SC EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
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Columbia SC 29211 | WWW.SCEOC.ORG

AGENDA

Academic Standards & Assessments Subcommittee

Monday, June 8, 2015
11:00 am
Blatt Building, Room 433

I. Welcome & Introductions ..... Dr. Danny Merck

II. Action: Approval of Minutes of March 2, 2015

III. Action Item: Comments on Draft Request for Proposals (RFP)
ELA and Mathematics Assessments, Grades 3-11 ..... Dr. Danny Merck

IV. Other Business

V. Adjournment

<u>Academic Standards & Assessments Subcommittee Members:</u>
Dr. Danny Merck, Chairman
Sen. Mike Fair
Mrs. Barbara Hairfield
Sen. Wes Hayes
Mr. Neil Robinson
Mrs. Patti Tate

David Whittemore
CHAIR
Daniel B. Merck
VICE CHAIR
Anne H. Bull
Bob Couch
Mike Fair
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Margaret Anne Gaffney
Barbara B. Hairfield
Nikki Haley
R. Wesley Hayes, Jr.
Dwight A. Loftis
Deb. Marks
John W. Matthews, Jr.
Joseph H. Neal
Neil C. Robinson, Jr.
Molly Spearman
Patti J. Tate

Melanie D. Barton
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

SOUTH CAROLINA EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
Subcommittee on Academic Standards and Assessments

Minutes of the Meeting
March 2, 2015
1:00 PM, Room 433 Blatt Building

Subcommittee Members Present:	Dr. Danny Merck (Chair); Mr. Neil Robinson (Vice-Chair); Sen. Mike Fair, Ms. Barbara Hairfield, Sen. Wes Hayes and Ms. Patti Tate
EOC Staff Present:	Kevin Andrews, Melanie Barton, Hope Johnson-Jones; Rainey Knight, Bunnie Ward, and Dana Yow
Other EOC Members Present:	Ms. Deb Marks and Mr. David Whittemore

Welcome and Introductions
Dr. Merck welcomed members and guests to the meeting.

Minutes of December 1, 2014
The minutes of December 1, 2014 were approved as distributed.

Public Comment on Revised Standards
The Subcommittee recognized individuals who signed up to make public comments on the revised South Carolina College- and Career-Ready English language arts and mathematics standards. Each person was limited to five minutes. There were fifteen individuals who offered verbal and/or written comments on the standards.

Consideration of 2015 South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards
Dr. Merck called upon Dr. Julie Fowler, Deputy Superintendent, at the South Carolina Department of Education, to provide an overview of the standards under consideration. Dr. Fowler discussed the process that the Department has taken since the EOC review panels' observations and recommendations were received.

Then Mrs. Barton provided insight into the standards review process which differed from prior cyclical reviews in at least three ways: (1) the timeframe was condensed. According to Act 200 of 2014 the new standards must be implemented in school year 2015-2016. (2) Members from the Department of Education's writing panel and members from the EOC's review panels worked collaboratively in January to amend the standards. This was the first time that such a joint panel was used, and the products of their work are the standards under consideration; and (3)The direct and indirect costs associated with the review for the EOC were extensive, $146,000. She used a two-page analysis compiled by

the EOC staff to summarize the work prepared by the staff in response to requests for information made by EOC members, Ms. Deb Marks and Senator Fair.

Dr. Merck then asked members for comments and discussion. Senator Fair noted that the process that began in July of 2014 to review and write new standards involved South Carolinians. He acknowledged that he had not had sufficient time due to his legislative duties to read the information provided.

Mrs. Patti Tate, a former state teacher of the year, discussed her reflections up on the English language arts standards. As an English language arts teacher, she expressed support that the standards promote critical thinking, collaboration and communication which are important to providing students with a 21st century education.

Senator Hayes recognized the legitimate concerns that were voiced at the meeting. He thanked one of his constituents, Ms. Alice Yoder, who spoke during the public comment period.

Mr. Robinson noted that concerns about the developmental appropriateness of standards confuse standards with curriculum. Standards define what students need to know; curriculum is how the standards are taught. He concluded that the time has come to move on.

Ms. Marks offered concerns that national experts had made about the standards and emails that she has received from parents and taxpayers.

Ms. Hairfield asked for a list or itemization of which standards are not developmentally appropriate. She concluded that she would be endorsing standards that are rigorous and in the best interest of children. Ms. Tate concluded that in her opinion teachers are the experts in this issue.

Mr. Robinson moved to approve the South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards and addendum as presented. Ms. Tate seconded the motion.
The motion passed with Sen. Fair abstaining.

Based on the questions posed, Ms. Hairfield asked that the EOC staff hold an informational meeting for all interested EOC members on Monday, March 9 at 10:30 a.m. to answer questions and concerns about the standards and analysis conducted.

There being no further business the Subcommittee adjourned.

EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Subcommittee: Academic Standards and Assessment

Date: June 8, 2015

ACTION ITEM
Feedback on Draft Request for Proposals (RFP)

PURPOSE/AUTHORITY
Proviso 1A.79. of the 2015-16 General Appropriation Act, as adopted by the Senate, requires the EOC to provide consultation to the South Carolina Department of Education on its procurement of assessments for grades 3 through 11

CRITICAL FACTS
Acts 155 and 200 of 2014 amended the Education Accountability Act to institute a procurement process and establish minimum requirements for summative assessments for students in grades 3 through 11 in English language arts and mathematics. Pursuant to a special procurement handled by the Executive Director of the South Carolina Budget and Control Board, ACT, Inc., was awarded the contract to administer ACT Aspire in grades 3 through 8 and ACT Plus Writing for grade 11 for the 2014-15 school year. A successful protest was made and now the South Carolina Department of Education is issuing another request for proposals (RFP) for assessments beginning in school year 2015-16. If Proviso 1A.79. is adopted by the Conference Committee on the state budget, the Education Oversight Committee will have to provide feedback to the Department on the procurement. To provide timely feedback and to ensure that the procurement process is not impeded, the Subcommittee is meeting to provide input on the May 27 draft RFP. ***The EOC staff will email you its analysis of the RFP prior to the June 8 meeting.***

TIMELINE/REVIEW PROCESS
May 18, 2015 – EOC contacted State Superintendent of Education (See Attached Memo)
May 27, 2015 – Draft request for proposal (RFP) posted online
June 2, 2015 – SCDE request consultation of EOC
June 8, 2015 – Subcommittee to review RFP and provide feedback to be considered by full EOC

ECONOMIC IMPACT FOR EOC

Cost:

Fund/Source: Agency Appropriations

ACTION REQUEST

☒ **For approval** ☐ **For information**

ACTION TAKEN

☐ **Approved** ☐ **Amended**

☐ **Not Approved** ☐ **Action deferred (explain)**

SC EDUCATION
OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

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May 18, 2015

The Honorable Molly Spearman
State Superintendent of Education
1429 Senate Street
Columbia, SC 29201

Dear Molly:

If proviso 1A.79, which is attached, is adopted by the House of Representatives upon its consideration of the 2015-16 General Appropriation Act as approved by the Senate, then I wanted to reach out to you and your staff to set up a timeline for the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) to provide consultation to the statewide assessment procurement. I understand that the Department will be under a tight timeframe in issuing the request for proposals.

The full EOC meets on June 8 and if necessary, can also meet in early July to provide timely feedback. To provide such feedback the EOC needs a written draft of the request for proposal to make specific and constructive feedback. Because Dr. Danny Merck served on the special assessment panel created by Act 200, it would be my intent that Dr. Merck would provide critical advice and input to this project.

I might also offer a suggestion. When the Executive Director of the Budget and Control Board handled the emergency procurement for the 4K and kindergarten early literacy assessment last summer, her staff conducted a pre-bid conference whereby potential bidders reviewed a draft of the request for proposal. Questions raised at that meeting were instrumental in helping refine and amend the request for proposal.

Sincerely,

Melanie Barton

Melanie Barton
Executive Director

Attachment

c: Betsy Carpentier, Chief Operating Officer
Cathy Hazelwood, Deputy Superintendent, General Counsel
Emily Heatwole, Director of Legislative Affairs
David Whittemore, Chair, EOC

David Whittemore
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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

1A.79. (SDE-EIA: Statewide Assessment Procurement) With the funds appropriated and carried forward for assessment, the Department of Education, in consultation with the State Board of Education and the Education Oversight Committee pursuant to Section 59-18-320 of the 1976 Code, is directed to issue a procurement for a statewide assessment to students in grades 3 through 8 in English/language arts and mathematics that meet the requirements of the Education Accountability Act as amended by Act 200 of 2014. The assessment must be a rigorous, achievement assessment that measures student mastery of the SC College- and Career-Ready Standards, that provides timely reporting of results to educators, parents, and students, and that measures each student's progress toward college and career readiness.

In addition, the Department of Education, in consultation with the State Board of Education and the Education Oversight Committee pursuant to Section 59-18-320, is directed to issue a procurement for a statewide assessment of students in grade 11 that meets the requirements of the Education Accountability Act as amended by Act 155 of 2014. The procured assessments are to be administered in school year 2015-16.

H.3701 as Adopted by the Senate

1A.79. *(SDE-EIA: Statewide Assessment Procurement) With the funds appropriated and carried forward for assessment, the Department of Education, in consultation with the State Board of Education and the Education Oversight Committee pursuant to Section 59-18-320 of the 1976 Code, is directed to issue a procurement for a statewide assessment to students in grades 3 through 8 in English/language arts and mathematics that meet the requirements of the Education Accountability Act as amended by Act 200 of 2014. The assessment must be a rigorous, achievement assessment that measures student mastery of the SC College- and Career-Ready Standards, that provides timely reporting of results to educators, parents, and students, and that measures each student's progress toward college and career readiness.*

In addition, the Department of Education, in consultation with the State Board of Education and the Education Oversight Committee pursuant to Section 59-18-320, is directed to issue a procurement for a statewide assessment of students in grade 11 that meets the requirements of the Education Accountability Act as amended by Act 155 of 2014. The procured assessments are to be administered in school year 2015-16.

