



RFP - Student Assessment System

Questions & Answers

Bidders' Conference October 30, 2014

1. In Section V. Contents for Proposals, on page 9, the RFP states "The proposal shall be organized in the format listed below and shall be limited to twenty (30) pages (excluding attachments and appendices)..." Please clarify whether the page limit for proposals is twenty (20) or thirty (30) pages.

Thirty (30) pages. Additional information may be included as attachments and appendices.

2. In Section II. General Instructions, on page 4, with respect to the Bidder's Conference, will the district provide a conference call number for out of state vendors who would like to respond to this RFP?

No, bidders must attend the Bidders' Conference in person.

3. How many teachers and administrators will need to be trained on the system?

Approximately 1,978 teachers.

Grade	Number	Grade	Number
K	94	7 (Math & ELA)	254
1	200	8 (Math & ELA)	72
2	133	9 (Math & ELA)	436
3	129	10 (Math & ELA)	200
4	147	11 (ELA)	62
5	121	12 (ELA)	33
6	97		
Total		1978	

Approximately 150 administrators.

4. Can you clarify if the budget of \$575,000 is PER YEAR or is for the 10 year duration of the project?

The estimate listed above is for the first two years. Response should include estimated costs for continued support and licensing.

5. Which, if any, of the items listed under Project Deliverables does the District wish to receive in the RFP response?

All, as stated.

6. How do you intend to measure Customer Satisfaction? Will this be the responsibility of the vendor or does the District intent to measure this?

The District will assume this responsibility.

7. Nondisclosure agreement form (pg 6). Where can this form be found? We do not see it included in the RFP.

To be provided upon selection of vendor.

8. Does the District require every piece of end-user documentation to be customized for Sacramento? Will customized items such as cover pages be sufficient for this?

The expectation is that vendors will provide customer online knowledge base to support customer training as well as standard hardcopy training materials.

9. Open source, SCORM compliant for interoperability with Learning Management Systems (pg 6). What level of integration with the LMS does the District desire?

Each and all components that comprise the Student Assessment System shall be a fully interoperable system or systems capable of plug-and-play functionality for delivery of all content, utilize a data exchange such as active directory authentication, and provide cloud or server-based synchronization.

10. Our standard SIS integration provides the client with a template so they can create a CSV file containing their roster data. Typically, a client will take this template, create the file and automate the extract to an FTP location on a nightly basis. This level of integration is included as part of the setup, but it requires the client to do the automation of the extract. Is the District open to this type of SIS integration? We have the ability to automate this process, however this would require custom development work and would increase costs.

As per the RFP, the Student Assessment System will need have the capacity for full integration with our SIS, Infinite Campus. Data exchange and synchronization between systems shall be automated and preferably utilize active directory authentication protocols.

11. Does the district desire vendors to provide only ELA and Math items or do you also want Science and SS items included with item bank proposed?

The content requested is for ELA and Math.

12. What LMS is the district currently using or considering?

The District does not currently have a Learning Management System nor is it considering a particular one.

13. Can you describe in more detail what district expects by the term, “auto-register accounts” with regard to SIS integration?

A single sign-on or LDAP solution is desired to enable our staff to utilize existing accounts. Data exchange and synchronization between systems shall be automated and preferably utilize active directory authentication protocols to auto-populate the new Student Assessment System with existing user accounts and information to provide seamless access and use among systems.

14. On page 6, Systems Integration section, bullet point #6; district lists “Vendor shall warrant that there are no third-parties involved in the execution of performance of vendor’s obligations... Is this to also include potential third-party item bank providers?”

Third-party vendors will only have write level access, and be disclosed as a third party to the contract.

15. What student count does the district wish pricing to be based on?

Please reference page 5 of the RFP. Per student licensing will be based on fluctuating student enrollments.

16. Can you provide the names of other districts who may be included in the stage 1 evaluations?

There will be no participating districts in the evaluation.

17. Page 5, Section: Assessment Form and Item Development. Please elaborate on what is meant by “templates to build assessments”. Does Sacramento City Unified require selected vendor to custom develop benchmark assessments?

Templates refer to pre-developed assessments forms, which represent a custom alignment to SCUSD’s curriculum maps the common which are also aligned to the Common Core State Standards that are part of the Student Assessment System, ready for use.

Please elaborate on the requirements for bullet #2 (On-demand form development, copy, storage, and retrieval).

