



## **OFFICE OF COUNTY MAYOR GLENN JACOBS**

Procurement Division, 1000 N. Central Street, Suite 100, Knoxville, TN 37917

### **Knox County Procurement Division Addendum I to Request for Proposals No. 3635 Supplemental Staffing Services**

**Addendum Date: February 27, 2025**

**Buyer: Heather Whitehead**

**Closing Date: March 13, 2025 @ 2PM**

**Total Page(s): Eight (8) Pages**

The following is for clarification:

- Question 1. Will the District accept a proposal for Speech & Psychology Staffing only?  
Answer 1. Yes. Per Section 1.5 of RFP No. 3635, Knox County *may* make an award on a schedule basis.
- Question 2. When would this contract begin?  
Answer 2. Contract(s) will be executed as expeditiously as possible. Board of Education and County Commission approval will be required for any contract stemming from this solicitation. BOE agenda dates and deadlines can be viewed [here](#).
- Question 3. Who are your current vendors for the 2024-25 school year?  
Answer 3. Academic Staffing (an ESS Company)  
ESS South Central, LLC (ESS Support Services Source 4 Solutions)
- Question 4. What is the current rate per hour you are paying for SLP services? For Psychology services?  
Answer 4. Academic Staffing (An ESS Company) ESS Support Services (Source 4 Solutions)  
School Psychologists - \$94.50/hour Special Education TAs - \$187.33/day  
SLP - \$94.50/hour
- Question 5. Has the District's current vendor(s) been successful in filling all open positions?  
Answer 5. The vendor has filled all Instructional Assistant and SLP positions but has not been able to fill all School Psychologist vacancies.
- Question 6. Will the District supply assessment materials for contractors for both f2f assessments and virtual assessments?  
Answer 6. The District will provide for on-site evaluations. No materials are readily available for virtual assessments.
- Question 7. Will the District provide a staff person to facilitate virtual therapy with the students?  
Answer 7. Yes, if that method is utilized.
- Question 8. Will the District accept licensed therapy assistants?  
Answer 8. No.



## **OFFICE OF COUNTY MAYOR GLENN JACOBS**

Procurement Division, 1000 N. Central Street, Suite 100, Knoxville, TN 37917

- Question 9. Will the District provide laptops to vendors' therapists?  
Answer 9. Yes. Please see 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 (Performance Expectations) of RFP No. 3635.
- Question 10. Will Knox County accept proposals for Instructional Assistant staffing solutions that utilize qualified international candidates on approved visas that include J-1 and H2B?  
Answer 10. Yes, if candidates meet position requirements. KCS will not be responsible for any fees associated with obtaining or maintaining the visas.
- Question 11. You are requesting a proposal and rate for both on-site speech therapy and virtual teletherapy. Will the district provide an on-site facilitator for the teletherapy services or does the contracting company have to provide facilitators? These are individuals that assist the tele-therapist with scheduling the children for teletherapy sessions. They are also usually the ones in charge of making sure the child gets to where they have to be for the teletherapy session.  
Answer 11. See Question/Answer No. 7.
- Question 12. Is this a new contract or renewal of an existing contract?  
Answer 12. Knox County has not solicited these services previously, but we have utilized a cooperative agreement. This solicitation could result in the award of a new contract(s).
- Question 13. If there is an existing contract, could you please share the names of the current vendors and their pricing?  
Answer 13. See Question/Answer No. 3, Question/Answer No. 4 and Question/Answer No. 12.
- Question 14. What is the estimated budget for this contract?  
Answer 14. Information not available- annual budget will be determined by district needs and allocations.
- Question 15. Is it mandatory to subcontract?  
Answer 15. No.
- Question 16. In order to be considered responsive for this solicitation, is it mandatory to bid on all positions?  
Answer 16. Please see Question/Answer No. 1.
- Question 17. Is there a minimum number of hours required for the service?  
Answer 17. No. Demand will be determined by open positions and student needs. Instructional Assistants are typically needed for a full day, but there are part-time possibilities for SLPs and School Psychologists.
- Question 18. Is this a new initiative? If so, could you kindly confirm the names of the current incumbents and the contract budget?  
Answer 18. Please see Question/Answer No. 3 and Question/Answer No. 14.
- Question 19. What is the allocated budget for this RFP?  
Answer 19. Information not available. The FY26 budget has not been approved.
- Question 20. Is there a preference for local vendors for this project?  
Answer 20. No.



