



Division of Fiscal and Administrative Services

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TO: House Education Committee

FROM: Dale M. Dennis, Deputy
Commissioner of Education

SUBJECT: Reading for Success Update

Authorization: House Substitute for SB 112, Sections 20 and 114

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

- (a) In addition to other purposes for which expenditures may be made by the above agency from the operating expenditures (including official hospitality) account of the department of education for the fiscal year ending June 30,2015, by section 144 of chapter 136 of the 2013 Session Laws of Kansas, or section 7 of chapter 93 of the 2014 Session Laws of Kansas, expenditures shall be made from this account to issue a request for proposal to provide a statewide Kansas reading success program: *Provided*, That the purpose of this program is to provide academic support to help ensure achievement on grade level reading: *Provided further*, That such program shall be available to all Kansas public school students in grades Pre-K through 8 and be online-delivered, interactive computer adaptive reading assessment and research-based intervention for use both at school and at home: *And provided further*, That the program shall be correlated to at least one of the commonly used reading assessments, such as DIBELS or the Kansas State Reading Test and the vendor must provide evidence that this program improves reading skills and scores; *And provided further*, That such program shall provide teachers and administrators with immediate reporting, provide recommendations for interventions and provide teacher lessons and resources for teachers in order to deliver direct instruction based on the individual student needs: *And provided further*, That such program must be able to provide a computer adaptive assessment, provide teachers, principals, and districts immediate on-line reporting including norm-referenced performance data that will enable teachers to plan and modify reading instruction without having to stop instructional time to administer a test: *And provided further*, That such program must provide accurate and predictive scores indicating the likelihood of a student being able to reach the requisite grade level reading skills by the end of the school year and an action plan for the students' teacher: *And provided further*, To ensure effective implementation of the program in conjunction with the beginning of the academic school year, the department of education shall issue a request for proposal to carry out the requirements of this provision no later than July 1, 2015, with plans to announce and implement the program no later than August 15, 2015.

KSDE Fiscal Department has a specific defined process to award competitive funds. The following RFP process was followed when going out for bid on this contract.

- Begin gathering documents:
 - 1) A Request Letter to Director of Purchasing to establish the Procurement Negotiating Committee(PNC).

- 2) Create a Specifications document and Cost Sheet. Provide a pricing structure that the agency would like to see, such as firm, fixed fee or payment schedule tied to deliverables, or combination of the two.
- 3) If available, a list of suggested bidders, including name, address, and email if available.
- 4) Suspension and Debarment clause. The PNC for Reading Success had three members
- Signatures must be obtained on the Non-disclosure agreement (NDA) for all committee members and reviewers. The NDA assures that the specified individuals will keep the RFP bid responses confidential, and safeguard the information to insure it is not inappropriately made available. PNC agreements must be sent to the Division of Purchasing before the bid responses will be released to KSDE.
- The Division of Purchasing will prepare the RFP using the KSDE's specifications and the Purchasing RFP template. The Procurement Officer will review our specifications, and request clarifications if necessary.
- When finalized, the RFP is advertised in the Kansas Register, per statute. Usually the time from first posting the bid to the closing date is approximately 30 days. This allows for the bid to be posted 10 days prior to the bid closing date, time to be allotted for pre-bid conferences, pre-bid questions and answers, and for the vendors to prepare the proposals. Also, the RFP is posted to the Internet, and notice of the RFP is e-mailed to interested vendors.
- Vendors submit their technical proposals, separate from the cost proposals to the Division of Purchasing. At bid opening, only names of bidders are announced.
- Review of Technical Proposals only are forwarded to the PNC members and other agency evaluators. Cost Proposals are retained by Purchasing to not influence the Technical Evaluation process.
- Once the KSDE PNC provides an adequate, complete and detailed Technical Evaluation of each Proposal to Purchasing Officer, the Cost Proposals are released to the PNC for review. The Cost Proposals and Technical Evaluations are reviewed together, and a recommendation is made to invite one or more vendors to negotiations.
- Submit a formal written recommendation for award, providing full documentation of the recommendation.
- State Board approval of both the vendor and the fiscal award is required before the Division of Purchasing can prepare the documents.
- Upon the concurrence of the Agency's recommendation, Contract documents will be prepared by the Division of Purchasing. Once all required signatures have been acquired, work on the project can begin.

Specifications in the Request for Proposal

Scope of Work: The reading program shall be available to all Kansas public school students in grades Pre-K through 8 in an online delivery system. Reading proficiency in the early grades has long been a focus for educators and legislators in Kansas; most importantly, reading proficiency by the end of third grade is essential as it serves as a benchmark for success for further educational development.

Services to be Provided: Students will be provided with an interactive computer-based adaptive reading assessment and research-based interventions for use both at school and at home. This program will automatically place students into a personalized learning path and continually tailor instruction to the individual needs of each participating student. The program must provide parent access to their student's progress through the computer. There does not need to be a separate URL for a parent to access their student's progress.