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
MOLLY M. SPEARMAN
STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION

June 2, 2015

Melanie D. Barton
Executive Director
PO Box 11867
Columbia, SC 29211

Dear Melanie:

In response to your letter of May 18 and in addition to our memo of May 27 on which you were copied, please find attached the draft Request for Proposal prepared by the Department per the proposed proviso 1A.79. We were reluctant to set a timeline for action until we had a draft that was available to review, which occurred on May 26. Although the agency is still awaiting the passage of the Annual Appropriations Act, the goal is to have the RFP ready to submit to the Budget & Control Board as soon as possible. As per the language in the proviso, the Department hereby seeks to act in consultation with the Education Oversight Committee. As we have discussed in emails, we can meet with EOC members on June 8 at 11:00 a.m. to exchange views and advice concerning the draft. We appreciate the Committee's willingness to facilitate the compliance with the proposed proviso. We have requested all feedback by June 17, 2015. As Betsy indicated, we are also willing to work with EOC to establish procedures for additional consultation after incorporation of that feedback.

Do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Very Truly Yours,

Emily

Emily E. Hentwole
South Carolina Department of Education
Director of Legislative Affairs

Attachment

Cc: Dr. Danny Merck
David Whittemore
Pierce McNair
Sally Cauthen

RUTLEDGE BUILDING · 1429 SENATE STREET · COLUMBIA, SC 29201
PHONE: 803-734-8500 · FAX: 803-734-3389 · ED.SC.GOV

Draft Request for Proposals (RFP)

ELA and Mathematics Assessments

Grades 3-11

I. SCOPE OF SOLICITATION

South Carolina is seeking assessments in English language arts (English, reading, and writing skills) and mathematics for students in grades three through eight and eleven. If funds are available, assessments will also be administered to students in grades nine and ten. This solicitation does not include testing for assessments of science or social studies or WorkKeys, South Carolina's End-of-Course Examination Program (EOCEP), alternate assessments, or formative assessments.

Offerors may respond to this solicitation of the assessments in one of the following ways:

- Grades 3-8
- Grades 3-8 with optional grades 9 and 10
- Grades 3-8, and 11 with optional grades 9 and 10
- Grade 11
- Grade 11 with optional grades 9 and 10

The assessments must be aligned to South Carolina's 2015 College- and Career-Ready Standards for ELA and mathematics (http://ed.sc.gov/scde-grant-opportunities/NewSCStandards.cfm). The current NCLB Standards and Assessments Peer Review Guidance is posted at https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/saaprguidance.pdf and provides current definitions and requirements for alignment. An updated version of the guidance is scheduled to be released during the summer of 2015.

The Contractor must develop and write all submissions for peer review. At the Contractor's expense and at no charge to the state, the Contractor must adapt (e.g., augment, edit, rewrite) the assessments to comply with the new guidance and the requirements of the federal peer reviewers. The assessments must be edited and the peer review documentation rewritten as many times as is needed until the assessments are approved by the U.S. Department of Education for federal accountability.

In the event that any of the assessment programs are eliminated in whole or in part during any period of this contract, the contract will remain in effect to provide testing and scoring services for those test(s) still given. If tests at any grade level or in any content area are eliminated and subsequently resumed during the life of this contract, the Contractor shall be obligated to provide services for the tests as if they were never eliminated, at the price stipulated in the proposal.

II. INSTRUCTIONS TO OFFERORS (State boilerplate)

B&CB and/or Office of Procurement boiler-plate text

III. SCOPE OF WORK/SPECIFICATIONS

1.0 Purpose

The scores from the assessments will be used for state and federal accountability. The purpose of this request for proposals (RFP) is to delineate the requirements and to solicit proposals for any needed development/production and for administration, scoring, and reporting services of statewide summative assessments in English language arts (English, reading, and writing skills)

and mathematics for students in grades three through eight and eleven (grades 9 and 10, if funds are available).

2.0 Legal Requirements for the Assessments

Requirements for the assessments are delineated in state and federal laws and in federal guidance. Title 59, Chapter 18 of the South Carolina Code of Laws (referred to as the Education Accountability Act or EAA) was amended in 2014 through Acts 155 and 200 (http://www.scstatehouse.gov/code/title59.php). The procured assessments must meet all requirements of the EAA, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA), and the latest version of the NCLB Standards and Assessments Peer Review Guidance.

In addition, the Contractor must work with the Department to meet the requirements specified in Section 59-155-160 of the Read to Succeed Act (Title 59 of the 1976 Code of Laws) as follows:

(A) Beginning with the 2017–2018 School Year, a student must be retained in the third grade if the student fails to demonstrate reading proficiency at the end of the third grade as indicated by scoring at the lowest achievement level on the state summative reading assessment that equates to Not Met 1 on the Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (PASS).

The contractor must determine the score corresponding to the specified cut score on SCPASS. The Department will provide all available data to assist in this determination.

The state and federal laws supersede any of the Contractor's procedures or policies.

2.1 Confidentiality and Information Security

Confidentiality Agreement

General. "Confidential Information" will mean all Department data, which will be unmarked, and other proprietary information which is specifically marked as proprietary or confidential and which is disclosed to in any form in connection with this Agreement.

During the term of this Agreement and indefinitely after the date of termination of this Agreement, the Contractor:

- will treat as confidential all Confidential Information provided by the Department;
- will not use such Confidential Information except as expressly permitted under the terms of this Agreement or otherwise previously authorized in writing by the Department;
- will implement reasonable procedures to prohibit the disclosure, unauthorized duplication, misuse or removal of such Confidential Information;
- will not disclose such Confidential Information to any third Party; and
- will treat all student records as Confidential Information in compliance with FERPA. Without limiting the foregoing, Contractor shall use at least the same procedures and degree of care to prevent the disclosure of Confidential Information as it uses to prevent the disclosure of its own confidential information of like importance, and shall in any event use no less than reasonable procedures and a reasonable degree of care.

All aspects of information handling and information systems must adhere to the State of South Carolina Enterprise Privacy Office (EPO) and Division of Information Security (DIS) policies located on the SC Division of Information Security web site (http://dis.sc.gov/). Contractor shall submit a statement of compliance as part of the bid process, which should include an independent attestation of compliance. Contractor must conduct annual reviews of EPO and DIS policies for updates and submit a statement of compliance or plan of actions and milestones to reach compliance for new requirements.

Obligations

The Contractor will implement administrative, physical, and technical safeguards that reasonably and appropriately protect the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of information that it creates, receives, maintains, or transmits on behalf of the Department.

The Contractor will ensure that any agent, including a subcontractor, to whom it provides The Department information, agrees to implement reasonable and appropriate security measures to protect the information.

The Contractor agrees information that it creates, receives, maintains, or transmits on behalf of the Department and information Contractor received from the Department shall remain in the United States and shall not be transmitted across international borders.

The Contractor agrees to abide by and maintain compliance with all applicable DIS and Enterprise Privacy Office EPO policies.

FERPA Compliance

The Contractor agrees that it may create, receive from or on behalf of the Department, or have access to, records or record systems that are subject to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA"), 20 U.S.C. Section 1232g (collectively, the "FERPA Records"). Contractor represents, warrants, and agrees that it will:

- hold the FERPA Records in strict confidence and will not use or disclose the FERPA Records except as (a) permitted or required by this Agreement, (b) required by law, or (c) otherwise authorized by The Department in writing;
- safeguard the FERPA Records according to commercially reasonable administrative, physical and technical standards that are no less rigorous than the standards by which Contractor protects its own confidential information;
- continually monitor its operations and take any action necessary to assure that the FERPA Records are safeguarded in accordance with the terms of this Agreement;
- not read the contents of any such files it receives with FERPA Records in its Service, except as necessary to process the transaction thru the system or store the data as part of Service;
- use FERPA Records only for the purposes for which they were intended;
- provide a copy, at its request, in a mutually agreeable format, then destroy all FERPA Records when the Agreement expires or terminates within sixty (60) days of such expiration or termination;
- provide the Department, at its request, with a written summary of the procedures Contractor uses to safeguard the FERPA Records; and

- provide an accounting of all unauthorized disclosures of FERPA protected records at the request of the Department.

Exceptions

The recipient of Confidential Information shall be under no obligation with respect to any information: (a) which is, at the time of disclosure, available to the general public; or (b) which becomes at a later date available to the general public through no fault of the recipient and then only after said later date; or (c) which the Department can demonstrate by written record was in its possession before receipt; or (d) which is disclosed to the Department without restriction on disclosure by a third party who has the lawful right to disclose such information.

Administrative Notice

In the event that the Contractor is required by judicial or administrative process to disclose any information or materials required to be held confidential hereunder, the Contractor will promptly notify The Department and allow a reasonable time to oppose such process before making disclosure. Any other notice or communication pursuant to this Agreement will be in writing and sent by certified/registered mail or overnight courier.

Injunctive Relief

Parties understand and agree that any use or dissemination of information in violation of this Agreement may cause the Department irreparable harm, may leave the Department with no adequate remedy at law and shall entitle the Department to seek injunctive relief.

Survivorship

The requirements of use and confidentiality set forth herein shall survive the expiration, termination or cancellation of this Agreement.

Ownership

All Confidential Information communicated to the Contractor will remain the property of the Department and shall be returned or destroyed upon termination of this Agreement or immediately upon request.

Loss or Unauthorized Access

In the event of any reasonably suspected disclosure or loss of, inability to account for, or unauthorized access to any Confidential Information of the Department, the Contractor will notify the Department promptly upon becoming aware thereof, take any reasonable actions requested by, and provide all reasonable cooperation with the Department to minimize the disclosure or loss and mitigate any damage associated with such disclosure or loss. Such notification to the Department will be made to the Department at 1429 Senate Street, Columbia, SC 2920, DIS by contacting informationsecurity@bcb.sc.gov, and EPO Chief Privacy Officer at (803)896-0001.

Data Security

The Contractor will at all times during the Term provide and maintain up-to-date security with respect to (a) the Services, (b) the Department's Web site, if applicable, (c) the Contractor's physical facilities, and (d) the Contractor, to prevent unauthorized access or "hacking" of the Department Confidential Information.

The Contractor will provide security for its networks and all internet connections consistent with best practices observed by well-managed companies working in the financial services industry, and the Contractor will promptly install all patches, fixes, upgrades, updates and new versions of any security software it employs.

The Contractor will maintain appropriate safeguards to restrict access to the Department Confidential Information to those employees, agents or service providers of the Contractor who need the information to carry out the purposes for which it was disclosed to the Contractor.

For information disclosed in electronic form, the Contractor agrees that appropriate safeguards include electronic barriers (e.g., "firewalls" or similar barriers) and password protected access to the Department Confidential Information. For information disclosed in written form, the Contractor agrees that appropriate safeguards include secured storage of the Department Confidential Information.

The Contractor will also establish and maintain any additional physical, electronic and procedural controls and safeguards to protect the Department Confidential Information from unwarranted disclosure as may be required for the Department to comply with all applicable federal, international and state laws and regulations now in effect or hereafter imposed, passed or promulgated.

