



Pre-Bid Conference Questions and Answers

RFP 20-9045 – IDAHO WEB BASED FREE & REDUCED-PRICE SCHOOL MEALS APPLICATION

GENERAL INFORMATION

Contracts and Procurement Officer reviewed the timeline included in the RFP.

Respondents did not express any concerns with the closing date and time.

Respondents were informed that there will be a change to the RFP. The SDE will be posting written questions and answers from pre-proposal call. Appendix B (Certification of Compliance) will be edited to include additional information, along with Appendix C (Proposed Solution).

The SDE Strongly recommends that respondents keep a close eye on the website for any updates informing respondents of modifications.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS (A:)

Questions are shown in bold font and answers are designated with an "A:" and listed below each question.

- 1. Is the SDE Looking for a solution that will be administered locally or statewide? Meaning, is the SDE looking for an enterprise level solution or local level accounts?**

A: The SDE will not be self-hosting this solution in a State data center. The respondent shall respond with a solution detailing how hosting of the system shall be accomplished and what degrees of software licensing are proposed and available for both state level users and local level users.

- 2. The award date is March 31, does the SDE plan to implement the proposed solution for Districts for the 2020-2021 school year?**

A: Yes

- 3. Will the SDE notify all districts in Idaho, or roll-out the proposed solution regionally?**

A: The solution is optional. The SDE shall make the selection known to all SFA's in Idaho upon award and roll-out is dependent on those who adopt the solution in both year 1 and year 2.



- 4. Would it be permissible to offer a product that was scaled to the size of the district? (The respondent clarified this was in regard to customizing the solution to include both locally hosted services/products compared to cloud-based hosting services).**

A: The RFP asks for the different ways a proposed solution could be hosted. The Offeror shall respond with a solution detailing how hosting of the system shall be accomplished and which products will be used. While local hosting solutions are acceptable, the cost proposal shall be evaluated based on the price charged for cloud-based hosting.

- 5. Can Offerors provide a quote for other products or services outside of the RFP?**

A: Yes, companies can provide a separate list of products, services and prices. This list can be submitted with the RFP proposal.

- 6. Does Idaho have a statewide Student Information system?**

A: No.

- 7. Is there a statewide information repository for Direct Certification benefits that is available to local districts?**

A: Yes, it is housed internally at the SDE and Districts generate a CSV file to import into their local POS systems.

- 8. Does Idaho participate in the Pilot Program for Medicaid benefits?**

A: No.

- 9. With regards to the Cost proposal, how many participants are anticipated in Year 1 and beyond?**

A: The SDE can not anticipate how many SFAs will elect to participate in the proposed solution on in year 1, so an estimate for years one and two were listed in the Cost Proposal section.

- 10. Section 6.2 requests a list of current customers, is the SDE asking for the entire list of customers or just a sampling?**

A: It is up to the discretion of each company to determine a list that best represents the proposed solution.

- 11. Will the State require Azure Government hosting?**



a) Will the State require SQL Managed services in an Azure Government hosting solution?

A: The State requires that all data is secured in accordance with all respective state and federal laws. The respondent shall respond with a solution detailing how the proposed hosting solution meets or exceeds these requirements.

b) Will the State require the use of a cloud application environment?

A: The State will not be self-hosting this solution in a State data center. The respondent shall respond with a solution detailing how hosting of the system shall be accomplished.

c) Will the State require transparent data encryption and virtual clustering?

A: Due to the sensitivity of the data involved, data must be encrypted at rest and in transit. The solution shall be designed to ensure security, availability and accessibility. Respondent shall respond with a solution detailing what data encryption models will be implemented (such as TDE) and if virtual clustering is proposed, should detail the benefits of this design.

d) What is the State's requirement for guaranteed uptime?

A: The State does not have a requirement for guaranteed uptime. Question 2.19 in Appendix D asks for each company to provide its uptime metric.

e) Will the State require automatic load balancing, automated scaling of resources, and automated failover?

A: The State requires that the system be accessible, available, and secure. Respondent shall design and propose a solution to ensure that the system is available to users per question 2.19 in Appendix D. Respondent should detail what methods are used to ensure availability and scaling.

12. Will the parent or guardian be required to fill out an application if the student is pre-qualified (i.e., Via SNAP, TANF, FDPIR, Foster Care, Migrant, Homeless, Medicaid)?

A: No.



13. How does the State wish to require integration of eligible student information into point of service (POS) solutions?

- a. CSV file and frequency?**
- b. Real-time API data integration?**

A: The ideal solution would use real-time API data integration. If that is not currently supported, then CSV file exports would be considered.

14. Is the chosen solution required to recommend if a Free & Reduced-Price School Meals Application is approved as eligible?

- c. If yes, does the State require flexible threshold configurations?**
- d. If yes, does the State require identifying potential 'risk' applications based upon State configurable parameters?**
- e. Does the system need to have the capability to automatically make the eligibility determination based upon State configurable parameters?**

A: Ideally the proposed solution will have the ability to make eligibility determinations. If the thresholds for determining eligibility are configurable, then define the threshold configurations used by the proposed solution and who can determine threshold values in the proposal.

15. Does the State require electronic post application-submission income verification tools be built within the system application?

Example: If a student is selected to be verified, the system may notify a parent/guardian and provide methods by which to securely submit USDA acceptable income verification documentation directly into the application.

A: Verification functionality is not the primary goal of this RFP, however may be listed as an additional feature, should it be available.

16. Does the State require the system to include an administrative interface to set thresholds and specifications for income verification selection? Should this be accomplished at the level of State, District, School Specific, Income Level Specific, Parent/Guardian Specific, etc.?

A: The SDE is not looking to build verification modules in conjunction with the web-based free and reduced-price school meal application.

17. What is meant by the acronym "SFA"?



A: The acronym SFA stands for school food authority. In Idaho this could be a myriad of entities. It could mean a single site or a multi-school entity. Both private and public schools offer school meals in Idaho and would need to have access to the proposed solution. Additionally, approximately 50% of the SFAs in Idaho have less than 500 students and many of the larger districts utilize their own web-based free and reduced price software. However, all of Idaho's approximately 150 SFA's are welcome to participate in the proposed solution.

18. Are there districts ready to start using the software? If so, does the state purchase the software, or is the software recommended to the district for them to purchase?

A: In the first two years of the contract, the SDE will purchase the software solution on behalf of the SFA's.

19. Would a vendor be disqualified if they do not respond with a solution that allows an SFA to host software Locally at their discretion?

A: No, the Offeror would not be disqualified.

20. The RFP does not seem to address paper applications. Would the selected vendor be able to provide a feature add on to address this?

A: If there are additional features the offeror recommends, please detail them separately. This would be in addition to the cost proposal.

21. Does Idaho collect any additional information in conjunction with administering the NSLP? Additionally, are there any additional reporting requirement that we have outside the USDA requirements?

A: No, Idaho does not collect additional information, and in fact, has the requirement to protect student data per Idaho Code 33-133.

22. Are CEP household income surveys within the scope of this RFP?

A: Since CEP eliminates school meal applications, this should not be a part of the proposed solution. Idaho CNP doesn't oversee income surveys.