## **OFFICE OF COUNTY MAYOR GLENN JACOBS**

Procurement Division, 1000 N. Central Street, Suite 100, Knoxville, TN 37917

- Question 21. Are there any mandatory compliance or regulatory obligations associated with this RFP?  
Answer 21. Yes. See RFP No. 3635 for the requirements associated with this RFP and any subsequent award. RFP No. 3635, along with any addenda issued in conjunction with RFP No. 3635, will be incorporated into any subsequently awarded contract. A sample contract has been included as an exhibit to RFP No. 3635.
- Question 22. Should we include candidate resumes with the proposal submission? If so, could you suggest the actual or sample resume required per position?  
Answer 22. The inclusion of resumes is not a specific requirement, but proposers must thoroughly detail the experience and qualifications of contracted staff and the firm itself. Information provided must fully address each of the requirements outlined in the Scope of Work.
- Question 23. Could you specify the number of positions required for this project?  
Answer 23. Information not available as numbers vary. Section 4.1 of RFP No. 3635 provides information on past and current usage as well as *anticipated* demand.
- Question 24. Is there any mandatory subcontracting requirement? If so, what is the goal for subcontracting? Will good faith efforts be accepted in meeting certain requirements?  
Answer 24. Please see Question/Answer No. 15.
- Question 25. Page 14 Monitoring and leading the classroom when the teacher must attend staffing meetings, provide consultation, etc. Will there still be a sub teacher in the room with the para when the teacher isn't present?  
Answer 25. An Instructional Assistant may be left alone with students to continue the learning process for meetings. Substitutes are utilized for all-day teacher absences.
- Question 26. Page 13 states that Contracted Speech-Language Pathologists will work variable hours based on district needs, which may include full-time, part-time, or as-needed assignments. Can we bid on the full-time and part-time positions only? We don't have a pool of SLPs to cover as-needed positions.  
Answer 26. Our goal will be to hire full-time personnel, part-time services may be used when full-time is not available. Per Section 1.5 of RFP No. 3635, Knox County *may* make an award on schedule basis, so accommodation of as-needed assignments is not strictly required.
- Question 27. When is the estimated contract award date, and how will the district communicate award status to vendors?  
Answer 27. See Question/Answer No. 2. Knox County Procurement will send out an Intent to Award Notification to each successful vendor and an Unsuccessful Notification to each vendor who is not awarded. Notifications will be sent via email to the contact person identified in each vendor's proposal.
- Question 28. How many hours are there per school day? How many school days are there per year?  
Answer 28. A workday is KCS is 7 hours and 45 minutes. A duty-free lunch is included in that time. The State of Tennessee requires a minimum of 180 classroom instructional days per year.
- Question 29. In the case of a multi-vendor award, how will referrals/assignments be dispersed?  
Answer 29. It will be up to the discretion of Knox County Schools as to which awarded vendor(s) will be utilized.