Upon the request of the Department or DIS and with sufficient notice, DIS may conduct a security audit of the Contractor which may include a mutually acceptable auditor or be performed directly by the Department. The audits and test result information will be owned by the Department and should be sufficient to assure the Department that the Contractor implements information security measures that are consistent with its obligations under this Agreement.

3.0 Test Security

The Contractor must adhere to recommended test integrity standards as outlined in *Testing and Data Integrity in the Administration of Statewide Student Assessment Programs, Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing, Code of Professional Responsibilities in Educational Measurement, Operational Best Practices for Statewide Large-Scale Assessment Programs, and Security Considerations & Recommendations for Online Testing.*

South Carolina test security law and regulations are provided at the following Web site: http://ed.sc.gov/agency/ie/Assessment/TestSecurity.cfm.

4.0 Assessment Requirements

Assessment results must be fair, useful, accurate, interpretable, and comparable and the test scores must meet professional and industry standards with respect to these qualities. The Contractor must adhere to recommended test integrity standards as outlined in *Testing and Data Integrity in the Administration of Statewide Student Assessment Programs***,** *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing, Code of Professional Responsibilities in Educational Measurement, Operational Best Practices for Statewide Large-Scale Assessment Programs, and Security Considerations & Recommendations for Online Testing.*

Every assessment must be of sufficient length to ensure optimal reliability, provide a wide spread of test scores (adequately measuring upper and lower ends of the scale), and provide breadth and depth coverage of the standards. Every test item used to calculate a total test or subscore for

accountability reporting must be aligned to South Carolina's 2015 College- and Career-Ready Standards for ELA and mathematics posted at http://ed.sc.gov/scde-grant-opportunities/NewSCStandards.cfm.

The assessments of ELA and mathematics must also describe student performance in terms of achievement level. The assessments must include and report on at least four achievement levels. Achievement levels must be established on a basis that would be acceptable for peer review.

In 2015-16, the test administration must include both paper-based and computer-based formats. Computer-based formats must be secure (able to be locked down) so that students are not able to leave the testing session during testing. Individual students within each school must be allowed to select the desired format.

4.1 Test Administration Dates

In spring 2015, the writing, English, reading, and mathematics tests for grades 3–8 were administered April 28–30 with make-up testing through May 13. The grade 11 tests were administered on April 28 with make-up testing on May 12. Most districts and schools have already developed and approved schedules for the 2015–16 school year based upon the 2015 test administration dates. Therefore it is preferable that the test dates for spring 2016, under this contract, conform as closely as possible to the 2015 test dates. Final test dates for 2015–16 will be agreed upon during the initial planning meeting after a contract is awarded.

In subsequent years of the contract, the Offeror must propose test administration dates that occur as late in the school year as possible, but provide test file data and score reports by the required dates as indicated in this RFP. Test dates must take into account scoring, including any required hand-scoring, data verification activities, and early reporting of grade 3 results.

There is not a statewide school calendar in South Carolina. Districts set their school calendars at the local level. In addition, some individual schools, within districts, run on different calendars (e.g., year-round schools). In the past, the paper-based format of accountability testing has occurred on a specific calendar day. At least one bill has been introduced in the legislature that would require the tests being procured with this RFP, including paper-based format, to be administered on a specific instructional day. Therefore, the Contractor must be amenable to administering tests on different days, according to local schools' instructional days.

4.2 Score Results and Reporting Deadlines

In proposing testing dates, the Contractor must meet the following reporting deadlines. All electronic data must be posted on a secure Web site as approved by the Department.

Reports/Data Files	Delivery Method	Deadline
Student Rosters of Grade 3 Reading Results	posted for district and school access	at least one week before the end of each school's year to meet requirements of 59-155-160. Schools typically close in mid to late May.
Final district data files	posted for district access	on or before June 16

Final state data files	posted for state access	on or before June 16
Individual Student Reports and remaining Student Rosters	posted for district access	on or before June 16
Paper copies of Individual Student Reports (2 copies) and student labels	Arrive in district offices	on or before July 15
School and district summary score reports	posted for district and school access	on or before July 15
State summary score reports	posted for district access	on or before July 15

4.3 Student Participation

The administration of assessments includes testing state-funded public students in grades three through eight and eleven (grades 9 and 10, if funds are available). The South Carolina public school population includes students in eighty-one school districts, the South Carolina Public Charter School District, Department of Juvenile Justice, and six (6) special schools. The special schools include the South Carolina School for the Deaf and Blind, Felton Lab, Wil Lou Gray, John de la Howe, Palmetto Unified, and the Governor's Schools. This assessment population is also comprised of students in adult education centers, virtual schools, prisons, group homes, and those educated at home through the local school district.

4.4 Testing Special Populations

The Contractor must provide customized policies and procedures for the administration of assessments for special populations as determined by the Department. An overview of these special populations and some of the issues encountered by each as discussed in the following paragraphs.

Virtual school students - These reside all over the state and take classes online; these students may never attend a brick and mortar school. Virtual school students are assessed in regional facilities across the state. To reduce the cost of facilities and to minimize travel for the students and parents, the virtual school programs must be allowed to administer more than one test per day as approved by the Department.

Testing in Alternate Locations - The contractor must allow trained, certified test administrators to carry test materials to alternate locations to test students who are not tested in the regular school building (e.g., students who live in group homes; students who are home schooled, home-based, and homebound; virtual school students) will necessitate that a. These administrations may occur over multiple days and non-standard times. Test administrators must be allowed to store secure test materials in an alternate location (e.g., the test administrator's home) overnight or for several days prior to returning the materials to the school.

Incarcerated Examinees - The prison population presents unique challenges for testing because of the widespread locations of the facilities, the movement of students between prison facilities as they are processed, and the release of students back to public schools. If determined as necessary by the Department, the Contractor must allow extra time for delivery and return of test

materials, additional training for test administrators, and flexibility in test administration policies and procedures such as start times and multiple tests per day.

Adult Education Center and Schools with Alternate Schedules - Many courses in adult education centers are offered in the late afternoon and evening hours and for many students these hours may be the only times that can attend school. In addition, multiple school districts within the state have schools that offer high school classes at non-traditional school hours such as late afternoon and in the evening. The Contractor must allow these schools to administer the assessments during the students' regularly scheduled school hours.

Students with Disabilities and English Language Learners (ELLs) - The contractor must support the state, districts, and schools in conforming to all ESEA and IDEA requirements for testing all students, including students with disabilities and ELLs. All students in the tested grades, except for students with significant cognitive disabilities who qualify to take alternate assessments, are required to participate in the annual summative assessments. These students must be allowed to use any valid accommodations and customized materials specified in their IEPs or 504 Plans, including students who enroll in a school during the testing period. The contractor must have a process to approve use of any valid accommodation and must continue to ship all customized materials throughout testing (including make-up testing).

The contractor must be familiar with the requirements outlined in the set of papers commissioned by the Office of Special Education Programs of the U.S. Department of Education. These reports were produced for those responsible for the administration of large-scale assessment and accountability systems. The papers, listed on the following web page location https://www.osepideasthatwork.org/toolkit/tk_lrgAssmnt_ES.asp address several topics related to the inclusion of students with disabilities in these assessments.

4.5 Numbers of Students Tested and Enrollment Counts

The numbers of students who participated in the grades 3-8 testing during the past three years are provided in Table 1. Student enrollment counts for grades 9-11 are listed in Table 2.

Table 1

Student Participation in SCPASS (Grades 3–8)

Grade	2010–11	2011–12	2012–13
3	53,513	53,289	53,922
4	54,991	53,676	53,610
5	55,274	55,193	54,053
6	54,062	55,726	55,832
7	53,477	54,454	56,040
8	51,959	53,278	54,294
Total	**323,276**	**325,616**	**327,751**

Table 2

45-Day Student Enrollment for Grades 9, 10, and 11

Grade	2012–13	2013–14	2014–15
9	62,144	63,234	64,724
10	54,219	55,343	56,488
11	48,164	48,361	49,980

The number of customized materials ordered for the spring 2014 test administrations are provided in Appendix A.

The Contractor must maintain sufficient overages of all materials to respond to shortages discovered in schools and districts.

5.0 Program Management

Activities related to any needed test development and for the administration, scoring, and reporting services will be coordinated within the South Carolina Department of Education by a Program Manager in the Office of Assessment. The Program Manager will be the Department's primary contact with the Contractor.

The Contractor must have adequate staffing to execute the requirements of this RFP. At a minimum, the Contractor must provide one staff member to coordinate the tasks for this project. This staff member must serve as the Project Coordinator and be the key contact with the Department's Program Manager. All oral and/or written communications between the Department and the Contractor will be through the Department's Program Manager and the Contractor's Project Coordinator. The Contractor must establish a toll-free number(s) that the Department can use to call the Contractor and the Project Coordinator.

The proposed Project Coordinator must be at a level in the organization that permits the facilitation of priorities across all areas involved in the South Carolina project. The Department believes that a long-term Project Coordinator is essential if the project activities are to be conducted in a timely and efficient manner. The Department, throughout this contract, reserves the right to approve the Contractor's assignment/selection of personnel who work directly with the Department. The state reserves the right to terminate the contract if the Contractor proposes staffing changes affecting continuity in the Project Coordinator and other key positions.

The duties of the Project Coordinator will include responsibility for overall quality control of the entire project and for ensuring that timelines are met and deliverables are error-free. The Project Coordinator is responsible for ensuring the quality of work for any of the Contractor staff or sub-contractors (including those who deliver test materials to districts).

Psychometrician

The Offeror must also designate a lead psychometrician whose duties will include responsibility for overall quality control and technical review of the data for the entire project. The proposed psychometrician must be at a level in the organization that permits review of data programming and data analysis in all phases of the South Carolina project. The Department believes that a lead

psychometrician is essential to ensure that the test analysis, score reports, and data files are accurately generated and rigorously checked for quality.

Responsibilities of the Contractor

Contractor responsibilities will include, but are not limited to, the following tasks.

