HOWARD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
PURCHASING DEPARTMENT

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ADDENDUM NO. 1
(Total Pages - 4)

November 16, 2022

Invitation for Bids No. 023.23.B1
Mass Notification System

The following shall be incorporated into the captioned solicitation as though included in the original documents issued.

The Board of Education authorizes the following changes, clarification and/or attachments to the solicitation documents; however such changes shall not relieve the firm of their responsibilities as otherwise required by the solicitation documents.

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1. Question: Regarding exceptions, page 7 states: *"If an offeror takes any exceptions to the terms and conditions of the RFP, an offeror shall notify HCPSS in writing not later than ten calendar days (Saturdays and Sundays included) before proposals are due. Failure to take exceptions within the timelines indicated shall be construed by HCPSS as full acceptance of the stated terms and conditions."*

   However, page 41 states: *"If an Offeror takes exception to any of the proposed terms and conditions or the Standard Contract; those exceptions must be noted in the transmittal letter; however, failure to accept those terms and conditions may result in disqualification of the submittal."*

   Answer: The statement on page 7 is correct. The statement on page 41 will be amended to show the correct timeframe.

2. Can you elaborate on what requirement is related to user rostering?

   Answer: HCPSS should be able to be able to easily assign users to the platform via a SSO option, a CSV upload, or a simplified web interface.

3. Can you confirm that for mobile device support only android and ios are required?

   Answer: Yes, communications target iOS and Android devices. The customized mobile application is only available in the Google Play Store and Apple's App Store.

4. Can you elaborate on the requirement for integrated voice response system. That term is a large feature set so can you define specific features that are required for integrated voice response?

Answer: The district should be able to send robocalls to targeted recipients where Caller ID appears as from the district's phone number. Audio for the messages can be produced via speech synthesis. Recorded introductions should be a possibility.

5. There are two requirements dealing with SSO and authentication. In the first it indicates SAML 2.0, Micorsoft or Google. In the second it indicates Microsoft Active Directory, LDAP, SAML ADFS. Can you clarify which is acceptable? Is Google acceptable?

Answer: If the vendor can provide a SSO option, it should support SAML, OAuth via Google or Microsoft, LDAP, or Windows Integrated authentication via AD joined on-prem system.

6. For this requirement "Ideal system will have relationships with AT&T, Verizon, T-Mobile and other carriers to expedite posting time to less than 10 minutes" are you referring to the delivery of SMS messages when you indicate "posting time"?

Answer: Yes, this refers to delivery of SMS messages.

7. For this requirement "The system shall have the ability to tailor the message editing interface for schools." can you elaborate on why or how you would want to tailor the message editing interface?

Answer: At the broadcast level, HCPSS Administrators should be able to create user roles that only allow specific message types (Phone Call, Email, SMS , etc). At the email message level, HCPSS Administrators should be able to restrict specific user roles to only selecting from previously developed stationary.

8. For this requirement "The system shall have the ability to override call blocking devices." If the device has a number blocked, we would not recommend overriding it as that relates specifically to privacy concerns. Can you elaborate on this requirement?

Answer: Recipients often inadvertently remove themselves from their assigned distribution lists. If those parents reach out and request to have access again, HCPSS administrators need the ability to remove their email or phone number from the application's block list.

9. For this requirement "The system shall have the capability to send translated messages in multiple languages." Can you indicate specific languages required?

Answer: Current HCPSS language translations include Spanish, Korean and Chinese.

10. Does HCPSS have an anticipated or desired launch date for their Mass Notification System?

Answer: The launch date for the new system is March 1, 2023. However, the new system would begin in the FY24 school year.

11. In Section VI, you say to submit under Tab D of our Technical Proposal "an original, unaltered, executed solicitation document including any addenda issued by HCPSS." By an "original, unaltered, executed solicitation document," are you referring to the RFP itself and are wanting us to insert the RFP into the proposal we will submit? Or are you referring to a different document?

    Answer: Yes, this is referring to the RFP document itself along with any addenda.

12. In Section III, Point 3.3, you specify to prepare our response to the RFP in the format described on pages 14-17. However, in Section VI: Technical Proposal Format, the format of the technical proposal described on pages 41-43 differs from what's outlined in Section III, Point 3.3. Can you clarify which format we are to prepare our response as? Or, are the Technical Response and Technical Proposal two different responses we are to submit to you?

    Answer: Section 3.3 is the technical response which would be part of Section 6.5 Offer Response to RFP Requirements and Proposed Work Plan (Tab E)

13. Do you have an estimate on total audience size we can include in our proposal?

    Answer: HCPSS districtwide communications target approximately 60,000 students, which equates to around 100,000 emails and/or text messages per broadcast. Each school's targeted base would need to be restricted to their respective students.

14. This question stems from the below paragraph. Our system includes an in-house built mobile app, that allows ability to send notifications and track replies on the go. However, in reading the below it sounds like HCPSS is looking for a custom build mobile app specific to your organization. Is that correct and a requirement to respond to this RFP? If so – this will likely disqualify us from participating, as our standard mobile app is leveraged by thousands of our customers.

    Answer: The goal is to, at least, match our current iOS and Android mobile application solution that is branded as an HCPSS application within the Apple and Google app stores.

15. HCPSS desires a supporting mobile application development system that provides a custom platform for developing iOS and Android mobile applications that meet the requirements of both Apple's and Google's app stores.

    Answer: Please see question 14.

16. Can you please confirm that **all** bid forms need to feature the corporate seal and be attested by the corporate secretary? In lieu of attestation by the corporate secretary on each signature, will the District accept the resolution documents, signed by our corporate secretary, authorizing our binding officer to sign on behalf of the company?

    Answer: We will accept resolution documents, signed by the corporate secretary, authorizing a binding officer to sign on behalf of the company.

17. Can the district confirm whether vendors are required to respond inline to sections 3.5 — 3.10 in Section III: Scope of Work (pages 18-26)?

    Answer: Vendors are required to address sections 3.5-3.10 in their technical proposal response.

18. Can the district confirm that hard copies are not required?

    Answer: Correct, hard copies are not required.

19. Should vendors follow the same submission instructions for the proposal when submitting exceptions on or before November 23, 2022?

    Answer: Yes.

20. Can you confirm that vendors should include the entire RFP in our submission as Tab D, or can we use a statement that the RFP is included by reference?

    Answer: Please see question 11.

21. Are vendors required to submit a signed copy of Appendix E in their proposal?

    Answer: No, this is a sample only. The contract will be sent after the recommendation to award is approved.

22. Can you provide clarity or a use case scenario, if applicable, for the following specification? We want to ensure that we respond accurately. *Produce results through activities and methodologies in accordance with state-of-the-art practices; and accredited, certified, and/or in accordance with usual and customary practices, and others as may be applicable.*

    Answer: For clarification purposes, a solution is required to follow industry best practices and is certified where applicable.

23. Would the district prefer that vendors use the Technical Proposal Format on pages 14 - 18 of the RFP, or the outline on pages 41 – 43

    Answer: Please see question 12.

24. Can the district provide a use case or more information about the following specification: Integrated voice response system?

    Answer: Please see Question 4.