

September 2, 2016

State's Responses to Written Questions and Comments

Potential Respondents:

Please find below the State's responses in red to all submitted written questions and comments.

1. According to the RFP, there is an existing model for coaching. Is there already existing training content?
Yes, a coaching framework that corresponds with the State's indicated coaching cycle, including Learn and Plan, Apply, Reflect, Refine or Extend, and Evaluate components, have been developed with a suite of related coaching tools.

2. Will the list of attendees and/or questions and answers be posted on the procurement website?

The State collected contact information at the pre-response conference in order to include all interested parties on communications, but the list will not be posted on the procurement website. The State's responses to written questions and comments will be posted on the Department of Education's website under Solicitations, Requests, & Notices, found here: <https://www.tn.gov/education/topic/solicitation-requests-notices>.

3. Do training materials need to be 508 compliant?

Training materials will need to be accessible to, or adaptable for use by, individuals with disabilities; however, 508 does not apply to this procurement.

4. Does the State have a requirement for training delivery method (such as all in-person, computer-based, etc.)?

In-person training of the 16 Reading Coach Consultants should be provided for each instructional outcome. This occurs for instructional outcomes 3-6 prior to June 30, 2017. That training is then redelivered in person by the Reading Coach Consultants to the district reading coaches in years 2 and 3. Additional support trainings might be provided in a virtual format.

5. According to the RFP, materials required by the State include: training manuals, notes, PowerPoint presentations, and videos. Do these materials already exist and need to be updated and tailored to the State's requirements, or will they need to be created from scratch?

Materials for Instructional Outcomes 1 and 2 have already been developed, along with the instructional coaching framework and related materials. This includes classroom video of interactive read aloud, coaching video for interactive read aloud, PowerPoints, training manuals, and trainer notes. A few materials that might guide the work of the remaining outcomes have also been developed by the State, yet the bulk of materials will still need to be developed. This includes documents that encompass the vision of literacy and all outcomes working together in a literacy block.

6. The RFP mentions a 3-year initiative but below it states that the contract is for 8.5 months. Can you confirm the contract length and also what work may be anticipated for the remaining two years of the initiative (see D3 for reference to years 2 and 3)?

The State intends to secure a Contract for approximately 8.5 months to provide content, materials, and professional development to support highly effective literacy instructional coaching practices in grades K-3. It is the intention of the State to secure a package of customized resources and professional development content, materials, and delivery to support the learning and improved professional practice of literacy instructional coaches statewide. All content, materials, and training must be provided by June 30, 2017. The projections for this Contract range from approximately \$500,000-\$1,500,000 in the State fiscal year 2017, ending June 2017

We found this in D3 which seems to indicate that there is a Year 2 and 3. So clarification would be helpful: *D3. Provide a descriptive statement detailing the training content and materials the Respondent would provide for up to sixteen (16) Reading Coach Consultants and twenty (20) additional State employees to prepare them to deliver the training developed for years 2 and 3 of the Coaching Network.*

Funding for content development is currently only available through year one of the initiative. So, this contract is for content development of years 2 and 3, and training of TDOE staff to redeliver that training in years 2 and 3. The development of the content and the training of the TDOE Reading Coach Consultants all occur before June 30, 2017.

7. On page 18 of the RFP, section 6.2, item reference B.13 requires references. Please clarify what information needs to be included in the response. For example, is contract name, client name, period of performance, brief description of the work, and contact information for current and previous projects sufficient?

Yes, client name, contact information, contract/project name, period of performance and a brief description of the work will be considered acceptable.

8. Attachment 6.3 includes pricing tables for deliverables. If respondents would like to propose cost savings options, how can those be shown?

Responses may include information about cost savings, but that information will not be scored.

9. Please clarify how the State expects Contractors to provide content aligning to future State academic standards when such standards are not known today. Attachment 6.5, clause A.7: *"All training content and materials that the Contractor provides shall align to current and future State academic standards and assessments for English language arts and reading. The State shall have final approval of all training content and materials."*

The revised standards are available online. They have gone through review and been adopted for use beginning in 2017.

https://www.tn.gov/assets/entities/sbe/attachments/4-15-16_V_B_English_Language_Arts_Standards_Attachment.pdf

This will be the first year of the use of the newly revised standards, so it will be important to provide links and connections as needed between the current adoption and the newly adopted standards.

10. What coaching contexts will be used when coaches work with teachers?

We have developed a coaching framework that includes the phases: learn and plan, apply, reflect, refine and extend, and evaluation aimed at improving student learning. Learn and plan includes both professional learning sessions and planning (including modeling planning, co-planning, and holding a planning conversation). We are utilizing the TN standards for professional learning as the foundation of our work in professional learning sessions. Apply includes supporting the transfer of that learning to the classroom through modeling, co-teaching, and observing. Reflect is the ability of the coach to conduct a reflective conversation with the teacher that engages the teacher in being able to reflect deeply and make decisions about their practice. This then blends into the refine and extend where decisions are made for either continuing to refine the practice that is the focus of the cycle, or extending to take this learning to a new place, like another content area, classroom, or to help other colleagues. Finally, evaluate is about stepping back to see how the coaching cycle is working overall. It's about looking to see if the practices, on which we've been working, are having an impact on students and determining where we might go in the next cycle. A variety of sources and research have informed the development of the model, and the guiding principle is ensuring that we are providing differentiated professional learning that is supported in an ongoing fashion with teachers in their classroom.

11. What does the adopted literacy framework that your work is based on include?

Our literacy framework is based on three major components: increasing access to complex text, ensuring effective instructional practices, and providing a literacy rich learning environment. We want students to have frequent access to a variety of complex texts that represent a range of genres and topics, exhibit both qualitative and quantitative complexity, and exhibit quality of craftsmanship. We want to ensure that the instruction in those texts occurs daily. We want to provide instruction that is differentiated to ensure all students are provided access to both complex texts and grade level standards. We want to provide instruction that contextualizes skills and strategies within real text and authentic experiences. Finally, we want to generate a learning environment that builds students' knowledge about the world, connects to their prior experiences, provides relevant and authentic practice with reading skills, and develops the traits and habits of good readers. Our six instructional outcomes have been selected because of their potential to assist in building high quality Tier I instruction that meets these tenets.

12. Would our project need to supply copies of materials for the 450 school coaches to be trained or 16+ coaches who will be training the school level coaches?

Both

13. We also had a question about travel – because we are out of state travel would seem to be required if we were going to be competitive. Would you please advise on that restriction?

Section C.4. of the pro forma contract states that the Contractor shall not be compensated or reimbursed for travel time, travel expenses, meals, or lodging. However, Respondents may choose to account for the cost of travel expenses under other categories in the cost proposal, such as under facilitation costs.

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