- Proposing a schedule each year of the Contract. The schedule will include dates for training, ordering test materials, online test set-up, test administration, the delivery and return of test materials, scoring, reporting, and receipt of reports and data files. The schedule must be developed to guarantee that the state and district data files are posted on the secure Web site by June 16.
- Hosting a secure test administration platform that is locked-down during the test administration so students are not able to leave and return to the test session.
- Producing, printing, packaging, distributing and collecting hard-copy materials (e.g., regular test booklets, CDs/DVDs, customized test booklets, manuals, score interpretation or user's guides, brochures, and memos). Customized test materials may include materials such as large-print and loose-leaf test booklets, test booklets and ancillary materials for students who use braille, test booklets and materials for students who are deaf or hard of hearing (signed administration DVDs).
- Maintaining test security of all secure materials, both electronic and hard-copy, including delivery and return of the secure materials to the Department and the school districts.
- Providing information to DTCs (e.g., administration details, timelines/deadlines for key administration components, frequently asked questions and responses, and training schedules).
- Providing a “help desk.”
- Scheduling and facilitating planning meetings between Contractor and Department staff throughout the contract period. One face-to-face meeting must be held annually. Additional meetings may be in-person or through Webinars or conference calls. The purpose of the meetings is to finalize decisions about timelines, schedules, procedures, and production issues. The Contractor is responsible for preparing any materials necessary for the meetings and for providing documentation of the decisions made at the meetings to the Department within five days of the meeting.
- At least one member of the Contractor’s staff must attend an annual DTC review meeting. Contractor’s travel to the meeting is at the Contractor’s expense. The purpose of this meeting is to provide a platform for DTCs to provide input for improving the testing procedures.
- Creating and maintaining electronic documentation including agendas and minutes of meetings and conference calls. Records should include all decisions made and the action items for the Contractor and the Department. Minutes must be sent to the Department within five (5) business days of the event for review and final approval of the content.
- Providing secure a Web site for use by the Department and district staff. The Web site may be used for transferring secure information or materials (e.g., training and test materials, verifying enrollment numbers, placing orders for materials not in the precode file, student scores and analyses). The Contractor must abide by all electronic submission requirements specified by the Department.

- Coordinating, facilitating, and providing training for district and school staff.
- Providing an online enrollment and/or ordering system.
- Providing scanning, scoring, and reporting services as specified in this RFP.
- Providing district and state data files, summary and psychometric statistics, and a Technical Report following each administration.

Contractor Web Sites - The Contractor must establish one or more secure Web site(s) for Department, district, and school use. For Department use, the Web site will be used to upload and download any secure testing documents or test scores. The same or a different Web site will be used by DTCs (an others if permitted by the DTC) for tasks such as collecting information required for ordering materials or additional materials (late orders), re-score requests, test data files, and score reports. This site could also be used for verification of enrollment numbers.

Evaluation Survey and Report - Receiving feedback from Test administrators, STCs, and DTCs is an important component to the evaluation of each testing program. The Contractor must provide an online tool for soliciting comments from each of these populations for each administration. An attitudinal survey with open-ended questions has been used in the past. Test administrators, STCs, and DTCs must be able to access the survey or tool through a secure Web site to ensure the confidentiality of the feedback.

The Contractor must produce a report with recommendations from all online evaluation forms. The Contractor should provide the data file of all responses, analysis, and recommended actions with the summary of the results.

Alignment Study. The Contractor must provide all materials to the Department for independent alignment studies; a study of the alignment of the test items to South Carolina's 2015 College- and Career-Ready Standards for ELA and mathematics. The alignment studies will be conducted before testing each year, in time for the Contractor to make item substitutions, if necessary.

If the assessments contain items that are not aligned to the South Carolina's 2015 College- and Career-Ready Standards for ELA and mathematics or if the standards are not adequately assessed (see the peer review guidance for details), the contractor must correct alignment deficiencies by augmenting, editing, or replacing the items on the test form(s) before the assessments are administered. Scores derived from the augmented assessments must be of appropriate technical quality to meet accountability requirements.

For each item, the contractor must provide applicable text, illustrations and graphics, the item stem, answer choices, and the item identification number. The contractor shall provide, in an Excel spreadsheet, the answer key for all selected-response items. In an electronic format, the contractor will provide scoring guides and sample training papers for each performance item.

Other information will include, but is not limited to, the contractor's alignment indicator, the level of cognitive and language complexity, non-disclosure agreement form, etc.

5.1 District Communication

Cooperating with the Department staff in the administration of the program is a District Test Coordinator (DTC) in each of the school districts and the other special school districts or institutions. Administration of the assessment program within a district is the responsibility of each DTC.

The Department will provide the Contractor with updated contact information for DTCs each year. The district superintendent has sole authority to name the DTC within each district. Superintendents provide the DTCs names and contact information to the Department. The Department will notify the Contractor when a new DTC is identified during a school year. The Contractor must not accept a change in DTC through any other process.

In addition, each district assigns one School Test Coordinator (STC) for each school. DTCs coordinate assessment activities for the schools in their district and disseminate information to the STCs. STCs are responsible for coordinating assessment activities and training the test administrators/teachers.

All communication from the Contractor for districts and/or schools must be approved by the Department beforehand and must be sent to the DTCs identified by the Department. The Contractor must copy the Department on all communication to the districts.

The Contractor may not communicate directly with STCs except during any training sessions specifically designed for school level staff or at the specific request of a DTC.

The Contractor must provide the DTCs with a toll-free telephone number, fax number, and the name and e-mail address of a person or persons on the Contractor's staff who will be available to respond to questions (e.g., about the test itself and ordering, packaging, delivery, and receipt/return of test materials). The person or persons must be knowledgeable about the program specific to test requirements for South Carolina. When the Contractor receives policy-related questions regarding the assessment programs, the Contractor must refer these questions to the Program Manager in the Office of Assessment.

Yearly Calendar – the Contractor must provide a list that includes major DTCs milestones, deadlines, and activities for a year's testing cycle.

Weekly Newsletters - The Contractor must prepare and email a weekly newsletter to DTCs and the Department. The newsletter should include events and deadlines for the following week. The Contractor should seek Department input for the newsletter and its approval prior to its release.

Help Desk. The Contractor is responsible for providing a "help desk." The Contractor must provide DTCs with the hours of operation and at least one e-mail address and toll free phone number.

The help desk must be sufficiently staffed to respond to questions from DTCs. The help desk staff must know the specific requirements for the testing program being administered in South Carolina as opposed to only knowing a national product or procedures. DTCs must not have to go through a general operator who acts as a go between for DTCs and Contractor staff who know the specifics of the South Carolina administration.

The Contractor must provide an average daily response time for initial response (e.g., call-backs, response e-mails) does not exceed two (2) hours during the business day. The Contractor must establish protocols for the referral or response of inquiries that cannot be addressed immediately.

The Contractor must maintain a log of each contact, the response provided, and the response time. The documentation must be provided to the Department on a monthly basis except that during the six week period before and after testing the documentation must be provided weekly.

The Contractor will provide protocols for help desk contact modes (e-mail addresses and toll free numbers) and help desk.

The Contractor is responsible for improving help desk services based on feedback from the districts. Inability to provide accurate or consistent information to all callers is cause for canceling the contract.

Frequently Asked Quesstions (FAQ). The Contractor must develop and post a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document for use by the Department, districts, and schools. The Contractor must update the FAQ as needed.

5.2 Training

The Contractor must provide adequate training and technical assistance for DTCs, Technology Coordinators, and STCs. Training has been provided in face-to-face meetings or via Web-based conferencing with sessions repeated multiple times. Some districts may require one-on-one technology assistance for administering computer-based assessments.

The Contractor's training must include the following, at a minimum.

- An overview of the assessment system including test design (e.g., length of the test, test blueprints, subtests, and types of items)
- Testing student with disabilities and ELLs (accommodations, customized materials)
- Ordering materials
- Receipt and Return of test materials
- Procedures for administering paper-based assessments
- Technology assistance (e.g., preparing for and administering computer-based tests)
- Professional development for interpreting score reports

The Contractor must provide workshop materials for all attendees. All training must be recorded and posted on the Contractor's Web site. In addition, the Contractor must provide files of the presentations for posting to the Department's Web site.

6.0 Test Materials

The Contractor will be responsible for the development, production, and printing of all required materials (e.g., student level test materials, required forms, and manuals) for paper-based and computer-based materials at no cost to the local school districts.

Unless otherwise specified, all documents are to be of typeset quality and any necessary graphics must meet Department requirements for accuracy and quality. Online tests should be easy to read and provide appropriate tool sets for each subject and assessment. The Contractor must take steps to ensure the professional handling of the materials on the part of the Contractor and any subcontractor(s).

If errors are discovered in test materials, the Department reserves the right to request corrections and reprints.

Overages and Shortages. The Contractor will be responsible for printing all test materials. Sufficient quantities of test materials (based on Precode and enrollment numbers supplied to the Contractor), plus overage materials, must be printed. In addition, the Contractor must

immediately accommodate any shortages of materials in a district until the last day of the make-up period.

During the contract, overages shipped to DTCs during initial shipments can be adjusted by the Contractor based on evidence of need; however a sufficient number of materials must be produced to provide additional materials, if needed. Overages are not provided to districts for customized materials but should be available in the case of new students.

Secure Test Materials. All secure paper-based test materials (e.g., test booklets, secure customized materials) must contain a unique security number on the cover that is both machine-scannable and eye-readable on the front or back cover. Answer documents are secure, once they contain student responses. The unique security number must be printed on every sheet of each answer document in case the documents are dropped after they have been sliced during scoring.

The Contractor must bundle secure materials by sequence number and shrink-wrap the materials with a sheet indicating the range of security numbers on materials in the package. The range sheet must be visible through the shrink-wrap.

Security Checklists for Paper-Based Assessments. The Contractor must produce school and district checklists used for the distribution and collection of secure test materials, according to Department specifications. School Test Coordinators (STCs) and test administrators use the checklists to sign out and sign in individual secure test materials. The checklists are also used to indicate any materials that schools do not receive and any materials that are destroyed.

The security checklists must contain a list of the security number for each secure document. If the secure document is precoded, the student's name must also be listed beside the security number.

The School and District Security Checklists must be available to schools and districts in an electronic format. Checklists must be downloadable into an Excel spreadsheet and districts and schools must be able to sort the information on the spreadsheet.

Seating Charts. The Contractor must provide a sufficient quantity of seating-chart templates to the schools to be used by all test administrators (TAs) for each program. At a minimum, the heading of the chart should provide space for the following information to be completed.

- Name of Test:
- District Name:
- School Name:
- Test Administrator Name:
- Test Date:

The Contractor should preprint this information on each sheet, if possible. Below the heading, the Contractor should provide a classroom and laboratory rendering with blank seats shown. Test administrators will assign student seating as appropriate and record the names of students in the blank seats on the template. Seating charts will be returned to the Contractor and used, if necessary, by the Contractor and Department staff in a forensic analysis of the test data.