## **OFFICE OF COUNTY MAYOR GLENN JACOBS**

Procurement Division, 1000 N. Central Street, Suite 100, Knoxville, TN 37917

- Question 30. Is there a pre-bid conference, and if so, what is the date?  
Answer 30. No, there is no pre-bid conference scheduled in conjunction with the RFP.
- Question 31. Will you accept assistants (SLPAs)?  
Answer 31. No.
- Question 32. Who is your current vendor(s) for these services?  
Answer 32. Please see Question/Answer No. 3.
- Question 33. Are you utilizing any other programming for these positions?  
Answer 33. See Question/Answer No. 3 for information on current vendors. KCS endeavors to hire internal personnel to fill these positions before contracted personnel are utilized.
- Question 34. Who will the vendor work with directly within the district?  
Answer 34. KCS operates with a team approach. Individuals involved may include an HR representative, SPED Program Supervisors, and Title 1 personnel.
- Question 35. Does the district currently have a provider for these positions? If so, is there a contract in place, and when does it expire? Can you please provide a copy of the current contract?  
Answer 35. Please see Question/Answer No. 3 and No. 12. The ESS agreement can be viewed [here](#) (Item 8F).
- Question 36. What positions are being filled by the current provider, and how many for each position?  
Answer 36. Section 4.1 of RFP No. 3635 provides information on past and current usage.
- Question 37. What is the Bill Rate for the contracted positions?  
Answer 37. Please see Question/Answer No. 4.
- Question 38. Could you please share the current pay rates for all positions included in the RFP?  
Answer 38. Please see Question/Answer No. 4.
- Question 39. Are there any specific performance metrics tied to these positions?  
Answer 39. Section IV (Scope of Work) of RFP No. 3635 outlines the requirements and performance expectations for each position, along with that of the firm.
- Question 40. If additional training is required, will the district compensate the provider's employees for completing the training?  
Answer 40. Knox County expects vendors to present candidates that meet the defined requirements without needing to complete additional outside training. Our contracted employees may participate in district training provided for internal employees. Time spent in district-sponsored trainings will be compensated.
- Question 41. Will the district require the vendor to provide district-specific professional development or training for paraeducators and therapists beyond the initial training?  
Answer 41. See Question/Answer No. 40. Section IV (Scope of Work) of RFP No. 3635 outlines the requirements and performance expectations for each position including ongoing training requirements.



## **OFFICE OF COUNTY MAYOR GLENN JACOBS**

Procurement Division, 1000 N. Central Street, Suite 100, Knoxville, TN 37917

- Question 42. Once a new provider is selected, what is the expected transition timeline?  
Answer 42. See Question/Answer No. 2.
- Question 43. Will there be an opportunity for current staff to transition to the new provider?  
Answer 43. Unknown.
- Question 44. Is this a newly initiated project, or is it a continuation of an existing one? If it is ongoing, kindly provide the names of the current service providers/incumbent vendors?  
Answer 44. See Question/Answer No. 3 and No. 12.
- Question 45. Could you provide details on the previous expenditure associated with this contract?  
Answer 45. With the vendors being utilized for this service, Knox County has been invoiced for approximately \$1.6 million from October 2023 through present. However, not all of this spend was made in conjunction with a contract. Payment for services rendered but not yet invoiced and/or paid are not reflected in this total. See Question/Answer No. 4 for information on current vendors and rates.
- Question 46. Could you confirm if it is possible to obtain the proposals or pricing details of the incumbent vendors?  
Answer 46. The ESS agreement can be viewed [here](#) (Item 8F). See Question/Answer No. 4 for information on current vendors and rates.
- Question 47. Are there any specific challenges or issues currently being faced with the existing vendors?  
Answer 47. None.
- Question 48. Can you clarify the expected number of awards for this solicitation?  
Answer 48. To better ensure full coverage of the district's needs, Knox County anticipates making a multiple award. However, per Section 1.5 of RFP No. 3635, Knox County reserves the right to make an award on an all-or-none basis, schedule basis or by multiple award. Knox County reserves the right to not make an award.
- Question 49. Is there any preference or priority given to local vendors for this contract?  
Answer 49. See Question/Answer No. 20.
- Question 50. Who were the past vendors and what are the hourly rates paid for all of the disciplines?  
Answer 50. Please see Question/Answer No. 4.
- Question 51. Can you provide the name and contact information for the individual who will be coordinating the services for the disciplines at the district?  
Answer 51. To be determined. See Question/Answer No. 34.
- Question 52. Can we bid for other special education disciplines that are not mentioned in the RFP?  
Answer 52. No, positions utilized under any contract stemming from this RFP must align with its Scope of Work and the defined positions therein.
- Question 53. When is the anticipated award date for this RFP?  
Answer 53. See Question/Answer No. 2.



