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Important RFP Addendum

September 5, 2014

**FAILURE TO RETURN THIS RFP ADDENDUM IN ACCORDANCE WITH INSTRUCTIONS
MAY SUBJECT YOUR PROPOSAL TO REJECTION**

RFP Number: **40-IT00103-14**

COMMODITY: Learning Management System Managed Service for the NC Education Cloud

ADDENDUM Number: **01**

OPENING DATE/TIME: **9/11/2014 @ 2pm**

PURCHASER: Mike Beaver

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Please make the following change(s) in the RFP referenced above:
SEE ATTACHED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS on the following 7 pages (#'s 2-8).

2. Check **ONLY** one of the following categories and return one properly executed copy of this addendum along with your proposal by the opening time and date.
 - ☐ Proposal has already been mailed. Changes resulting from this addendum are as follows:

 - ☐ Proposal has already been mailed. **NO CHANGES** resulted from this addendum.

 - ☐ Proposal has **NOT** been mailed and **ANY CHANGES** resulting from this addendum are included in our proposal.

Execute Addendum:

OFFEROR: _____

ADDRESS (CITY & STATE): _____

AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE: _____

NAME & TITLE (Typed): _____

RFP# 40-IT00103-14
Addendum 01
Questions and Answers
September 5, 2014

Q1. (Citation – General) If possible, may I request for vendor and contract information that provided service to the state before?

A1. We have a current Learning Management System (LMS) contract with Blackboard Inc. for the following products through June 30, 2015:

- 1) Blackboard Learning Management System managed hosting and support at the 15,000 user band level.
- 2) MoodleRooms Joule 2 Learning Management System managed hosting and support at the 15,000 user band level.
- 3) Blackboard Collaborate Suite of tools managed hosting and support.

Q2. (Citation – Attachment 5 on page 54) Could you further describe the functionality that needs to be included in the Power School integration?

A2. Section III.7.x - Course, class and enrollment shall be imported from PowerSchool and grade book entries shall be synchronized to the PowerSchool grade book. PowerSchool shall be the system of record for student course enrollment. PowerSchool is also the system of record for the grade book and the service shall be able to synchronize the LMS grade book with it.

Q3. (Citation – General) On page 5 it says: "This RFP is designed to leverage the one-time Race to the Top (RttT) funds received by the state of North Carolina to assist NCVPS, LEAs, and Charter Schools in the state with their LMS needs. After the RFP is awarded, LEAs and Charter Schools may contact the selected Vendor(s) to request service and contract directly with the selected Vendor(s) to receive the service at the pricing specified by the vendor's response to this RFP". Does this mean that LEAs and Charter Schools that choose to contract with the selected vendor will be utilizing RttT funds to procure these services?

A3. Funding source will be identified by individual LEAs or Charter Schools, which may or may not include RttT funds.

Q4. (Citation - Section I, "Introduction", page 5) Can NCDPI provide additional information around anticipated ramp up scenarios from the initial NC Virtual School (18,000 users) to North Carolina LEAs and Charter Schools (1.5 million+)?

A4. As each LEA or Charter School must contract separately, this is an unknown.

Q5. (Citation - Section I, "Introduction", under Funding, page 5) Is NCDPI able to share how much of the \$400 million will be allocated to the LMS system on a yearly basis?

A5. Race to the Top funds are one-time-money and will not be used to fund ongoing LMS service subscriptions.

Q6. (Citation - Section II, “Bidding Information”, Part C, “Evaluation Process”, item 6, page 11) Can NCDPI please describe the date by which they would like to have a live system in place (“go-live” date)?

A6. Fall 2015.

Q7. (Citation - Section III, “Technical Specifications”, item 3, page 12 and Section VI, “Proposal Content and Organization”, item 4, page 27) Section III, item 3 states that “Any deviation from specifications indicated herein shall be clearly identified as an exception and listed on a separate page labeled “Exceptions to Specification”; however, Section VI, item 4 states “Any errata or exceptions must be stated on a separate page, labeled “Errata and/or Exceptions” with references to the corresponding terms or provisions of the Solicitation”. Can NCDPI please clarify if Technical Exceptions should be noted in its own section Called “Exceptions to Specification”, or included together with Legal Exceptions in a section called Errata and / or Exceptions?

A7. There shall be two sections:

- 1) Exceptions to Specifications
- 2) Errata and/or Exceptions.

The first being for technical and the second for legal.

Q8. (Citation - Section III, “Technical Specifications”, sub-section 7, item H, page 13) Will responses from non-US based companies be accepted?

A8. Yes.

Q9. (Citation - Section III, “Technical Specifications”, sub-section 7, item OO, page 16) Please expand or provide an example of “plus/minus option”?