Test Administration Manuals. The Contractor must produce Test Administration Manuals (TAMs) on an annual basis. One TAM for all grades by grade is preferred. The manuals should include, at a minimum, procedures for receipt and return of test materials, test administration

directions (scripts) for online and paper-based administrations, guidelines regarding availability of customized test materials, and accommodations for students with disabilities and ELLs.

If the contractor has pre-existing manuals, the Contractor must allow the Department to add test security laws, regulations, procedures and other policy information to the TAM or provide a District Supplement for distribution to the schools and district offices that is at least 20 pages.

The Contractor must be willing to make changes to the pre-existing manuals if errors or inconsistent policies and procedures are found. The Contractor must provide all final manuals to the Department for posting on its Web site.

The Contractor must provide paper copies of all administration manuals each year in the following quantities. The manuals must be packaged by school and shipped to the DTC sixty (60) days prior to the first day of testing. The manuals must not be changed or edited after they have been posted or printed.

- One for each test administrator
- Two for each STC
- Three for each DTC
- Thirty copies for the Department

Practice Tests. The Contractor must develop exemplary test items or practice tests for each assessment. Practice materials must be available one month prior to the first day of testing. At least 10 items must be provided for each test. Any paper-based items must be produced in a format that can be posted to the Department's Web site. Accommodated versions, such as braille and large print, must be provided.

Score Report User's Guide. A Score Report User's Guide provides a description of the score reports and explains how to interpret the scores. The primary audience for this document is teachers, administrators, and other educators. The Contractor must develop or provide and/or edit such a document, then produce, print, and ship the guides on an annual basis. If a guide must be developed, then the Department staff will provide input. Sample score reports will be included in the guides and must contain realistic dummy data. The Contractor is responsible for providing the dummy data and creating the sample score reports whenever score reports change.

The User's Guide must be provided to the Department in a format suitable for posting on the Department's Web site, ensuring that the format is suitable for printing by the districts.

The Contractor must provide paper copies of the guides for distribution to the following.

- four for each district
- one for each school test coordinator
- one for every test administrator
- one hundred for Department staff.

Student Brochures. The Contractor must produce, print, and distribute student brochures for each grade level that describes the assessment program. The brochures should provide an overview of the program and could include the following information.

- overview of the test, including purpose
- types of items on the test

- examples of items
- description of scores for each category/standard, etc.
- interpretation of scores
- test administration dates

The Contractor will provide a brochure for each student plus a fifteen percent overage, packaged by school and shipped to the DTC. An electronic copy of each brochure must be provided to the Department for posting to the Department's Web site. The current brochures are two-sided, 10.5 inch by 17 inch tri-fold brochure.

7.0 Packaging, Shipping and Receiving Test Materials

The Contractor will be responsible for all costs associated with the packaging, packing, and shipping of materials to and from the Department and the districts. All test materials must be shipped to the DTC unless the DTC specifically requests that the materials be shipped directly to the STC. In such cases, the DTC must provide the name and shipping information to the Contractor.

Packaging. Secure materials must be shrink-wrapped sequentially by security number. The wrap must be strong enough not to break during shipment or routine handling. A sheet that provides the range of the security numbers on the materials must be included and visible through the wrapping.

Test materials for each school and overage materials for the district must be boxed separately and clearly marked with the school or district name. Different colored boxes are preferred, for example, white boxes for district materials and brown boxes for school materials. Labels that identify the school and contents must be placed on the outside of each box. The boxes must be sequentially numbered for each school (e.g., Box 1 of 7).

District and school packing lists that specify the types, quantities, and security-number ranges of test materials must be included in the district and school boxes. Districts would prefer electronic packing lists, but if hard copy packing lists are used, then they should be included in the first box of test materials for each school and district. The district box must include a copy of each school's packing list. If there are any discrepancies involving secure materials listed on the packing list, the district is instructed to notify the Contractor for resolution.

Boxes should not be packed tight, or extra boxes must be provided, to accommodate repacking the materials after testing with normal expansion resulting from the use of the materials. Schools and districts are not to use their own boxes for shipping. The largest boxes must be small enough for district staff to easily lift and handle.

Shipping and Receiving. The Department will provide the Contractor with a list of the DTCs who are authorized to receive test materials. Test materials must be shipped to DTCs approved by the Department unless the DTC specifically requests that the materials be shipped directly to the schools.

Materials must be shipped to and from the districts with a company that tracks shipments and requires a signature for delivery and pickup. All materials must be shipped for inside delivery. Open-bed delivery vehicles must not be used for transporting test materials.

The materials must arrive in districts (or schools at the DTC option) at least two weeks prior to the first day of testing. The Contractor is responsible for shipping additional materials to the districts that order late for next day delivery, if necessary

The date for districts to return materials must allow districts sufficient time to pack and prepare test materials for return. The Department must approve the return date. As an option, the Contractor may request an early return date for grade 3 reading test materials to comply with Read to Succeed requirements.

Missing Materials and the Missing Materials Report. After each administration, the Contractor must prepare and distribute a Missing Materials Report to DTCs that lists all secure materials that were sent to the district but were not returned. The report must indicate following information, at a minimum.

- District name
- School name
- A list of each missing document, to include test form, subject, grade level, test document security number
- Total number of missing materials for each school and the district by document type

DTCs are required to respond to the report in writing, regardless of whether they are able to locate the missing documents. If a district cannot find missing secure materials, the district must send an affidavit to the Contractor indicating that the district and school have conducted an exhaustive search for the secure materials and that the missing materials were not located.

The Contractor will be responsible for contacting districts that have not responded to the report until a 100 percent response rate is achieved.

After its investigation, the Contractor must prepare a final Missing Materials Report for the Department. The report should include the same information as is on the districts' reports, as well as totals for the state by documents type. The Contractor shall, at the request of the Department, mail copies of all written responses to the Department.

8.0 Scoring

Scanning of Test Booklets and/or Answer Documents. The Contractor will be responsible for scanning and scoring all scorable answer documents, including any items requiring hand-scoring. The Contractor will be responsible for scanning and scoring all customized forms. If applicable, the Contractor must merge the machine-scored and hand-scored responses for each student.

Matching of Student Score Data. Test scores from the different subjects or test sessions for an individual student within the same administration period must be accurately matched to create a single student record in the student file. During the primary matching phase, students are matched by their Precode number or state ID. After all of the answer documents are processed, documents for non-precoded students that failed in the initial matchback process go through a final matchback process.

Re-Scoring. The Contractor must respond to rescore requests. Rescoring provides a means for verification of individual student scores when there is justifiable reason for suspecting an inaccurate score or an error in combining responses from separate documents. Rescore requests from districts may be submitted for any of the following reasons.

- correcting errors in linking test scores
- locating and scoring missing responses
- scoring an answer document that was incorrectly submitted with a “Do Not Score” label;
- confirming accuracy when test scores are inconsistent with performance in school
- re-scoring due to rater inaccuracy

9.0 Score Results and Reports

The Contractor must provide score reports and data files as quickly after testing as is possible. The Contractor’s standardized reports may be provided, however, for accountability purposes, the Contractor must provide the score reports and data files listed below in which scores are aligned to the South Carolina’s 2015 College- and Career-Ready Standards, as required by the peer review guidance.

- Individual Student Reports (electronic and paper versions (2 copies of paper reports, one home copy and one school copy)
- Student Rosters by grade within school and district (electronic)
- Student Rosters of Grade 3 Reading Results (electronic)
- Student labels (one for each student)
- Class, School, District, and State Summary Reports (electronic)
- District and State data files

Individual Student Reports. The Individual Student Reports must provide the student’s results for each test taken. The Individual Student Report should include the student name, birth date, tested grade, unique student ID, school name, district name, and the scale score and performance level for each test and subtest.

Student Rosters. School-level rosters must include each student’s scores. Within each grade, students are listed alphabetically by last name, first name, and middle initial. District-level rosters include all students from all the district’s schools into a single roster, alphabetical by grade within the district. District-level rosters must also include the school name or school ID where each student was tested. Rosters must include all students tested in the group.

Student Labels. The total scale score and performance level for each test must be provided on the student labels (approximately 4”x1” as specified by the Department). Schools receive one student label for each student. The following demographic information should be included on the label: student’s name, the state ID, district and school names, birth date, ethnicity/race, gender and special education codes if any.

Fall Assignment. Fall assignment is a system for sending score reports to the school a group of students will be attending in the fall. For example, the reports for a class of 5th graders would be sent to the middle school the students will attend in the fall. If the school fall assigns a group of students, the Contractor must send the Individual Student Reports and student labels to the fall school rather than the school where the students were tested.

The Contractor must provide rosters and summary reports to the fall school in addition to the school where the students were tested. For example, if students from three elementary schools are fall assigned to one middle school, the students from all three elementary schools are listed

alphabetically on the fall roster and the fall summary reports include the students from all three schools. The elementary schools receive rosters and summary reports for the students who tested in their schools.

Fall assignment information is provided through precode. The Contractor must provide a methodology for capturing this information on the answer documents, headers, or online registration for those students whose information was not coded correctly or changed from the precode data.

District and State Data files. Both the district and state data files must include all students tested.

10.0 Precode

The contractor must participate in precode. Precode refers to the student information in school databases (PowerSchool) that is extracted and provided to testing contractors for the purpose of pre-assigning student answer documents, populating online testing systems, ordering customized test materials, and sorting test materials. The pre-assigned information printed on answer documents or loaded into an online system might include district name, school name, teacher name, student name, and student demographic information.

All school districts participate in the Precode project. The districts electronically transmit the student information to the Department; the Department then develops a Precode file containing information for all students in the state. This information will be posted onto the Contractor's SFTP site, a secure Web site for retrieval by the Contractor.

The Department's precode data file, includes but is not limited to, the following variables—identification of each student to be tested, student demographic information including age, gender, and ethnicity, disability variables (IEP or 504 Plans), and accommodations. The Contractor must utilize the precode data submitted by the Department and, if necessary, make programming adjustments in their system to incorporate these variables. Variables included in the precode data will allow the Contractor to determine which students need customized test forms (braille, large print, sign language), by subject area , and which students need accommodations for each subject (e.g.; oral administrations, extended time, small group, etc.). The Contractor must incorporate this information into their process. Customized forms and accommodations are collected in the PowerSchool system by subject (ELA, writing, and mathematics) and the Contractor is expected to use this information from the Department office to eliminate the need for schools to enter this information a second time into a different computerized system. The Contractor will be responsible for sorting and packaging documents as indicated by each school using a "test distribution unit" field and "sorting" fields included in the Precode file.

