

EDURFI2011001

Request for Information by the State of Ohio Department of Education

RACE TO THE TOP INSTRUCTIONAL IMPROVEMENT SYSTEM

12/15/10

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REQUEST FOR INFORMATION OVERVIEW

PURPOSE

Ohio is one of 20 states awarded a Race to the Top grant in 2010. Ohio's grant application includes a project to provide a state-level Instructional Improvement System that will be provided to LEAs. ODE has two options available to complete this project:

- Build a new, custom system
- Purchase an existing system from a vendor

To assist in the decision making process, ODE is gathering information about the available systems in the marketplace that meet this need. ODE is interested in providing vendors with the opportunity to conduct a demonstration of existing systems that meet the IIS definition. The information gathered as a result of these demonstrations may also be used to assist in clarifying the State's functional and technical requirements that will be included in the Request for Proposal (RFP) that will eventually be developed.

BACKGROUND

ODE currently has a Local Data Analysis Data Warehouse (LDADW) that is used for the Data Driven Decisions for Academic Achievement (D3A2) application. LEA participation in the use of the D3A2 system and the LDADW is optional. LEAs throughout the state use a variety of SIS systems, many of which are hosted for them by ITCs. D3A2 and many of the SIS systems contain components of an IIS that could be leveraged if ODE decides to build a custom system.

SYSTEM DEFINING EFFORTS

As part of a grant funded by the Gates Foundation, ODE has been working with the Center for Educational Leadership and Technology (CELТ) in conjunction with the Florida Department of Education to define a set of high-level IIS requirements. As part of this process, CELТ has held requirements sessions throughout the state with representatives from LEAs and Information Technology Centers (ITCs). Additional time and budget has been planned to further define more detailed requirements as part of the Race to the Top IIS project.

OVERVIEW OF SYSTEM NEEDS

The federal definition of an IIS as defined in the Race to the Top Request for Applications (RFA) is as follows: means technology-based tools and other strategies that provide teachers, principals, and administrators with meaningful support and actionable data to systemically manage continuous instructional improvement, including such activities as: instructional planning; gathering information (e.g., through formative assessments (as defined in this notice), interim assessments (as defined in this notice), summative assessments, and looking at student work and other student data); analyzing information with the support of rapid-time (as defined in this notice) reporting; using this information to inform decisions on appropriate next instructional steps; and evaluating the effectiveness of the actions taken. Such systems promote collaborative problem-solving and action planning; they may also integrate

instructional data with student-level data such as attendance, discipline, grades, credit accumulation, and student survey results to provide early warning indicators of a student's risk of educational failure.

OVERVIEW OF SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

Ohio's Instructional Improvement will contain, but will not be limited to, the following functionality:

- Online access to electronic curriculum, resources and tools aligned to the revised standards
- Curriculum customization for differentiated instruction
- Online formative assessments
- Data-analysis capabilities
- Early-warning indicators for teachers, administrators, parents, and students
- Must be able to integrate with Student Information Systems (SIS) to make use of the available data
- Must be able to integrate with Ohio's Local Data Analysis Data Warehouse to make use of the available data
- Must be an externally hosted system outside of ODE

DEMONSTRATION FORUM

ODE, at its sole discretion, may extend invitations to responding vendors requesting a demonstration of their system. Such an invitation will be based on the content of the vendor's response content as it relates to the stated requirements. The demonstration format is as follows:

- Vendors must have an existing Instructional Improvement System that meets the federal definition of an IIS described in Race to the Top and that meets the description of an IIS as defined in Ohio's RttT application.
- Vendors should focus on the features of the system that specifically address the functionality of the IIS described in Ohio's RttT application.
- Demos must include working versions of systems, not screen shots.
- Demos will take place at the Ohio Department of Education in Columbus in the lecture hall.
- The audience will include approximately 10 ODE stakeholders representing Race to the Top, ODE Program Areas and IT.
- Representatives from all 23 Ohio Information Technology Centers (ITCs) are also invited.

