

Mission Statement

The mission of the Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education (“ADECE”) is to inspire, support, and deliver cohesive, comprehensive systems of high quality education and care so that all Alabama children thrive and learn. The Department is comprised of the Alabama Children’s Policy Councils (Early Childhood Advisory Council); the Alabama Head Start Collaboration Office; the Children First Trust Fund; and the Offices of School Readiness, Early Learning and Family Support, and Early Childhood Development and Professional Support.

Purpose of this Request for Proposals

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to enter into a professional services contract with a qualified vendor, registered with the State of Alabama, to work in conjunction with the ADECE to develop a new Alabama Kindergarten Entry Assessment. This RFP will result in a contract award to a single vendor. This RFP is designed to provide interested vendors with sufficient basic information to submit proposals meeting minimum requirements but is not intended to limit a proposal’s content or exclude any relevant or essential data.

Summary Scope of Work

The goal of this RFP process is to help the state develop a formative, valid, and reliable Kindergarten Readiness Assessment tool, that will support and correlate with the current Alabama observational assessment tool. The Kindergarten Entry Assessment will assess all of the essential domains of a child’s school readiness, including:

1. Language and literacy development
2. Math
3. Cognitive
4. Physical
5. Social and emotional development

While all domains will be evaluated, there will be emphasis placed on the domains of language and literacy development, math, and executive functions.

The major elements within the scope of work including the following:

1. The contractor will publish at the end of the year a “Status of Alabama Children’s Kindergarten Entry and Contributing Factors.”
2. This correlation with the Alabama Pre-K Observational Assessment will result in a valid and reliable Alabama Kindergarten Readiness Assessment that meets the following elements:
 - a. Address all five essential domains of a child’s school readiness;
 - b. Can appropriately be administered within the first 30 days of the kindergarten school year;
 - c. Aligns with the National Research Council’s recommendations on early childhood assessment;
 - d. Allows for electronic data entry during assessment compatible with DECE’s web-based collection of child data;
 - e. Has capacity for secure, web-based collection of data (child, site, program/school, district, state-level) with online access for state officials to monitor, manage. And integrate with ADECE data base.

- f. Provides child-level and classroom-level data to classroom teachers to inform individualized instruction and classroom practice in kindergarten and the early grades, as well as support services and interventions that may be required;
 - g. Provides aggregate data for state and local policy makers to assess the outcomes of the early childhood system, provide actionable information to drive future policy related to closing the school readiness gap, and make resource allocation decisions (e.g., decisions regarding professional development, data systems, funding allocations, etc.); and
 - h. Is supported through training and technical assistance for administration that ensures inter-rater reliability for test administrators, data entry, and use of data in order to inform or guide instruction, interactions/activities and routines, and to inform parents of a child.
3. In addition, ADECE will work with the contractor to:
 - a. Develop a training plan, including training, associated materials and support in administration of the tool to a statewide population of early childhood professionals; training should include, but not be limited to data entry and validity of results, use of assessment results to enable teachers to understand a child's kindergarten readiness and guidance on how to use results to inform instruction, provide information about program trends as well as guidance on how to share this information with families; and
 - b. Partner with ADECE to administer the assessment tool statewide.

Preschool Development Grant, Birth-Five

Alabama First Class Pre-K, managed by the Department of Early Childhood Education, has been nationally recognized for meeting all quality standards by the National Institute for Early Education Research for the last 13 consecutive years. On behalf of the State of Alabama and with designated authority from the Office of the Governor, the Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education (ADECE) applied for the Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5) through the United States Departments of Health and Human Services and Education on November 2, 2018 and received notice of the federal grant award of \$10.6 million on December 31, 2018. On November 1, 2019 the Department applied for a renewal of the state's PDG B-5. On December 18, 2019 the Department was notified of a \$33 million grant award by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Education for a renewal of Alabama's PDG B-5 initiative over the next three years.

The stated purposes of the PDG B-5 Initiative are:

1. Develop, update, or implement a strategic plan that facilitates collaboration and coordination among existing programs of early childhood care and education in a mixed delivery system across the State;
2. More efficiently use existing Federal, State, local, and non-governmental resources to align and strengthen the delivery of existing programs;
3. Encourage partnerships among the wide range of early childhood education programs and service partners that make up the B-5 Early Childhood State System;
4. Expand parental choice and knowledge about existing programs; and

5. Enhance school readiness for children from low-income and disadvantaged families, including during children's transition into elementary school by sharing best practices between and among early childhood education providers.

Scope of Procurement

The scope of work in the procurement shall encompass all services specified herein and requires contractor to submit to ADECE a comprehensive final report, including narratives and supporting documentation of all required components described as well as recommendations for possible follow-up activities.

Work will be conducted both on-site and remotely, by computer and phone.

The duration of this contract will be for one year (July 2020 – June 2021) with the option for renewal through June 2022. All services must be provided by the vendor and cannot be subcontracted to a third-party vendor. Invoices will be billed monthly. Inability or refusal to perform duties, responsibilities, and expectations as outlined below will establish grounds for contract termination. Subsequent phases of the project are subject to Legislative approval.