A9. This only applies to letter grade scales, for example, A+, A-, B+, B-, etc.. The service shall be able to customize letter grade scale where necessary.

Q10. (Citation - Section III, “Technical Specifications”, sub-section 7, item YY, page 16) Please expand on “electronic messaging”, is this instant messaging, discussions, email?

A10. Electronic messaging includes all possible means of electronic messaging such as Instant messaging, the ability to post internal email messages, discussion boards/forums, etc..

Q11. (Citation - Section III, “Technical Specifications”, sub-section 7, item DDD, page 16) Can support for this item be a third party integration / tool?

A11. Support for this can be from a third party vendor as long as the cost and service is included in the proposal submitted as stated in Section IV.3.

Q12. (Citation - Section III, “Technical Specifications”, sub-section 7, item NNN, page 17) Can support for this item be a third party integration / tool?

A12. Support for this can be from a third party vendor as long as the cost and service is included in the proposal submitted as stated in Section IV.3.

Q13. (Citation - Section III, “Technical Specifications”, sub-section 7, item PPP, page 17) If alternate workflows make this process not applicable, can they be stated as alternatives?

A13. If an alternate workflow(s) is proposed, then it must be documented in detail with examples given in order to be considered meeting the requirement. This feature requirement allows for efficiency and ease of use in development of course content and grade book setup. Details and examples given must address the alternative workflows' focus in these areas.

Q14. (Citation - Section III, “Technical Specifications”, sub-section 7, item SSS, page 17) When asking about what vendors view as the “most significant risks” in the project, what kinds of risks are you referring to? (E.g. technical, organizational, financial, etc.)

A14. Any possible risk in any category.

Q15. (Citation Section III, “Technical Specifications”, sub-section 7, item WWW, page 18) Could NCDPI please define “Level 3” and “Level 1” so that we can ensure that our proposed solution will meet the desired response times?

A15. Level 1 - The most basic of support levels and often center around general service issues that may require vendor administration support to handle. (i.e. An issue where a user account enrollments is not synching with his available course list, or the administrator needs a rolling restart performed on the system in order to optimize systems performance.)

Level 3- The most advanced support level and will require vendor administration to resolve service issues.

Q16. (Citation - Section III, “Technical Specifications”, sub-section 7, item www, page 18) The required hours of support and requested response times in these sections seem to conflict with each other. The Technical Specifications (page 18) require 24x7x365 support. The hours of support in the Supplemental Terms are listed as “8:00 AM – 5:00 PM Eastern Time, Monday-Friday”. Could NCDPI please clarify which hours of support are required?

A16. Response times shall be as stated in Section III.7.www. “The Vendor shall provide 24/7/365 support. This shall include system monitoring, responses to unscheduled outages and service inquiries from the designated LMS service manager.”

Q17. (Citation - North Carolina Office of Information Technology Supplemental Terms and Conditions for Software and Services, item 5f, page 41) Similarly, the Technical Specifications require response times of 24 hours and 1 hour, where the Supplemental Terms and conditions say that requests should be answered within 4 hours. Could NCDPI please clarify these requirements?

A17. Response hours shall be as stated in Section III.7.www. “The Vendor shall provide a Level 3 response time of 24 hours and a Level 1 response time of 1 hour.”

Q18. (Citation - Section VI, “Proposal Content and Organization”, item 1, page 27) Are vendors required to respond in the RFP document, or can responses be provided in a vendor’s template as long as it follows the prescribed format?

A18. Responses may be in the vendor's template but shall follow the prescribed format. Vendor must return all pages of the RFP document, as stated in page 2 of the RFP. Please note Section VI.6.a: “Elaborate proposals in the form of brochures or other presentations beyond that necessary to present a complete and effective proposal are not desired.”

Q19. (Citation - General) Is it NCDPI’s goal to award this RFP to a single LMS vendor? Or is it the goal to qualify multiple vendors in the NC Education Cloud for procurement by districts and charter schools individually?

A19. Per Section I: “The State reserves the right to make partial, progressive or multiple awards” and “After the RFP is awarded, LEAs and Charter Schools may contact the selected Vendor(s) to request service and contract directly with the selected Vendor(s) to receive the service at the pricing specified by the vendor’s response to this RFP.”

Q20. (Citation - General) Please confirm the NCVPS is a completely virtual school with no on premise/physical attendance?

A20. NC Virtual Public School is a completely virtual school with instructors, teachers and students participating from remote locations.

Q21. (Citation - General) Students in NC public schools have the option to enroll in courses offered in the NCVPS? So they will physically attend their schools and virtually attend courses they have enrolled at the NCVPS?