## **OFFICE OF COUNTY MAYOR GLENN JACOBS**

Procurement Division, 1000 N. Central Street, Suite 100, Knoxville, TN 37917

- Question 54. Can the district clarify what supervision is needed for the mentioned positions in this solicitation? Is the district looking for direct supervisors of potential staff?
- Answer 54. Any awarded firm must provide HR oversight in collaboration with KCS. Vendors should provide supervisory knowledge of all certified employees. KCS will provide on-site district supervision.
- Question 55. In reference to Section 3.9, can the district please clarify if vendor(s) are expected to provide specific software to meet KCIT compliance standards?
- Answer 55. No specific software is required, but any awarded vendor will be expected to operate in a manner that complies with KCIT standards. Please see Exhibit C (Technology Restrictions on Use of Confidential Information) of RFP No. 3635.
- Question 56. Would Knox County accept electronic signatures as part of the physical proposal submission?
- Answer 56. Yes.
- Question 57. For vendors that offer only virtual services and will not travel to sites: Would the district accept an alternative automobile liability insurance coverage for Hired Autos Only (symbol 8) and Non-Owned Autos only (symbol 9) instead of the "Any Auto Symbol (1)" listed in Attachment C (#3)? If yes, should the vendor list this alternative as one of its exceptions with Tab VII?
- Answer 57. Yes and yes.
- Question 58. Would the district accept General Aggregate Limits that apply "per Policy" instead of "per Project" listed in Attachment C (#4)? If yes, should the vendor list this alternative as one of its exceptions with Tab VII?
- Answer 58. Yes and yes.
- Question 59. In the event that the vendor includes exceptions/and or has alternative insurance, can the vendor add a note with the signatures on Attachment C to refer to the requested exceptions on select policies for consideration and negotiation, or should Attachment C be left unsigned until an award?
- Answer 59. Leave Attachment C unsigned and clearly note exceptions as outlined in Section 3.17 (Exceptions to Specifications).
- Question 60. Can the vendor include the verification as a registered Business Entity from the Tennessee Secretary of State's online services to meet the requirement under Tab II regarding "Knox County Tax License for Organization"?
- Answer 60. No, registration with the Tennessee Secretary of State does meet the requirement for a Knox County Tax License. If applicable, proposers must hold a valid Knox County Tax License. Please note that this requirement is only applicable to entities with a physical location within Knox County.
- Question 61. Under Tab III, do you require the proposal to include responses to the bullets under Section 4.3 on pages 14-15 regarding "Staffing Firm" and "Fulfillment & Program Management"?
- Answer 61. Information provided must fully address each of the requirements outlined in the Scope of Work.
- Question 62. Does the district require resumes of potential service providers upon proposal submission, and if so, would Knox County accept blind resumes with full names and license numbers withheld?
- Answer 62. See Question/Answer No. 22. Blind resumes may be submitted.