A proposed Student Assessment System shall provide users to ability to create item content, assessment forms (tests) and provide the functionality to copy an existing assessment form to enhance or modify, and store and retrieve all items and or forms for continued use or modification.

18. Do you currently have common district assessments in the Data Director application? If so, do you plan to administer any of those common assessments (as they are today) in the new assessment platform, or do you plan to build new common assessments in the new platform?

Yes, common district assessments reside in Data Director. No, these existing assessments developed within the Data Director will not be administered in the new platform. Yes, we expect to plan and/or build new assessments in the new platform.

a. If you plan to build new common assessments, are you looking for assistance in the assessment development process?

Yes, ability to custom develop assessment forms are expected.

b. When do you plan to administer common district assessments in the new assessment platform? Is that timeframe based on whether or not assessments from Data Director are pulled into the new system as they exist today, vs a schedule where new assessments are developed?

Expected administration of common districts assessments would occur late January or February. The timeframe is not depended on extracting existing assessments from Data Director.

19. When you have implemented the new assessment system, do you plan to administer 100% of common district assessments online? If not, what % will be online vs offline in the first implementation year? What time period/year do you envision being able to administer all district common assessments online?

No, approximately 30% of the administration will be offline/paper-pencil.

20. Could you further clarify the scope of data integration with Infinite Campus and LMS?

The Student Assessment System should be fully interoperable with or include an LMS. Further, Student Assessment System should have interoperability with Infinite Campus, capable of nightly, automated synchronization of data exchange.

21. In addition to items that are already developed and available for CCSS, is the District looking for additional assessment development or workshops specifically to train staff on CCSS item development?

No

22. What is the District's current capacity to deliver on-line assessments? Are there any technology limitations?

We have hardware and wireless capacity to deliver online assessment, but we have limited resources for a self-hosted solution.

23. The RFP states that a "Fully configured SAS software with any customizations required to satisfy state, federal, or agreed-upon SCUSD requirements." Please clarify and provide examples of the types of customization you expect to see in the system.

If there are changes in state or federal laws that affect standards or assessment as well as changes within the district's program, non-fee-based updates and/or customizations are expected for SCUSD to maintain compliance with these changes. For example, changes to the Common Core State Standards or the district-developed curriculum maps.

24. "SCUSD desires a single system to handle all student assessment activity....." Does this include both formative and summative assessments?

Yes, a single Student Assessment System will support all district-based assessment activity and store and report all state and district-based assessment results.

25. Does the District desire adaptive benchmark tests to validate growth and provide diagnostic feedback in addition to the form based assessments specified?

A Student Assessment System that provides online adaptive delivery of item content providing reliable and valid results for validating growth and/or expectations for growth is highly desirable.

26. Is Infinite Campus going to be used to store all assessment data, or will any other data storage or data warehousing system be used?

The Student Assessment System will be capable of storing all data originating in the system for extended reporting use, as well as storing and integrating data not originating in the system so that complete academic profiles can be rendered. Therefore, the Student Assessment System will be capable of synchronized data imports and exports.

27. How does the direct assessment delivery capabilities of Infinite Campus fit in with what is being requested in this Student Assessment System?

SCUSD is expecting integration and synchronization.

28. *“The SCUSD expects the proposals to include recommendations for hardware to satisfy stated performance requirements. However, the SCUSD may choose to acquire hardware through a separate process.”* Could SCUSD please clarify this statement?

We reserve the right to make the final determinations on whether to provide the hardware for on or off-site hosted solution, please reference item four on page 6 of the RFP under System Integration.

29. *“SCUSD desires to begin implementation and staff training during Fall of 2014 and for operational use of the proposed assessment system district-wide by December 2014.”*

This seems to be a very aggressive plan, although the time from the decision to implement Infinite Campus to its actual implementation was also aggressive. Please add any possible details to the above statement. For example:

- a. When does SCUSD need for students to begin live testing with this new solution?

February 2015, following staff training.

- b. What data from prior years of testing needs to be converted into the new system, and by when?

Yes, all assessment data should reside in a single system. This will be considered a deliverable, but can be prioritized after full implementation of the new system.

- c. What components, specifically, does SCUSD expect to be up and running “by December?”

The System Assessment System is expected to be fully functional by January to train users on functionality.

- d. By when does SCUSD anticipate needing to author items or build tests in the system?

By Spring 2015. However, existing items and forms should be modifiable with system installation and rollout (December/January).