A21. NC Virtual Public School courses are open to any K-13 student in North Carolina. This includes those students not attending a public school; however, these students would be enrolled via PowerSchool.

Q22. (Citation - General) Teachers at the NCVPS are teachers who physically teach at the LEA's?

A22. NC Virtual Public School instructors may teach at other LEAs; however, most do not.

Q23. (Citation – General) Teachers teach courses at the NCVPS virtually? And this is aligned with their schedules at their respective LEA's?

A23. NC Virtual Public School instructors may teach at other LEAs; however, most do not. Those that do teach at an LEA must coordinate with their class schedule. The classes are taught virtually.

Q24. (Citation - General) Active accounts are 18K. Are these 18K distinct users/students enrolled in different courses or these are the number of enrollments for the different courses?

A24. The 18k active user accounts refer to the number of unique user accounts that were active in current semester courses at the time analytical data was pulled. This is NOT to be confused with concurrent users.

Q25. (Citation - General) What is the total number of students and teachers in all 115 LEA's and 100 charter schools?

A25. The total number of students is 1.5 million with 98 thousand teachers.

Q26. (Citation - RFP, Page 12) To the best of our knowledge, Pearson does not allow for gradebook synchronization with non-Pearson partners. Roster and course information are readily available to LMS vendors for a common LEA customer, but Pearson's system does not allow for an API or data extract of gradebook data out of PowerSchool. Does DPI believe that Pearson will provide access to this data for the RFP respondents selected by DPI, or does DPI have a work-around plan in mind that will allow the selected LMS vendors to access PowerSchool grade book data? Or must the respondent be part of the Pearson family of products to satisfy this requirement of the RFP?

A26. NCDPI expects vendors to do what is necessary to meet the stated requirements. Please see Section VII.4 and Section IV.3.

NCDPI is not in a position to provide any technical support with regards to PowerSchool integration.

Q27. (Citation - RFP, Page 12) Is the PowerSchool integration required a write of LMS data to PowerSchool, a write of PowerSchool gradebook data to the LMS, or both?

A27. Section III.7.x - Course, class and enrollment shall be imported from PowerSchool and grade book entries shall be written to the PowerSchool grade book.

Q28. (Citation - RFP, Page 12) Can DPI provide sample file formats for the Moodlerooms Joule and Blackboard Learn course exports so we can assess the costs for the project and include these in our response?

A28. Blackboard Examples:

http://152.46.13.240/CreativeCommons/ArchiveFile_WorkingMasterAPComputerScience_20140903113803.zip

http://152.46.13.240/CreativeCommons/ArchiveFile_WorkingMasterAPWorldHistory_20140903113733.zip

Moodle Examples:

<http://152.46.13.240/CreativeCommons/backup-moodle2-course-6-workingmastersuccess101-20140903-1151-nu.mbz>

<http://152.46.13.240/CreativeCommons/backup-moodle2-course-102-workingmastermath2-20140903-1154.mbz>

Q29. (Citation RFP, Page 12) How frequently must the PowerSchool grade book integration refresh?
A29. This refresh shall occur on a minimum of an hourly synch schedule in order to capture up to date grading activity. It is preferred that this be real-time.

Q30. (Citation – RFP, Page 12) On page 17 of the LMS RFP, DPI specifies that the LMS respondent must provide a gradebook embedded in the LMS solution. Is this grade book to operate in isolation from the PowerSchool Grade Book? Or is this to include course, roster, and grade book data written to the LMS grade book from the PowerSchool grade book?

A30. The LMS shall include students enrolled in the class/course as designated in PowerSchool. PowerSchool is the system of record for enrollment.

Q31. (Citation - RFP, Page 12) In what file format will DPI provide the extract from Blackboard and Moodle? Can DPI share a sample?

A31. Blackboard Examples:

http://152.46.13.240/CreativeCommons/ArchiveFile_WorkingMasterAPComputerScience_20140903113803.zip

http://152.46.13.240/CreativeCommons/ArchiveFile_WorkingMasterAPWorldHistory_20140903113733.zip

Moodle Examples:

<http://152.46.13.240/CreativeCommons/backup-moodle2-course-6-workingmastersuccess101-20140903-1151-nu.mbz>

<http://152.46.13.240/CreativeCommons/backup-moodle2-course-102-workingmastermath2-20140903-1154.mbz>

Q32. (Citation - RFP, Page 14) Will the NCLOR content object meta-data be made available to the winning LMS vendor? And if so, in what format? Can you share samples of the meta-data file format?

A32. The NCLOR metadata schema will be made available in Excel and PDF formats. A current listing available in Excel can be accessed here:

<http://152.46.13.240/CreativeCommons/NCLOR%20metadata%20list%205-21-2014.xlsx>.