The current precode manual is posted online at the following link: http://www.ed.sc.gov/agency/programs-services/46/.

Data Extractions. Under the present system, assessment program Precode data are extracted from the district databases twice a year. The Precode Print Phase occurs in the first half of January and is used to determine identify tested students, the number of students to be tested, and type of test materials to be sent to the schools and districts. The demographic information can be preprinted on student test booklets. This information is also used to pre-populate the database used for online testing.

The Precode Update Phase, which occurs in late March, provides Contractors with information to produce labels for new students who enroll after the Precode Print Phase extraction. Schools apply these labels to the answer documents.

Hand Coding of Demographic Information. Data for students whose demographic information were not included on the initial or update precode files will be collected through hand coding on the answer documents or inputting the information at the beginning of an online test administration.

For students whose data are preprinted, data contained in the precode file overrides information hand-coded on answer documents. Information that is hand-coded on blank fields or on blank answer documents will be included on the data files and score reports. In general, the latest precoded (or hand- coded when precoded data are not available) data will appear in the test data files.

11.0 Online Enrollment and Ordering Materials

The Contractor must provide an online system or some user-friendly mechanism that districts use to provide the Contractor with updated information and orders for test materials. The online system must allow districts to: (1) verify contact names (DTCs and STCs), e-mail addresses, and telephone numbers; (2) provide district shipping/mailing addresses as well as school addresses, if appropriate; (2) verify and/or provide current school enrollment numbers; (3) order specific customized materials not available through precode, if applicable; and (4) order additional testing materials.

It is important for the Contractor to collect names and enrollment data and to ensure that sufficient quantities of test materials are printed and are delivered to the correct location. The STC at each school must enter all information with verification provided by the DTC. The Contractor is responsible for follow-up with districts that do not respond.

In conjunction with the Department, the Contractor may set a deadline for ordering additional materials for each administration. After this deadline, orders from districts must be accepted; however, the Contractor may require districts to pay the cost of all test material ordered late, unless the materials are for a new student who enrolled in the school after the deadline. Materials ordered after the deadline must be shipped overnight for delivery by 10:00 a.m. the next day. In advance of each test administration, the Contractor will notify the districts regarding this date and provide a document indicating the cost of each late test document. The Contractor may charge districts a late fee, but materials will be charged to the Department at the regular price.

12.0 Test Integrity Data-Forensics Analysis

The contractor must provide individual student erasure/answer change data (right-to-wrong, wrong-to-right, wrong-to-wrong) for each test administration. The contractor must provide data-forensic analyses for each test administrator by test session, school, and district.

The required analyses include

- erasure/answer change report;
- similar answer patterns between pairs or groups of students; and
- similar responses to open-ended items.

As a cost option, the offeror may propose additional analyses such as the following:

- unusual changes in test scores in adjoining test years;
- unusual changes in student demographics across years;
- outliers in scatter plots of subject areas scores (e.g., classes with mathematics scores that were outliers based on reading score performance).

13.0 Technical Reports

Technical reports will be composed in Microsoft Word and provided to the Department via an SFTP site or other process agreed to by the Department. The Contractor will provide technical reports with secure information, according to examples of prior technical reports provided by the Department. The technical reports will conform to professional measurement standards as outlined in the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* (American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association, and National Council on Measurement in Education, 2014).

The Contractor should adhere to writing conventions given in the Department's Style Manual as much as possible. The Department will provide technical report templates, which, when completed, are available to the public. The Contractor is to complete the tables in these templates according to Department's specifications and provide any information necessary for the correctness and completeness of the reports. All secure information will be reported in a separate appendix (or appendices) and may be in Microsoft Word, Excel, or other formats.

Upon award of the contract, the Department will provide the Contractor with the technical report templates. For end-of course, the technical report will contain data from all three administrations.

The technical report will include, but is not limited to, the following data.

- Summary results, by subject and grade (where appropriate), for all students and by demographic subgroup
- Counts of students tested
- Scale-score means and standard deviations
- Percentages of students scoring at each achievement level
- Item statistics (item difficulty, item discrimination, DIF)
- Descriptions of scoring scales (including scaling coefficients) and achievement levels
- Descriptions of linking and equating procedures (when appropriate)
- Descriptions of standard-setting procedures (when appropriate)
- Reliability measures by subject and grade (where appropriate), for all students and by demographic subgroup, as designated by the Department
    - Classical reliability indices (e.g., coefficient alpha, stratified coefficient alpha)
    - Classical standard errors of measurement (SEMs) for total scores

      (for accountability purposes, these indices are needed with test result files or shortly thereafter)
    - Conditional SEMs for all obtained scores on the theta and scale-score metrics

- Decision-consistency indices (p and kappa) at passing/cut scores (e.g., Huynh 1976, 1979, or other procedure acceptable to the Department)
    - Inter-rater reliability measures for constructed- and extended-response items

Validity evidence

- Alignment of test items with South Carolina's 2015 College- and Career-Ready Standards for ELA and mathematics
- DIF results by gender, ethnicity (black/white, at a minimum), test mode (paper-based and computer-based formats, where appropriate) using Mantel-Haenszel or other procedure agreeable to the Department
- Intercorrelation of results among items and South Carolina's 2015 College- and Career-Ready Standards for ELA and mathematics
- Graphics
- Raw-score and scale-score frequency distributions for total scores, by subject and grade (where appropriate), for all students and by demographic subgroup as designated by the Department; relative and cumulative frequency distributions (list format)
- Item characteristic curves for each item
- Conversion tables (raw-score to theta to scale score, with appropriate standard errors)
- Item statistics
- Item identification numbers, content standards, keys, test year and administration, and any other appropriate identifiers
- Item response frequency distribution, including numbers and percentages of students selecting each option, including omits, multiple responses, and items not reached
- Item difficulty
- Item discrimination
- Option-total correlations
- Rasch item parameter estimates and fit statistics

14.0 Warehousing and Retrieval

For the duration of the contract, the Contractor must maintain archival records of the project (key meeting minutes, conversion tables, test form keys, etc.) and five paper copies of each test administration manual, test form, and answer document produced.

The Contractor must be able to retrieve any individual student test booklets or answer documents during and for three years after the scoring process, and for three years after the conclusion of the contract. The Contractor must have a mechanism for retrieving test booklets and answer documents for individual students, with the Department receiving requested documents by the fifth day after the submission of a request.

Destruction of secure documents must be requested in writing and approved by the Department.

15.0 Data File and Electronic Storage Media Requirements

The Contractor must work with the Department to determine data file content and layouts for district and state data files. Data files will consist of rosters, test score summaries, and test and item analyses. All required data files will be in Word, Microsoft Excel, and/or ASCII text file format. District and state data files must include all students tested.

The Contractor will produce state and district data files following each test administration. The state and district data file layouts may be modified when assessment program changes are made. The Department may require additional information or changes to the files with each administration.

In addition to rosters and test score summaries, the Contractor will provide files containing classical and modern item analysis variables. If the contractor is unable or unwilling to provide any or all of the variables listed below, this must be explained in the response to the solicitation.

- Group Being Analyzed (all students, several demographic categories)
- Form Number/Identifier
- Item Position on the Test Form (sequence number)
- Item Type (MC, CR,ER)
- Item ID(s) (including previous identifier(s))
- Passage Title (when applicable)
- Content Standard(s) each item assesses
- Number of MC Answer Options
- Key (Correct Answer for MC)
- Total Number of Students in Group Analyzed
- Maximum possible points for the item
- Average item score (classical item difficulty)
- Item response distributions (number and percentage of students who selected each MC option including omits, multiple responses, and items not reached)
- Adjusted point-biserial correlation for item
- Adjusted point-biserial for each response option
- Item discrimination (option – total correlation for the option keyed as correct)
    - Numeric values that determine DIF according to gender (female vs. male), ethnicity (African-American vs. White), and test mode (paper-based vs. computer-based formats), if relevant
- Measure of gender-based, ethnicity-based, mode-based DIF
- Rasch calibrated item difficulty and standard error (MC)
- Rasch step difficulties and standard errors (CR, PT)
- Infit mean square error and associated standard error
- Outfit mean square error and associated standard error
- Number and percentage of students scoring in each CR and PT score point

- Anchor item flag (Y/N)
- Flags (Items with item statistics outside designated ranges)
- Actual Item Grade

The Contractor will produce state and district data files following each test administration. State files shall be delivered to the Department in usable form via electronic storage media compatible with the Department's computers and external storage devices. Electronic storage media characteristics will be specified/approved by the Department.

After the end of the testing cycle of a school year, the Contractor will provide the Department with all testing deliverables given to the state and/or districts, including but not limited to, district data files in secure electronic format. District and state files are to be delivered securely in a format compatible with the operating system used by the Department. Currently, the system in use is Windows 7.

If, for the purposes of state and federal accountability, the test is augmented, scores and reliability measures based only on items directly aligned to South Carolina's 2015 College- and Career-Ready Standards for ELA and mathematics must also be computed and reported. These scores must meet the same technical specifications cited for the offeror's unaugmented tests.

The following list of specifications has been included for pricing purposes.

- Test and subscore reliability strictly for items aligned with South Carolina's 2015 College- and Career-Ready Standards for ELA and mathematics.
- Classical standard errors of measurement for total scores in all subjects and subscale scores, as designated by the Department, must be provided by secure file transfer.
- The Department requires a data file that contains the item statistics derived from the item analyses and classical standard errors of measurement for total scores and subscale scores. In the past, data files received from the Contractor have been in the form of Excel files or plain text files for loading into Access databases and/or into SAS datasets. The Department will provide the Contractor with the complete list of demographic categories, the complete list of item analyses results fields (e.g., distractor analysis, difficulties, correlations, DIF analysis), and the data file format for the student data file.
- Each data file created by the Contractor must have an accompanying data file layout that clearly explains the contents of the file and/or any codes used in the creation of the file. This applies to state-level and district-level data files.
- The Contractor must provide for data files as specified by the Department throughout the life of the contract.

File Specifications

- The Contractor must produce "clean," edited data files. "Clean" data are defined as each data field containing only valid data values of the variable assigned to that field. Missing data must be indicated by blanks only. Unknown or conflicting multiple marks must be designated by asterisks or question marks, except in any field containing dates (e.g., the date-of-birth or "Date First Enrolled in U.S. Schools" fields). If unknown or conflicting multiple marks are received for any value (e.g., date, month, and/or year) in a date field, the value must be left blank.