Performance Measures: In order to ensure full implementation of the program, performance measures will be established as follows:

- Student usage must be monitored at least on a monthly basis, but preferably weekly

- At least 60% of students are expected to meet weekly minimum usage recommendations during the first year of the program's implementation
- Minimum usage measures will be documented and shared

Deliverables:

- a) A personalized learning system for students that tailors instruction to individual needs while also providing teachers with feedback on how to target instruction to suit individual needs.
- b) Evidence in the form of peer-reviewed research that attests to the effectiveness of the state program.
- c) Evidence that the program is correlated to at least one of the commonly used reading assessments such as DIBELS.
- d) Immediate reporting on student performance on a daily basis for teachers and administrators that can be used to plan and modify instruction.
- e) Recommendations for reading interventions.
- f) Lessons and resources for teachers that can be used to provide direct instruction in reading.
- g) Reporting and resources to parents on student participation available by computer.
- h) Norm-referenced performance data for use in planning and modifying reading instruction.
- i) Accurate predictive scores indicating the likelihood of a student's ability to meet grade-level reading skills by the end of his academic year.
- j) Reading score data that can be traced to individual buildings in Kansas.
- k) Provide regular highly predictive scores for all elementary school students that indicate the likelihood of a student's reaching grade-level reading expectations by the end of a school year.
- l) Evidence that the vendor is fully compliant with the data-sharing protocols established in FERPA and 2015 SB 367 the Kansas Student Data Privacy Act.

Timeline: The Kansas State Department of Education was not allowed to post the request until the funding was approved. The timeline for Statewide Kansas Reading Success Program Bid Event # EVT0003854 in favor of Istation is below:

June 29th – RFP advertised in the Kansas Register for 4 weeks.

July 9th – Due date for questions from potential vendors

July 21st – RFP closed

July 22 – Received non-disclosure statement from Department of Administration, Procurement Officer for PNC members signature

July 23 – RFP vendor documents received by KSDE and distributed to PNC members for review

August 4 – Meeting of PNC to review proposals

August 10 – Proposal review sent to KSDE fiscal – forward to procurement officer

August 11 – Reply from procurement officer with approval to review cost sheets

August 13 – Recommendation from PNC sent to KSDE fiscal

August 14 – KSDE fiscal recommended negotiations on cost

August 19 – PNC award form completed and sent members for signature

August 19 – KSDE determined Kansas State Board of Education must approve contract; board materials were prepared for September 8 meeting

August 20 – Procurement officer visited with selected vendor

August 24 – KSDE legal received vendor contract documents from procurement officer for review pending board approval

September 8 – Kansas State Board of Education board item

After board approval, the KSDE attorney, procurement officer and vendor all must sign contract before the vendor can be announced to the public.

September 21 – Contract award date

Review: The technical evaluation of each proposal submitted to Kansas State Department of Education was evaluated by a three (3) member Procurement Negotiating Committee (PNC) on the following eight criteria and an overall impression of the reading intervention process:

- Response format as required by the RFP
- Adequacy and completeness of proposal
- Vendor's understanding of the project
- Compliance with the specifications, terms, and conditions of the RFP
- Experience in providing like services
- Qualified staff
- Methodology to accomplish task
- Research or peer-review

Cost Review and Final Recommendation: Purchasing provided the cost proposal for each vendor after a review of the technical evaluation. The PNC considered completeness of the proposal, number of Kansas students to be served with the funds, training, and amount of time need to operationalize the program.

Final Recommendation: Overall the PNC felt Istation submitted the best proposal to meet the intent of a true reading intervention process for all students in Kansas. Their proposal demonstrated a thorough understanding of the Request for Proposal and an ability to meet the technical and functional requirements outlined in the RFP. The PNC felt Istation's experience in providing reading improvement software to other states serves the best interest of the State of Kansas and best fits the needs of Kansas students at a cost within the allocated budget.

Istation Update as of March 1, 2016

The Kansas Reading Success Program was announced and launched October 5, 2015 after the beginning of the current school year. Since the launch date, Istation has been able to achieve the following:

- After contract approval, 124 districts have signed up for Istation Reading since the October 2015 launch.
- 66,471 students are currently enrolled, of those, 23,823 have taken at least one assessment.
- As of March 1, Lawrence will soon enroll all of their students (7,500 ish) as well as Shawnee Mission (22,000 ish) this month in the Istation Reading Program.
- Each day another 2 – 3 districts are signing up for Istation as part of the Kansas Reading Success Program.
- Mass communications, PR releases, personal communications are continuing to go to all Districts.
- Superintendents, Assistant Superintendents, Principals and Assistant Principals. Istation has had meetings with numerous large districts.
- Istation attended the Kansas Statewide Superintendent conference on October 25 and October 26 and gained a lot of excitement and recognition.
- Eleven (11) full day on-site trainings and twenty-nine (29) webinars have already been provided to districts in order to educate districts, campuses and teachers about Istation and the reading program.
- Access to Istation is being made at no cost to schools during the summer months.
- Istation Is successfully partnering with KSDE staff.