- Presentation length should be about 1 hour. Vendors should plan an additional 30 minutes before the presentation for setup and 30 minutes after for questions and teardown.
- Vendors must have a web/phone conference available so ITC representatives can attend remotely.
- Vendors must provide the web/phone conference information as soon as it is available so it can be forwarded.
- Internet access, a phone and a projector will be provided.
- Vendors must provide contact information for the person leading / coordinating the presentation, including phone number, e-mail, and fax number
- Vendors must provide the number of vendor representatives attending and their names

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

EVENT	DATE
Request for Information Issued	12/17/10
RFI responses due	01/07/11
Issuance of Invitation to Demonstrate	01/21/11

RESPONSE INSTRUCTIONS

Respondents must email a copy of their response to this RFI not later than 01/07/11, 5:00 PM, Eastern Standard Time. Proposals received after this date and time will not be reviewed. Material mailed or submitted separate from the proposal packet will not be accepted or added to the proposal by ODE staff. Faxes will not be accepted. Proposals must be in PDF format and emailed to:

Marsha Ward, Ohio Department of Education: marsha.ward@ode.state.oh.us

Vendors that are not submitting a response to this RFI, but would like to receive a copy of the RFP will be able to find it on the State of Ohio Procurement site at: <http://procure.ohio.gov/proc/index.asp> after it is posted.

CONTENT OF RESPONSE

Vendors responding to this RFI are encouraged to provide as much information as possible in their response. Vendors are asked to organize their responses as indicated below; additional information may be provided at the vendor's discretion.

It is specifically understood that any costs or information provided as part of the RFI process are not to be construed as binding upon either ODE or the vendor at such time as the competitive procurement may occur. Information obtained as a result of this RFI will be used for planning purposes only. Vendors are advised that any information received is considered public information.

VENDOR PROFILE

The vendor shall summarize experience in the Instructional Improvement System field. An indication of the size and scope of the experience should be provided. This should include only the work done by the vendor. The role of vendor (primary or sub-contractor) in their past work should also be identified. The vendor should identify the project phases in which the vendor participated and the environments in which the systems were implemented.

The vendor should demonstrate their capability to provide project management, hardware recommendations, and software development through expertise and experience. Vendors shall specify what they consider their competitive advantage to be.

Based on experience, vendors should identify the following:

- Lessons learned from past implementations regarding analysis, design, development, testing, deployment, and training tasks.
- General implementation time frames from previous IT efforts.
- The name of the primary contractor for the system (if applicable)
- The vendor's role in the development of the system
- Where the system is operational

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Vendors should identify the hardware and software used in past Instructional Improvement System implementations. This information should include any minimum requirements for the system. Vendors should explain the lessons learned from previous implementations regarding data conversion. The information on the past conversion efforts should include data volumes, formats, and approaches used. Vendors should also provide lessons learned from developing interfaces in previous Instructional Improvement System implementations.

Vendors should also identify what specific information about functionality, usability, reliability, performance, and supportability requirements is necessary to be included in the procurement document in order to provide appropriate recommendations in the following areas:

- Hardware

- Software
- Conversion
- Interfaces

Vendors should provide a description of:

- Their existing customer base
- The number of students covered
- Examples of existing, in-place SLAs
- Any other documentation regarding the vendor's ability to deliver a state-level system at Ohio's scale

ADDITIONAL COMPETITIVE PROCUREMENT INFORMATION

Vendors should also describe what information is generally overlooked in a competitive procurement but is critical to their ability to provide a working configuration and successful system for a fixed fee.

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

Vendors should describe what they feel the critical success factors are in a system of this size and complexity. The areas generally overlooked or underestimated by the user should be discussed.

APPENDIX A: GLOSSARY

ACRONYMS

ACRONYM	DEFINITION
CELT	Center for Educational Leadership and Technology
D3A2	Data Driven Decisions for Academic Achievement
IIS	Instructional Improvement System
ITC	Information Technology Center
LEA	Local Education Agency
LDADW	Local Data Analysis Data Warehouse
ODE	Ohio Department of Education
RttT	Race to the Top
SIS	Student Information System