## **OFFICE OF COUNTY MAYOR GLENN JACOBS**

Procurement Division, 1000 N. Central Street, Suite 100, Knoxville, TN 37917

- Question 63. For Tab IV, would the district consider reviewing the recently completed reference surveys and/or letters to demonstrate experience? These forms typically include the reference name, contact information, score on performance questions, and additional comments regarding their experience with the company.
- Answer 63. Proposers may submit any supplemental documentation deemed pertinent to fully detail the experience and qualifications of contracted staff and the firm itself. Information provided must fully address each of the requirements outlined in the Scope of Work. If supplementary documentation such as reference surveys/letters are attached, Attachment A (Reference Form) should still be completed and submitted with the proposal.
- Question 64. Do you require the Cost Sheet (Attachment B) to be only included under Tab VIII?
- Answer 64. The Cost Sheet should be included under Tab V, as outlined in Section V (Proposal Format). It is not required under Tab VIII.
- Question 65. If the Cost Sheet (Attachment B) is only included under Tab VIII, can you confirm that the vendor should submit additional details (models, rate tables, buy-out policies, etc.) regarding its pricing under Tab V?
- Answer 65. Please include the Cost Sheet under Tab V. Additional pricing information can be submitted under Tab V as well. However, cost for additional value-added services will not be factored into the pricing evaluation.
- Question 66. Under Tab V, should the vendor include details regarding any additional fees separate from the hourly rates listed in Attachment B and separate from other rate options?
- Answer 66. Yes, however, cost for additional value-added services will not be factored into the pricing evaluation.
- Question 67. Separate from the hourly rates listed on the Cost Sheet (Attachment B), can the vendor include additional rate structure options, such as rates per assessment or service, under Tab V of the proposal?
- Answer 67. Yes, however, cost for additional value-added services will not be factored into the pricing evaluation.
- Question 68. Can you confirm that, after the initial one-year period, the vendor may request and mutually negotiate price increases at the renewal time for approval per Section 2 of Exhibit B?
- Answer 68. Yes. Pricing shall remain firm for the initial one (1) year period. At the end of the first one (1) year period, the Contractor may request price increases for each subsequent renewal. Price increases will only be given at the renewal time and must remain in effect for the next one (1) year term. No price increases will be given during the term of a Contract. If the Contractor's price is increased after the twelve (12) months, Knox County must be given a written notice to consider. Such a request shall include as a minimum, (1) the cause for the adjustment; (2) the amount of the change requested with documentation to support the requested adjustment. Price increases will only be considered at the renewal period(s) following the initial twelve (12) months.
- Question 69. Would the district provide its students the hardware (e.g., computer, webcam, headsets, etc.), test kits, supplies, and other materials needed for services?
- Answer 69. KCS approved materials will be provided for use by students.



## **OFFICE OF COUNTY MAYOR GLENN JACOBS**

Procurement Division, 1000 N. Central Street, Suite 100, Knoxville, TN 37917

- Question 70. Does the district anticipate awarding more than one vendor under this RFP?  
Answer 70. Please see Question/Answer No. 48.
- Question 71. Is there an anticipated budget or hourly rate cap for services, and if so, what is the estimated budget or cap?  
Answer 71. There is not an hourly rate cap for services. The budget for FY26 has not been approved. Usage, and by extension the budget, will be determined by demand.
- Question 72. What are the current vendor names and rates for SLP and School Psychologist services?  
Answer 72. Please see Question/Answer No. 4.
- Question 73. Will the services from this RFP be expected to begin during the 2024-25 SY or begin the 2025-26 SY?  
Answer 73. Unknown. Please see Question/Answer No. 2.
- Question 74. Regarding Attachment C, Number 4 General Liability, can the district clarify what “per project basis” means? If a vendor’s General liability aggregate applies on a per policy basis, will that suffice?  
Answer 74. In this instance, the project will refer to an awarded contract and any services provided in conjunction with it. Yes, that will suffice.
- Question 75. What are the current rates for each of the services by provider?  
School Psychologists/ SLP
- On Site
  - Virtual
- Instructional Assistants  
Answer 75. Please see Question/Answer No. 4
- Question 76. Will more than one vendor be awarded?  
Answer 76. Unknown. Please see Question/Answer No. 48.
- Question 77. Will any redlines/deviations be accepted to the terms?  
Answer 77. Exceptions must be noted as outlined in Section 3.17 (Exceptions to Specifications).
- Question 78. Are you open to negotiations after the award?  
Answer 78. Yes. However, there are some terms and conditions that are non-negotiable. See Section 3.17 (Exceptions to Specifications).

End of Addendum I.

Please acknowledge Addendum I in your response.

Heather Whitehead, CPPB  
Knox County Procurement