IV. INFORMATION FOR OFFERORS TO SUBMIT

(to be detailed once evaluation criteria are determined)

(A) B&CB text)

(B) Executive Overview

The Executive Summary should be written in non-technical language to summarize the Offeror's overall capabilities and approaches for accomplishing the products and services requested by the Department. Evidence should include, but is not limited to, the Offeror's mission, date of founding, size, and experience. The Offeror must specify which grade-level assessments are included in the technical proposal. The executive summary should demonstrate the Offeror's understanding of the Department's goal to securely administer, score, and report the assessments in an efficient and cost-effective manner. The summary should be limited to no more than three pages.

(C) Technical Proposal

The maximum limit for the technical proposal is one-hundred (100) pages, not including appendices. Technical proposals that exceed this limit will be viewed as non-responsive. The Technical Proposal must be in 12-point font and in an 8.5 by 11 inch format.

The Offeror should submit one (1) original in hard copy and electronic copy, ten hard copies, and ten in electronic format (flash drive) with copies to be typed in Microsoft Word 5.0 or higher.

The response should provide a description of the Offeror's proposal to meet or exceed the requirements of this RFP. This discussion should encompass all of the requirements of the RFP, to include information security and privacy measures necessary to meet security and privacy objectives. The response should describe the methodologies, quality management standards, and best practices that will be employed in managing and completing the requirements. The descriptions should be thorough and clear, yet as concise as possible.

Minimum requirements of ESEA and Peer Review

Offerors must describe how their assessments meet the requirements required by Title 59, Chapter 18 of the South Carolina Code of Laws (referred to as the Education Accountability Act or EAA) as amended in 2014 through Acts 155 and 200, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA), and the latest version of the NCLB Standards and Assessments Peer Review Guidance.

At no additional cost to the state, the Offeror must clearly commit to augment, revise, edit, and/or alter any aspect of the assessment system, including but not limited to the assessment itself and/or the reporting system, to meet the requirements of peer review and the U.S. Department of Education that will allow the results to be used in ESEA reporting.

The Offeror must clearly commit in writing a willingness to either to administer the tests in all schools on the same schedule (e.g., reading test on May 2nd), or, if required by the Department or by legislation, administer the tests at a set point during each school's instructional year to be designated by the Department or legislation (e.g., each school's 175th instructional day).

Special Emphasis should be placed on the following:

- At no additional cost to the state, the Contractor must explicitly commit to make item substitutions, augment, revise, edit, and/or alter the assessments before testing if, during the independent alignment study items are determined not to be aligned.
- At no additional cost to the state, the Offeror must clearly commit to augment, revise, edit, and/or alter any aspect of the system, including but not limited to the assessment itself and/or the reporting system, to meet the requirements of peer review and the U.S. Department of Education so that the results can be used for ESEA accountability reporting.
- The Offeror must clearly commit to writing and rewriting all text as required for peer review as a base cost of the Contract.
- The Offeror must clearly state a willingness to change, alter, etc. any of the Contractor's policies, procedures, testing in compliance with state and federal laws and regulations and federal peer review guidance.
- The Offeror must clearly address it's understanding of the roles of the Department and Contractor, clearly stating that the Department is the customer and has final approval of any and all of the Contractor's administrative testing policies and/or procedures, such as communication with districts, delivery and return of materials, data file layouts, etc.
- Describe the achievement levels established for the ELA and mathematics assessments. Provide the appropriate Descriptions of Achievement Levels (DALs) for each assessment.
- Describe and provide available results for any studies that demonstrate alignment for college and career readiness standards. Discuss how the results have been used in other states.
- Describe studies the Offeror proposes to complete to ensure that the assessments will meet requirements of ESEA, peer review, and US Department of Education.
- Describe the reliability and validity of the proposed assessments and evidence that they meet the criteria of ESEA and peer review.
- Provide proposed schedules that include training dates, recommended testing dates, the delivery and pick-up of test materials, score report and data file delivery dates. Address any timeline issues that are critical to meeting deadlines.
- Describe any available practice items and/or tests, especially for online testing and for students who use accommodations and customized materials. The costs, if any, for development of practice items and/or tests should be provided as a cost option.
- Describe the Contractor's staffing plan, including the responsibilities of the Project Coordinator.
- Describe any training that is required prior to test administration. Describe the types and numbers of training sessions needed for School Test Coordinators, District Test Coordinators, and Technology Coordinators. Include the time required for each session and the training format(s) proposed (e.g., in-person, webinars, or conference calls). The Contractor will be responsible for any Contractor expenses (e.g., setting up webinars, travel) associated with the meetings. Meeting space and any costs for attendees will be the responsibility of the Department.

- Describe materials shipment and return procedures, including quality control procedures that will be used to ensure that the correct numbers and types boxes are received in the districts and returned from the districts in a timely, safe, and efficient manner. Include assurances that districts receive the correct boxes; express services will be available to all district delivery sites and a letter of guarantee from the shipping subcontractor that the Contractor will use to ship materials.
- Describe the proposed online enrollment and/or ordering system.
- Describe the proposed scanning, scoring, and reporting services including electronic and paper score reports.
- Describe the Offerors ability to offer rescoring services (a means for verification of individual student scores when there is justifiable reason for suspecting a score is inaccurate. Include investigating and resolving incomplete scores or responses.
- Describe the test security procedures that will be implemented to ensure the confidentiality of the test materials during an online administration of the assessment and any additional precautions and procedures that will be implemented to ensure the security of all secure test materials during the electronic and hard-copy production, printing, distribution, and return. Address procedures that will be implemented to ensure the security of test materials if printing occurs outside the vendors' facilities, electronic document transfer, and storage phases of the project.
- For online testing, describe how test items are secured and whether the testing platform will allow the computers to be locked-down during testing to ensure that students are not able to leave the testing environment, search for answers, and then return to the test.
- Describe all types of items that require handscoring. Describe the procedures for handscoring these items, including the training and qualifying of scorers.
- Describe scoring and handscoring procedures. For handscoring, provide information about where scoring occurs, training and qualifying raters, how many raters score each type of item, the process if rater reliability falls (at what level is action taken and when does it occur). Describe the type of scoring information provided to the Department, including rater reports including individual performance during training, overall and individual rater-agreement indices during the scoring process, and other quality control statistics (these data must be provided to the Department, if requested). Provide whether the contractor will permit Department staff to travel, at Department expense, to monitor and/or review the scoring facilities, training, and scoring.
- Describe the availability for "rescoring" as described in this RFP.

Description of the Proposed Assessments

Include a discussion of each item or question listed below, following the same order and format.

Test Title and Copyright Date.

- Provide the complete title of each proposed assessment.
- Provide the date(s) of the first publication for each assessment and test administration manual(s).
- Provide the date(s) for all subsequent revisions of the tests and manual(s).

Purpose and Use of the Assessments

- Describe the purpose(s) for which each assessment was developed and can be validly used.
- Describe the construct being measured.
- Describe the intended examinee population.
- Provide an interpretation for intended uses including a rationale supporting the interpretation and uses of results for each purpose.
- Indicate the states administering the assessment and dates of use.
- Indicate the purpose(s) for which each state uses the assessment.

Test Development

- Provide an overview and description of the development and history of the assessment(s) indicating who developed the assessment and when.
- Indicate the types of items on the test. Describe how the item types comply with ACT 200 and the EAA.
- Describe the procedures used to develop each type of test item and indicate the procedure employed to ensure that items were developed using universally design elements.
- Cite research indicating why these types of items are effective for achieving the assessment's purposes.
- Indicate how many test forms are available at each level and describe the procedures used to develop the forms and levels.
- Provide evidence and describe the procedures used to equate the test forms. If the forms are not equivalent, report the major differences between forms.
- Indicate the procedures used in equating content and test form difficulty.
- Describe the procedures used to vertically align the grade level forms.
- Describe the differences in paper-based and computer-based assessments (e.g., describe whether the items and item types the same or different, describe the equating).
- Describe plans for on-going development of items and test forms.

Test Overview

- Define the general content being measured by the proposed test.
- Describe the objectives being measured by the test. Provide a copy of all sets of standards the assessments are based on.
- Provide the test length of each assessment.
- Indicate the item formats on each assessment.
- Provide a test blueprint that governs construction of the test, including the number of items per objective and reporting category.
- Describe the taxonomic classification system used to classify each test item and the proportional assignment of items within the taxonomic classification system.
- Describe the range of content difficulty included on each grade level of the test.

- Describe the extent to which the items included at each level assess higher order thinking skills.
- Describe how grade-level appropriateness of item content was determined for the assessment. Indicate the method by which text complexity and grade-level appropriateness was determined for reading passages.

Customized Materials and Accommodations

- Describe and provide a list and all valid accommodations available for students with disabilities and ELLs.
- Describe the types of customized test materials that are available for students with disabilities and ELLs.
- Describe all accommodations, special provisions, special supplementary materials, or special versions of the assessments that students were used to use during the field test or research studies.
- Provide the number and percent of students with disabilities and ELLs that were included in the field test or other research study samples and provide a description of the populations that used different types of customized forms and materials in the development of each assessment.
- Describe how scores from students with disabilities and ELLs were included in the overall or standard setting results.
- Describe the degree to which the assessment(s) are appropriate for students with disabilities and ELLs.

Research Studies

- Describe any research studies (e.g., pilot tests, field tests) conducted for each assessment.
- Provide the dates of each study, a description of any samples used, and procedures used to select students or schools for the study samples.
- Indicate all stratification variables used in selecting the sample.
- List the schools in South Carolina, if any, which participated in the study.
- Describe any empirical studies that show the degree of accuracy with which the assessments predict college and/or career readiness.

Reliability and Validity

- Describe the procedures used to calculate the reliability of any subtests and the test as a whole.
- Report the reliability coefficient(s) calculated per test form, identifying each type of reliability coefficient (e.g., stability, equivalence, or internal consistency). The South Carolina Technical Advisory Committee has recommended test reliability indices ≥ 0.85. Proposing a test with reliability indices of less than 0.85 would negatively impact the scoring of the Offeror's proposal.
- Report the reliability coefficients for different types of student subgroups including race, ethnicity, gender, students with disabilities, and ELLs.

Scaling

- Describe the procedure used to scale test items (e.g., latent trait or classical approach) for each subtest and the total test.
- Report the p-values (i.e., difficulties) for each item, if available. Provide an explanation if they are not available.
- Report the average difficulties for each subtest and the test as a whole.
- Indicate whether the assessments are vertically scaled. Describe how scores can be used for programs that require growth measures (e.g., Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) and VAM).