Procurement Manager

It is the intent of ADECE and the State of Alabama that the RFP process be open and fair, and that the funds be allocated in a manner that provides the greatest possible benefit to Alabama residents. The agency has designated a Procurement Manager who is responsible for the conduct of this procurement whose name, address, and telephone number are listed below:

Eria White
Procurement Manager
Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education
445 Dexter Avenue Suite 2050
Montgomery, AL 36104
Eria.white@ece.alabama.gov
(334) 451-5655

Any inquiries or requests regarding this procurement should be submitted to the Procurement Manager via email. Vendors may contact only the Procurement Manager regarding the RFP.

Evaluation Criteria & Award Process

ADECE reserves the right to conduct discussions with any or all respondents, or to make an award of a contract without such discussions based only on evaluation of the written proposals. ADECE reserves the right to contact and interview anyone connected with any past or present projects with which the respondent has been associated. ADECE likewise reserves the right to designate a review committee to evaluate the proposals according to the criteria set forth under this section. ADECE may make a written determination showing the basis upon which the award was made, and such determination shall be included in the procurement file.

ADECE reserves the right to award this contract in whole or in part depending on what is in the best interest of ADECE with ADECE being the sole judge thereof.

Major criteria to be used in evaluating proposals are:

1. Adherence to the duties, responsibilities, and expectations outlined below;
2. Qualifications and demonstrated experience; and
3. Pricing of services

A committee to be chaired by the Director of Innovative Projects and Assessment will evaluate each properly submitted proposal.

The evaluation committee may invite finalists for interview and/or presentations. Failure to attend a requested interview presentation before the committee may result in a proposal not being considered. It is the agency's expectation that, upon selection, we will develop and agree to an annual scope of work to be delivered by the agency, keeping in mind that ADECE is held to stringent cost-control measures and always seek to be good stewards of the state's resources.

The RFP will be posted publicly on the Alabama STAARS database from **April 1, 2020 – April 30, 2020**

Finalists will be notified via email by 5:00 PM C.S.T. on **May 1, 2020**

Product demonstrations by finalists will take place on **May 15, 2020**.

Contract negotiations will be conducted, and the final contract will be developed and signed with the most advantageous applicant by the contract review deadline of **June 25, 2020**. This contract shall be awarded to the vendor whose proposal is most advantageous, taking into consideration the evaluation factors set forth above.

The planned contract effective date is **July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021**. All contracts are subject to the approval of the legislative oversight committee on contract review and the State Comptroller's Office before coming effective.

Instructions for Submitting a Proposal

Please email the proposals. With requests for further information, please contact the Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education at **(334) 224-3171**. Transmit proposal via email to **ada.wyhe@ece.alabama.gov**.

<i>Instructions:</i> Complete each item. The authorized person must sign and date the title page.

TITLE PAGE

Name:

Address:

City: County: Zip Code

Application Contact Person:

Title:

Telephone Number:

E-mail Address:

Mailing Address:

City: County: Zip Code

Description

Instructions: Please explain, in detail, your efforts in the areas below. This section should be no more than five pages. For all attachments (excluding application forms), please use single spaced, Times New Roman font, one-inch margins, font size 12.

Eligible applicants include public or private organizations registered to do business with the State of Alabama, with demonstrated expertise in early childhood assessment validation. In addition, the vendor must have the ability to develop technical documentation, and the organizational capacity to manage a statewide assessment validation process. Eligible applicants must have an existing or prototype assessment tool to submit to ADECE as part of a properly submitted proposal.

Vendor Certifications

Instructions: All applicants must initial by each of the following statements and provide the signature of the vendor legally authorized to conduct business within the State of Alabama, as registered with both the Secretary of State and the State of Alabama Comptroller’s Office (through the State of Alabama Accounting and Resources System, known as “STAARS”) and to carry out the services described in this RFP.

_____ 1. By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, the vendor warrants and represents to the Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education (ADECE) that the vendor accepts and agrees with all of the terms and conditions of the RFP. Further, by so submitting, the vendor certifies to the ADECE that it is legally authorized to conduct business within the state of Alabama and to carry out the services described in this RFP.

_____ 2. The vendor warrants that neither the vendor nor any of the vendor’s trustees, officers, directors, agents, nor employees is a current employee of the ADECE, and none of the said individuals have been employees of the ADECE within a two-year (24 month) period ending with the date of this RFP.

_____ 3. The vendor certifies by submission of this proposal and resulting contract that the vendor has not publicly or privately colluded with any other vendor to fix prices or conditions of the proposal.

_____ 4. The vendor certifies that neither it nor its principals is presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this contract by any Federal department or agency.

Signature of Authorized Vendor

Date

Budget

Instructions: Please explain, in detail, your price schedule and information below.

The following cost estimate is provided to allow ADECE an insight and estimate of the vendor's fee to accomplish a scope of work that closely represents the tasks approved and executed by ADECE.

1. Each response must provide prices for professional services only; no equipment is to be priced in the proposal.
2. The respondent must be able to work within the Montgomery area, as needed, to carry out the services required.

Required Attachments

***Instructions:* Please print, complete, and submit the three (n=3) documents below with your proposal. Proposals without these documents will NOT be reviewed.**

The documents below can be found at www.legislature.state.al.us

(Resources > Joint Interim Committees > Contract Review Permanent Legislative Oversight Committee)

1. Immigration Status Form
2. Vendor Disclosure Statement
3. Certificate of Compliance