

QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS NO. 008-NN10 – ADULT EDUCATION STUDENT ACCOUNTING SYSTEM

1) PURPOSE OF RFP:

The stated purpose of the RFP is to select a Student Accounting System (SAS) for Adult Education/Vocational (AEV) centers at M-DCPS, but notes that "the procurement ... may also be used in other district-wide activities, where possible."

The described SAS-AEV includes a superset of the functionality of an Internal Funds Accounting (IFA) solution for traditional K-12 school buildings, along with additional functions and interfaces specific to AEV sites.

Should our response include software and service pricing for IFA at traditional K-12 school sites as well, or only pricing for SAS at AEV sites?

RESPONSE: The District prefers a Student Accounting System which is scalable and will accommodate any number of sites, without incurring additional or significant implementation costs. If pricing is dependent on the number of sites, please include pricing at a minimum of 78 schools.

2) SEPARATE PRICING:

If our response * should * indeed include IFA for traditional K-12 school sites as well as SAS for AEV sites -- should software and services pricing be combined into single values for district-wide use (SAS-AEV & IFA-K12 combined), or left as separate totals for the different programs (SAS-AEV sites only, and IFA-K12 sites only) ?

RESPONSE: See response to question number 1 regarding pricing.

3) PARTIAL SOLUTION PROPOSAL:

Will M-DCPS consider a proposal which addresses only a portion of the overall SAS-AEV requirements as described?

RESPONSE: M-DCPS will consider proposals which materially comply with all requirements stated in the GENERAL section and at least one of the modules (FINANCIAL AID, STUDENT ACCOUNTING, POINT OF SALE, WEB-BASED COLLECTIONS, CENTRALIZED BANKING)

4) MULTIPLE-VENDOR SOLUTION PROPOSAL:

Will M-DCPS consider a proposal which addresses part or all of the overall SAS-AEV requirements as described, through the combination of products and services from more than one vendor?

RESPONSE: Yes, M-DCPS will consider proposals which materially comply with all requirements stated in the General section and at least one of the modules (Financial Aid, Student Accounting, Point of Sale, Web-Based Collections, Centralized Banking).

As stated in Section A. Purpose, "The ultimate solution may provide all functionality under one system or may encompass more than one system provided by multiple vendors. In all instances, proposers must respond to Section V. General Vendor Functionality and at least one of the sub-section delineated in Section VI. Systems Functionality."

5) NUMBER OF SITES:

Please provide the number of sites which are expected to implement either SAS-AEV or IFA-K12 through this procurement:

RESPONSE:-- Number of M-DCPS Adult Ed / Vocational (AEV) sites: 78 distinct locations would need to process financial transactions
-- Number of M-DCPS traditional K-12 school sites: This RFP does not directly address K-12 sites, see response to question #1 for more details.

6) CURRENT INTERNAL FUNDS ACCOUNTING (IFA) SYSTEM:

Please provide some background on the current (in-house) IFA system being used, and on any specific current functional constraints leading to the possible replacement of that system through this RFP.

RESPONSE: The current IFA system was built in house and runs through the mainframe. Although the current system can handle the accounting transactions, it is not a user friendly system and does not provide the flexibility to implement future requirements such as point of sale, web-based collections, and centralized banking.

7) EXISTING VACS SYSTEM:

Referring to the flow chart "VACS CURRENT SYSTEM DATAFLOW" on page 1 of Appendix A, is there a desire to replace any of the functions currently provided by the VACS system with the proposed solution(s), or is it intended that all those functions continue to be provided by VACS as they are today ?

RESPONSE: This RFP is the first phase of a planned replacement of the VACS system. Eventually, all functions in VACS must be replaced and that solution would need to be addressed at that point to interface with the financial system(s) in place. However, it is imperative that current VACS processes be supported in the initial implementation of the financial system, since it will likely need to operate in that mode for several years.

8) Are you seeking tuition payment plan solutions for your Adult/Vocational programs?

RESPONSE: This is not a requirement stated in the RFP, but may be included for additional services provided by the proposer.

9) Are you seeking tuition payment plan solutions for your Before and After School programs?

RESPONSE: This is not a requirement stated in the RFP, but may be included for additional services provided by the proposer.

10) Are tuition payment plan solutions for Miami Dade College included in your RFP?

RESPONSE: No.

11) A Miami-based ally of ours may be of value to your district, and we recommend that they participate in your RFP process. May we forward you the company's name and contact information?

RESPONSE: Yes, although the company is free to submit a proposal to this RFP, we cannot participate in any discussions with this "ally" on this RFP while the cone of silence is in place.

- 12) The District's proposal asked how the proposed software solution handles automated file transfers for integration with other district software. Can the District be more specific as to which software you would like the proposed solution to integrate with? As well, a description of this software and desired integration points/functions would be helpful if possible.

RESPONSE: The two main systems which require interfaces are discussed on page 1 of the RFP. They are the Vocational, Adult, and Community System (VACS -mainframe) and the SAP accounting system. Integration points to the VACS system are discussed in detail in the Appendix, but the salient points involve the processing of a student scheduling transaction from VACS in order to generate an invoice, collect payment, etc. This is anticipated to be the most technically challenging integration point, since this transaction must occur in real-time or near real time.

The SAP integration may involve rolling up transactions in the student accounting system and automatically posting to the appropriate databases, such as the SAP general ledger.

It should be noted that M-DCPS utilizes Microsoft SQL server to maintain robust Operational Data Stores (ODS) which could be leveraged in these integrations.

- 13) A number of the District's requests revolve around student loans, financial aid, and connection to related interfaces and processes. Can you describe your current and ideal process for dealing with financial aid at both the state and federal level so that we can best determine how to integrate it into our own solution?

RESPONSE: Current processes for financial aid are largely manual and ad hoc and likely differ at different sites. Although all sites enjoy direct connections to the federal systems to download ISIR information, and track student disbursements, eligibility is done manually. There are several reports which have been configured for financial aid use utilizing our data warehouse and Microsoft Reporting Services which help; however, many sites rely on the mainframe system or source systems such as Pinnacle Gradebook to track student enrollment and attendance. Accounting processes for tracking student level disbursements are ad hoc.

The ideal process is aptly described in the FINANCIAL AID section of the RFP. In summary it is a fully automated solution which interfaces with our local systems and federal systems and is able to support student level accounting.

- 14) The District is seeking to implement a centralized banking structure for all the adult/vocational schools' internal fund accounts. Can you describe in more detail what your plans are with regards to a move to a centralized banking structure? Are you considering moving all school programs (e.g. both adult and student activity fees/meal plans) to a centralized accounting system, or are you considering only moving the adult/vocational programs to a centralized account? What is the expected go-live date for this?

RESPONSE: The district would like to move all adult/vocational centers to a centralized banking structure as delineated in Section VI. E., which would require in-house bank functionality whereby checks and deposits would be tracked via the locations codes provided by an interface with Wells Fargo Bank and seeks automated reconciliation services, as well as transfer posting from District accounts to individual In-House Bank Accounts. The go-live date is dependent on the responses from this RFP (for example, if one vendor can meet all of the modules, implementation may be streamlined and go-live would be much earlier).