Test Bias

- Describe the procedures and the types of statistical tests performed to evaluate for item sensitivity and bias, including tests for gender and ethnicity bias. Provide the results of these evaluations.
- Describe the participants who conducted the bias study and the instructions given to them.
- Provide any research evidence or analysis of results related to geographic or socioeconomic sensitivity and bias.

Test Administration

- Provide a description of the procedures to be used for test administration including permissible variations.
- Describe the materials necessary to administer the tests.
- Indicate if there are there any special procedures, equipment, or materials that are required for a valid administration of the assessment.
- Indicate the types of test administration manuals needed/provided and provide a description of each indicating if test administrator directions are included.
- Describe whether the test is timed or not. If timed, specify the amount of time allowed for testing for each component of all assessments proposed.
- Describe the test booklet and/or answer document options that are available for paper-based tests.
- Indicate how many test booklets and answer documents per student are necessary for paper-based testing.
- Describe any professional development supports and/or resources that have been developed for educators and/or parents.

Test Results/Interpretation/Use of Scores/Reports.

- Indicate whether the test is criterion-referenced or norm-referenced and how the type of test is appropriate for use in state and federal accountability. If the assessments are norm-referenced provide information about the norms, including the following.
    - Describe the norming sample (the size of the norm group, where the students were from, what percentage of the students had disabilities or were English Language learners).

    - How often are norms set?
    - Describe how was the norming sample selected (e.g., randomly, user norms).
- Describe how test scores are reported for the total test and the different domains or standards, indicating the method or process used to calculate the scores.
- Indicate the reasoning for the selection of the particular type of scores provided.
- Provide a description of achievement levels, achievement descriptors, and cut scores developed for the proposed assessment program.
- Indicate how the achievement levels were developed providing a detailed description of the process including the rationale and procedures used to determine each level. Specify how the procedures comply with the requirements of peer review.
- Provide exemplars of student work, if available, that illustrate the range of achievement within each achievement level.
- Describe the student-level and summative reports available to parents, schools, districts, and the state. Provide samples, if available.
- Explain how the scores are intended to be used by teachers.
- Describe the way(s) in which the proposed assessment(s) can be used to inform instruction.
- Describe supplemental products and services (e.g., an interpretive guide, tutorial, and/or training) that are available to assist with the interpretation of test results.

Technical Manual

- Submit any and all technical manuals for each assessment as an appendix.

Training and Professional Development

- Describe any training that is required and will be provided prior to test administration (e.g., DTCs, Technology Coordinators, and STCs).
- Describe how and by whom this training will be conducted.

Assessment Materials

- If available, submit a complete set of assessment materials for review (including test booklets, answer documents, TAMs, brochures, etc.).
- If available, provide online access and/or an electronic or video demonstration for review if the product is computer-based in part or in whole.
- **Computer-based Test Administration.** Describe the key features of the online system. To help with that description a minimum set of Contractor capabilities must be addressed in the proposal. This set of criteria is as follows:
    - A general description of the Offeror's current online assessment system, experience with it in other states, and information about where and how it has been used successfully in the past. Describe all difficulties encountered in the past three years by the system, Contractor, any subcontractors being proposed, and/or users (e.g., scoring delays, capacity issues, students being kicked out of testing sessions, lost scores, inaccurate and/or delayed scoring) and how the issues were resolved.

- A description of the current technical specifications of the online assessment system including
  - the platform, design, software
  - speed (bandwidth usage)
  - encryption
  - memory usage
  - capacity (e.g., numbers of students who can be served simultaneously, hourly, daily, weekly) etc.
  - security features including encryption, items resident in memory, locking out other software during testing, , firewall issues, disabling print screen capability, etc.
  - server/network issues
  - minimum system requirements for computer hardware/software, all acceptable operating systems, and other necessary software
  - supported devices (desktops, laptops, tablets, other handheld devices, etc.
  - user/presentation interface
  - Specify any user tools available to the user (e.g., zoom or enlargement feature) that allows users an experience that is comparable to the paper/pencil assessment.
  - Describe of tech support availability, before, during, and after testing, as well as after regular business hours.
  - Describe resources available and plans for dealing with difficulties that might arise before, during, and after testing.
  - Describe any automated scoring and/or reporting procedures.

(D) QUALIFICATIONS

Submit and explain (as necessary) the requested information listed below.

- A narrative discussing the Offerors qualifications and prior experience performing tasks similar to those required in this RFP. The discussion must include a description of the respondent's background and relevant experience that qualifies it to provide the products and services required by this RFP.
- Document contracted services during the last five (5) years for assessment projects similar to the ones described in this RFP and any other projects the respondent believes will demonstrate its corporate capability. For each instance, the documentation should include a description of the services and products delivered, contract reference numbers, the contract period of performance, and the name, address, telephone number, and e-mail address of a contact person for each of the contracting agencies. Separately list any assessment contracts that have been terminated or ended before the original contract period was over and explain the reasons associated with the loss.
- If subcontractors will be used for any portion of the work tasks, name the subcontractor(s) and document the experience and qualifications of the subcontractor(s) in performing tasks similar to those tasks they will perform.

(E) PROGRAM MANAGEMENT PLAN

- Provide an organizational chart indicating lines of authority for personnel involved in the performance of this contract and the relationships of the staff on the project and other functions/programs in the vendor's organization.
- Submit a plan that clearly delineates the staffing structure for the management of the contract specified in the technical proposal and how they will meet or exceed the requirements identified in the RFP.
- Indicate who will have prime responsibility and final authority for the work described in this RFP and the contractor's proposal and the percentage of time this person will devote to the project.
- Discuss the organization's overall capabilities to carry out this project.
- Identify staff, including subcontractors, who will be assigned to the potential contract, indicating the responsibilities (duties and roles) and qualifications of each person and the percentage of time each will be assigned to the project. If contractor staff will also be assigned to another project, this information must be conveyed in the plan. For each staff member participating in the project, provide curriculum vitae that include information on the individuals' particular skills related to this project, education, experience including experience managing projects of this magnitude, significant accomplishments, and any other pertinent information. The Offeror must state that staff identified in its proposal will actually perform the assigned work. Any staff substitution must have the prior approval of the Department.
- Propose a Project Coordinator who meets the minimum qualifications specified below and provide evidence that the proposed Project Coordinator meets these qualifications. Provide the percentage of time the Project Coordinator will be devoted to tis project.
    - extensive knowledge of the Offeror's operation
    - experience conducting similar statewide projects
    - some background in education
    - effective managerial skills (including the ability to initiate scheduled activities, creatively solve problems, accurately and thoroughly document conference calls and meetings, follow through on tasks requested and agreed upon through e-mail or telephone by the Department, and ensure the quality of materials and activities completed by the Contractor or its subcontractors)
- Propose a psychometrician who meets the qualifications specified below and provide evidence that the proposed psychometrician meets these qualifications.
    - extensive knowledge of the Offeror's operation
    - experience with similar statewide projects and production of technical reports
    - Ph.D. in educational measurement or related field and three years of psychometric and data analysis experience on a large-scale level.

V. QUALIFICATIONS

B&CB Boiler plate text

VI. AWARD CRITERIA

(State Boilerplate)

	Item	Total
1.	**Assessments –** The degree to which the assessments meet the requirements for use in state/federal accountability.	1-25 Points
2.	**Technical Proposal** – The degree, completeness, and suitability of the Offeror's proposed solution and their ability to meet or exceed all requirements of the Request for Proposals.	1-25 Points
3.	**Qualifications** – The Offeror's experience and references and evidence of successful past performance with projects of similar size and scope.	1-20 Points
4.	**Program Management Plan** – Provide the overall description of the approach to manage, implement, and support this assessment program.	1-20 Points
5.	**Business Proposal** – See Section VIII. Bidding Schedule / Price-Business Proposal.	1-10 Points
	Total Potential	**100 Points**

VII. TERMS AND CONDITIONS
(B&CB Boilerplate)

VIII. PRICE-BUSINESS PROPOSAL

The state fiscal year is July 1 through June 30.

- The price proposal must be submitted in Microsoft Excel format. Offerors must separate their "Price-Business Proposal" from all other submittals for this procurement.
- Base prices and optional prices must be listed under separate headings, by fiscal year.
- The prices for assessing grades 3–8 and grade 11 must be provided separately. Prices for grades 9-10 must be provided as an option.
- Individual prices must be submitted for all major documents and activities (or services).
- For 2015-16, within each school, some students may be tested online while others are tested through paper-based administrations. The Offeror must provide costs for testing 50% of students in paper-based format and 50% in computer-based format. For 2016-17 and beyond, the Offeror must provide prices for testing 100% of students in computer-based format.
- Individual student prices must be provided by subject for paper-based and computer-based administrations. Charges to the Department during the contract will be based on the actual number of students testing with each format.

- The price proposal must include individual costs for paper-based and computer-based formats of all available accommodations.
- The Offeror must include overage printing allowances for all paper test materials except customized materials. The calculation of overages, unless otherwise specified, should be based on a ten (10) percent overage for the districts and a five (5) percent overage for each school. Any price estimates related to class-level materials and/or procedures must be calculated on the basis of one document for every ten students for the assessment program plus overage.
- As a price option, provide the costs to produce and provide copies of User's guides in braille and large-print.
- The price proposal must include a separate cost for producing, printing, and shipping fifty (50) braille versions, and two hundred (200) large-print versions for both assessment programs.

IX. ATTACHMENTS TO SOLICITATION

Appendix A Numbers of Customized Test Materials Ordered

Appendix A
Numbers of Customized Test Materials Ordered

English Language Arts

Customized Material	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
Loose Leaf	48	46	29	25	13	8
Large Print	71	48	52	52	45	42
Braille	2	2	5	1	4	4
Sign Language	10	11	13	13	15	21
Oral Scripts	105	86	2477	1419	1301	1184
Oral CD-ROM			677	1985	2217	2062
ELA Signed Script	4	1	12	8	6	22
ELA Signed Admin. DVD	1		2	11	10	19

Mathematics

Customized Material	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
Loose Leaf	46	51	29	31	14	9
Large Print	58	50	52	53	45	41
Braille	2	2	4	1	4	5
Sign Language	15	12	11	13	14	22
Oral Scripts	4212	4345	3627	1694	1462	1273
Oral CD-ROM			803	2412	2582	2323
Math Signed Script	15	10	13	6	7	14
Math Signed Admin. DVD	4	3	4	12	10	25