30. *“Sufficient and proportional representation of item content by grades.”* What qualifies as “sufficient counts?” Can SCUSD provide ranges?

Item availability should provide a sufficiency of items that are proportional in subject matter standards and claims, within and across grade levels, and that are also representative of the range of Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) item types and depths of knowledge, rigor, and complexity. Ranges cannot be provided, but item sufficiency would allow for development of multiple assessment forms with unique items, in the proportions desired, to be administered within a traditional, single year, benchmark cycle. It is strongly recommended that you reference the SBAC item specifications on the SBAC website.

31. *“The length of this contract shall be for the estimated implementation period plus ninety (90) days from date of award.”* By “estimated implementation period,” does SCUSD mean the awarded provider’s estimated number of weeks or months from date of award in which it plans to fully deliver the solution sought, including all Year 1 training?

Yes

32. What is SCUSD currently using for an online testing platform and for content (items and/or any preconfigured quizzes or tests)?

We do not utilize our current platform for online delivery.

33. Since many CA school districts are in transition to the Common Core and preparing for the upcoming SBAC assessment, which is approximately 11.5 hours of total test time per student, which of the innovative item types or which assessment content is most important to SCUSD this coming spring? Can SCUSD rank the types defined in the proposal?

All of the SBAC-liked items are expected with equal weight and priority. However, the ratio of constructed responses to selected responses is expected to be fewer. SCUSD will work with the selected vendor to determine assessment form development.

34. “However, the proposal must contain an estimated modification cost based on experience with other customers”. Please identify the types of modifications that the district might expect to be made.

Please page 4 of the RFP and the response to question 25 of this document. However, modifications to items and/or reporting abilities may be requested. Bidder is asked to provide an estimated cost and timeline for modifications.

35. “4) inclusive of or able to integrate with a Learning Management System”. Please identify the district’s Learning Management System.

SCUSD does not currently have a Learning Management System.

36. On page 6, under Services, what format is acceptable for System documentation?

Available in hardcopy upon delivery and available online.

37. On page 7, under written deliverables, what format is acceptable for end-user documentation

An accessible on-line knowledge base and in-program resources.

38. What does the District anticipate the concurrency of on-line assessments to be?

There are established windows for benchmark assessments. We anticipate approximately 30% of any particular grade level to be concurrently testing on-line.

39. Do you require a particular scanner? Do we include a scanner option in our proposal?

Proposals should include a scanning solution. The District will reserve the right to purchase the necessary hardware separate or inclusive of the proposal. The cost will not come out of the \$575,000.

40. Data exchange with Infinite Campus (scores, data): Is there anything that needs to be aligned with Infinite Campus?

The District Student Information System runs on Microsoft SQL Database which is compatible with most Excel file formats, including but not limited to csv, txt, xls. With that said, we can utilize Microsoft Visual Studio to deploy SSIS packages in order to automate imports and extracts through SSMS. However, the data needs to be transparent in both the Student Information System and the Student Assessment System using the above mentioned resources.

41. Are there any District-created items?

Yes, a few were developed last year. These will be discussed in more detail with the firm selected to provide the student assessment system.

42. Where do we find scope/sequence? What format are they in?

They are in Word format and not available to the general public. We will share this information with the selected firm. These maps were provided to the bidders at the Bidders Conference and will be posted on-line.

43. Can you clarify the timeline?

It is expected that the first benchmark, which for the purpose of this RFP represents our Trimester 2 Benchmark assessment, would be available February 2015. Availability is defined as an operational on-line and paper/pencil administration, scoring and reporting. The assessment benchmark form can be a template, but will need to be aligned to the scope and sequence of our Curriculum Map. The Benchmark 3 would be the next priority for development, followed by Benchmark 1.

44. Will these outcomes be used for teacher evaluation?

No

45. Are assessments normally proctored?

No, they are delivered by teachers.

46. What kind of data analysis to you expect?

Front end user reports will include descriptive statistics reported for the performance results reporting options – error analysis, year to year comparisons, etc., as specified in the RFP. Inferential item statistics will also be provided for district level users, as specified in the RFP.

47. SLA Requirements – in proposal or Phase II?

In proposal

48. Do you intend to integrate Infinite Campus and a Learning Management System down the road?

Yes, if the assessment system can't do both.

Proposals are due on November 14, 2014 by 4:30 p.m.