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RFP 060B8400016  
Virtual Educational Learning Management System (VELMS)  
Pre-proposal Conference Recap

A pre-proposal conference was held for the VELMS RFP issued by MSDE on behalf of the Department of Information Technology (DoIT) on Wednesday, September 20, 2017 at 10:00 am. There were six companies represented in person and three companies on a WebEx phone conference. Seven MSDE staff attended the conference.

Introductions were made both in the room and on the phone. Val Emrich, the program manager and contract monitor gave an overview of the solicitation. MSDE is seeking a commercial off-the-shelf solution inclusive of both student courses and Professional Development courses, resources, eCommunities, discussion boards, and a registration system. This solution will support the local area school systems students, teachers, administrators and MSDE staff. MSDE, through its Instructional Technology and School Library Media Program (ITSLM) collaborates with local school systems, institutions of higher education, and other organizations to increase and encourage the effective integration of technology into teaching and learning in all schools.

A Question and Answer Session followed the overview.

Q. In the RFP it reads that the new solution will have the same look/feel of the existing system. Are screenshots available for the current system?

**A. You may visit the public view of the current website at: <https://msde.blackboard.com>. The new solution does not have to be the same as the current but it should model the MSDE look/syle.**

Q. Who is the incumbent?

**A. Blackboard is MSDE's current contract awardee. The State also has a contract with Cornerstone.**

**Potential Offerors are reminded that the State is moving toward an Enterprise solution to coordinate IT within the State. This is a statewide solution that any Agency may purchase from.**

Q. How many agencies will use this contract?

**A. We have no way of knowing the answer. It will depend on their needs and budget.**

Q. There does not appear to be an MBE goal on this RFP.

**A. That is correct. This is for a solution that will host and it was determined that the MBE goal was not applicable as there was not a significant amount of work that could be subcontracted. Should an Offeror determine that they may subcontract to a minority business or Veteran-owned business, MSDE would encourage that.**

Q. Do parents have access to this system?

**A. Yes there is a parent tab and MSDE would like an opportunity for parents to be able to see what their student is doing.**

## Virtual Educational Learning Management System (VELMS) Pre-proposal recap

Q. Is the current system a SAAS system?

**A. It is a hosted, managed environment-by the Contractor**

Q. What formats are supported currently?

**A. MP3, MP4, videos, SWF**

Q. Do you require grading and integration with the counties?

**A. Grading is done on-line and is required, however, there is no integration with any of the County systems**

Q. Do you require on-line registration?

**A. Yes it is required and the solution must work with the eCommerce solution**

Q. Is there a 3<sup>rd</sup> party payment system?

**A. Yes**

Q. Will the current vendor provide a sandbox environment for testing and integration?

**A. MSDE will need to verify that**

Q. Is there a hosted payment page?

**A. Yes, data is not kept by the 3<sup>rd</sup> party, there are links**

Q. Who is the current merchant for payment processing?

**A. NIC**

Q. A non-disclosure is mentioned. Is that a state non-disclosure or is it the Contractor's?

**A. There is a standard, state non-disclosure that is sent upon contract award that will have to be signed**

Q. Some of the county schools are asking how this contract will affect them and their current contracts. Does this mean that the State will pay for our LMS?

**A. No. This is a state system that will have to work with the county solution**

Q. Are public users active or view only?

**A. Public users do not need an account or log-on. They do not count against the number of licenses.**

Q. Are the eCommunities public?

**A. No, they are enrolled and have several levels of access/view**

Q. Data security is mentioned all over the RFP. Is it currently a 3<sup>rd</sup> party?

**A. The data security standards have evolved since the contract was first awarded. There is more scrutiny and higher security at the state. Contractors must meet the State requirements as outlined in the RFP and on DoIT's website.**

Q. Are there any problems with the current contract? Why is this being bid?

**A. There are some things MSDE needs to be sure are addressed. The solution must work with all current browsers that are used. Currently there may at times be issues with the school's browsers.**

## Virtual Educational Learning Management System (VELMS) Pre-proposal recap

**A. (cont'd) There are no problems with the contract or contractor that we are aware of. The current contract is ending and the State of Maryland operates on a competitive bidding process. A new contract will be awarded.**

Q. Will the State pay for all licenses in advance or prorated based on active licenses?

**A. The State will pay an annual license fee based on active licenses. The first year's payment is based on deliverables. After all is set, MSDE will pay an annual license fee.**

Q. Is training a requirement and who should be trained?

**A. Yes. It is a train the trainer concept. Staff at MSDE should be trained and will in turn train the LEAs or other users. Training needs to address all roles MSDE requires for offering and delivery content.**

Q. Is this a master contract with 1 instance or multiple instances?

**A. This is a state master contract. Using agencies will issue "task orders" for the service that they require.**

Q. Will the LMS be hosted by the organization or 1 data center with multiple users?

**A. Please refer to section 1.1.1 (page 9 of the RFP) and section 3.1 (page 27 of the RFP). MSDE does not tell Offerors how to respond to the RFP. Offerors must propose their solution to meet the RFP requirements.**

The pre-proposal conference attendance and recap will be published as addendum 1 shortly after this conference. The conference adjourned at 10:30.

Attendees were asked to submit their questions in writing to be answered publicly. Questions may be asked within a reasonable time prior to the due date for proposals. Answers will be published as an addendum.

June Dwyer, Procurement Officer

MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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( ATTENDANCE SHEET )

PRE-PROPOSAL CONFERENCE DATE: September 20, 2017		8 <sup>TH</sup> FLOOR CONF. RM. #2		
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NAME (Please Print)	ORGANIZATION	ADDRESS	TELEPHONE #	FAX# E-MAIL
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