level 2 users) having the ability to look at student (Level 1) inventory/survey responses and determining if their course taking patterns are aligned to their interests/aspirations and be able to give guidance on plans and goals.
41	Section 2.8.A.7		Could you define what qualifies as an accelerated learning opportunity? And specifically the context with providing feedback on these accelerated learning opportunities in comparison to desired career pathway?	Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, Concurrent Credit, Work based Learning (Internships, Pre-apprenticeships), Career Credentials or Certificates.
42	Section 2.8.A.7	Provide Users with feedback on accelerated learning opportunities in comparison to desired career pathway.	Please define "accelerated learning opportunities."	Refer to the answer for Question 41.
43	Section 2.9.A.3		Could you please elaborate on how you envision the "Ability to incorporate secondary and post-secondary academic plans"?	Refer to the answer for Questions 32 and 33.
44	Section 2.9.A.9		Could you please define what "individualized data" consists of? And further, the definition in the requirement that the Contractor must "provide individualized data to assist in strengthening lower scoring areas"?	Individual student data gathered through State assessments and inventory assessments through the system. The goal is for the system to help students see areas of weakness and how those areas impact future academic and career goals.
45	Section 2.10.A.3	Electronic document delivery for transcripts and letters of recommendation to include CommonApp Schools and link to YOUniversal application process	Is there also a requirement to support electronic delivery to CoalitionApp?	If the Contractor has the capability to support CoalitionApp or CommonApp they are encouraged to include that in their proposal but it is not a requirement.
46	Section 2.10.A.5	FAFSA aid application forms and submission option	Can you clarify if the FAFSA submission option can be from link/lesson plan within the platform to https://fafsa.edu.gov/ ? As I understand, FAFSA requires students and parents to submit information directly on their platform. Any additional details on functionality desired would be helpful.	If FAFSA requires submission through their site only then the Contractor should provide access via links in the platform.

47	Section 2.11.A.7	A dashboard for Level 2 Users to identify students' progress in meeting key requirements for graduation, certificate, and/or degree completion.	Please explain the need for certificates and/or degree completion? Will you provide vendors a list of requirements for graduation, certificate, and/or degree completion?	Refer to the answer for Question 28. This guidance is available through the State and can be gained from State or school district information to remain current and up to date with any changes.
48	Section 2.11.A.8	Allow Level 2 Users the ability to create lessons, individual study plans, and course plans for Level 1 Users based on their college and career readiness needs.	How do you envision this working? How will the college and career planning system determine individual student college and career readiness needs? How are those determined in Arkansas today?	Refer to the answer for Question 28. This addresses the need of the school district (Level 2 user) to interact with the students. Currently this process is handled manually and through various forms of contact. (meetings, emails, etc.)
49	Section 2.12.A.5		Could you please define what is meant by a "push communication"? Does this reference mobile-only access of the program or the ability to send a mass message via the mobile application?	The ability of the level 2 users to send information to level 1 users via mobile, email, pop up on a dashboard, relevant to those students. How the Contractor handles this notification process should be addressed in the proposal. It not limited to mobile, email, or through a dashboard.
50	Section 2.12.A.6		Could you please clarify the user focus for journal entry creation capabilities? Is this intended for Level 1, Level 2, and/or Level 3 users, and if more than one Level, which Levels need to be able to enter information, see but not edit entered information, edit or comment on entered information, or simply process data on the entered information?	Our vision is for level 1 students to have full edit and creation ability. Level 1 parents and Level 2 district personnel could view and make comments but not edit or delete. Level 3 users do not anticipate needing access to the student journal.
51	Section 2.12.A.7	Be compatible with State's data system that house education information	Does the eSchool, Discover Arkansas and EMSI systems all have ability to support csv file exports and csv downloads? Would you be able to provide additional tech specs on how these systems exchange data or support the use API's?	Yes. Data will be delivered by the local school/district to the Contractor through a Cognos CSV export (Arkansas provides Cognos to all districts for data extracts).
52	Section 2.12.A.7.a		What is the State's data system? Is it eSchool, eSchoolPlus, or something else?	Yes, please see Addendum 1. eSchoolPlus 4.0
53	Section 2.14.A.4		Please provide additional details regarding what is meant by "Data compatibility reports for sharing with state system".	"Data compatibility reports" refers to documentation related to the Contractor's ability to meet file specifications listed under 2.6.P.

54	Section 2.15.C		Beyond submitting during or in preparation for classroom instruction, how are priority levels defined?	Priority should be given to preparation for classroom instruction or presentation. System level issues should take priority over individual account issues. If the Contractor has deeper levels of assigning problems they are welcome to address that in their proposal.
55	Section 2.16.B.1		Could you elaborate the requirement behind QA completed by the State? In the event that evidence for a Contractor's own QA team completing the process to and above expectations, is the 30 day lead time required?	The 30-day lead time also allows for State QA of our systems and our integration with the Contractor. It could move faster if there are no issues on the Contractor side but the State will still need time assess functionality and to make adjustments as needed.
56	Section 2.16.B.1	The Contractor(s) shall furnish to the State, 30 calendar days prior to go-live, Quality Assurance Guidelines for testing new updates, patches or upgrades to the software solution.	The term "Quality Assurance Guidelines" is capitalized but we did not see a specific definition. If specific guidelines are being referenced, could you provide for our review?	The capitalization does not imply a specific document at this point. Going forward, one may be created and would be shared with Contractors.
57	Section 2.16.B.1		What type of testing would you be conducting as it pertains to updates and/or patches to the solution?	Refer to the answer for Question 55.
58	Section 2.19.B	ADE projects the go-live date to be January 2, 2019.	Please clarify what will take place on January 2, 2019; will the contract start, the system will go live, or both? If the system is to go live on January 2, 2019, please clarify item 2.20 A, which states that contractors shall attend 3-5 regional fairs in the spring of 2019 *prior to school selection of systems* .	Refer to the answer for Question 12.
59	Section 2.23.B		Per Section 2.23(B) during negotiations of Performance Standards prior to contract award will the State be open to negotiating the time frames and penalties associated to the Damages for Insufficient Performance currently outlined in the table at Section 2.23 H?	Refer to Section 2.23.B
60	Section 4.1.A	Forward invoices to:	Will vendors have payment contacts within each district? Is the state reimbursing districts who choose to use a state-approved system?	All invoices must be submitted to ADE at the address provided in 4.1.A. ADE will reimburse the Contractors directly after verifying services with the districts.
61	Response Packet E.2.F		Could you please provide more detail around the requirement to "pre-populate and update the online system through an automated process"?	Refer to 2.6.K.1

62	Response Packet E.3.C		Could you please define "parent data" in specific terms?	Parent contact information such as name, mailing address, phone number, email address, etc. Refer also to answer for Question 29.
63	Response Packet E.4.C		Could you please define the resources available for local and regional labor market data?	Refer to the answer for Question 31.
64	Response Packet E.5.B		Could you please elaborate on how you envision the "Ability to incorporate secondary and post-secondary academic plans"? (see also question pertaining to 2.9.3)	Refer to the answer for Question 32 and 33.
65	Response Packet E.6.E		What types of administrative reports are required and what format is required?	Refer to Sections 2.13 and 2.14.