Q33. (Citation - RFP, Page 16) Does DPI require LTI compatibility with or without outcomes?

A33. LTI compatibility shall include outcomes. Furthermore, LTI compatibility shall provide grade book integration where grades from a gradable LTI content item can be passed to the grade book if that integration is support by the LTI tool vendor. Additionally, update of any LMS fields that would be supported by the vendor (e.g. profile information).

Q34. (Citation - Delivery Instructions, Page 2) Does the state require eight (8) copies of the Proposal in addition to eight (8) signed executed electronic copies?

A34. Yes, we require eight (8) printed copies of the proposal. This is in addition to the eight (8) signed executed electronic copies.

Q35. (Citation - Section III Technical Specifications, Page 18) Is the 24/7/365 support for end users or just LMS admin?

A35. Response hours shall be as stated in Section III.7.www for designated LMS Service managers only.

Q36. (Citation - General) What is the scheduled “Go Live Date” for students, LMS admin, and instructors?

A36. Fall 2015.

Q37. (Citation - Section II. Technical Specifications, Page 17 & on Page 40) 99% uptime is stated on page 17 in the RFP and then a higher or more extreme request of 99.99% uptime is listed on page 40. Please confirm that 99% uptime meets NCDPI requirements.

A37. Section III.7.vvv is correct - “99% uptime on a quarterly basis (no more than 2.19 hours total per quarter of unscheduled downtime).”

Q38. (Citation - Section II. Technical Specifications, Page 18 & on Page 41) Page 18 states, “The Vendor shall provide 24/7/365 support.” Page 41 states support be provided during normal business hours, 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM Eastern Time, Monday- Friday. Which type of support is required?

A38. Please reference the response from question number 16 above.

Q39. (Citation - Section I Page 5) Is it the intention of NCDPI to award to multiple LMS suppliers and have districts pick?

A39. Please reference the response from question number 19 above.

Q40. (Citation - Section I Introduction, Page 5) The RFP states that it will leverage “Race to the Top” funds to assist schools. Is it the intention of the state to subsidize or award funds to the schools for the LMS project?

A40. Please reference the response from question number 3 above.

Q41. (Citation - Section II.A.9) Does the RFP require vendors to be registered with the e-procurement solution prior to submittal, or can this happen upon award of the contract?

A41. As stated in Section II.A.9.2, “Within two days after notification of award of a contract, vendor must register in NC E-Procurement @ Your Service at the following web site: <http://eprocurement.nc.gov/Vendor.html> “.

Q42. (Citation - Section III.4.ii) The RFP states that the State would like to train instructional technologists and teachers. How many instructional technologists and teachers would this include initially? What level of training would the State like to see for each group?

A42. NCVPS has 900 teachers and 30 instructional technologists. Any training should include modules for technology administrators, school administrators, instructional technologists, teachers and students. Vendors must specify a training plan with resources that would ensure successful implementation for any size LEA.

Q43. (Citation - RFP Section III.4.a, Page 12) What is the approximate total file size of the courses to migrate from both Moodle and Blackboard? What version(s) of Moodle and Blackboard house these courses?

A43. An approximation of the file size of these courses can't be given as many of these course masters changes daily due to content revisions and real-time updates; however, some example exports have been provided. Blackboard Learn is at version 9.1.201404.160205 and Moodle is at version 2.6.3 (Build: 20140512).

Q44. (Citation - RFP Delivery Instructions, Page 2) "Vendor must return all pages of this solicitation in their response." Please clarify whether all pages (even RTT forms and legal notifications) must be printed and included in vendor responses.

A44. Please reference the response from question number 18 above.

Q45. (Citation - RFP #40-IT00103-14 Section III.7. jjj Page 17) Could you clarify what is required in "teacher progress monitoring?" What is the state looking for in this feature? Are there specific metrics to be reported?

A45. The main objective is for the administrator, teacher or manager (or similar role) to view a detailed analysis of a teacher's activity with regards timely grading, feedback on assignments, and grade dispute resolutions. To the same degree, a teacher will be allowed to pull data on the student's activity and progression on assignments and other activities in a course.

Q46. (Citation - RFP Section III.7.E, Page 13) Regarding Host audit reports, what specific reports are required?

A46. Section III.7.e - Host audit reports shall be included if available.

Q47. (Citation - RFP Section III.7.dd, Page 15) Regarding support of browser releases, Firefox 28 is a previous version. How long is support of this version required? What are the state's browser update requirements?

A47. The versions are outdated examples; Section III.7.dd correctly states "all Vendor supported web browsers."

End of Addendum 01