

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Academic Office
Request for Proposals: Curricular and Instructional
Management Systems



PURPOSE: provide universal, free access to high quality, high impact online instructional resources and curricula to support all districts.

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Dr. Miguel A. Cardona
Commissioner of Education

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Background

On March 15, 2020, Governor Lamont signed Executive Order No. 7C directing public schools to cancel school classes. To promote and secure the safety and protection of children in schools, districts engaged in distance-learning utilizing a variety of online and offline curricular resources. The change in learning environments highlighted online disparities across schools districts. As a result, the CSDE has committed to providing free, universal access of high-quality, high-impact online instructional resources and curricula to support all districts, and most importantly our under-resourced districts. The CSDE recognizes that in order to create future-ready learning environments, teachers, students, and families require daily access to high-quality, high-impact resources, and curricular materials.

Request for Proposals

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) is seeking submission of written proposals, on a competitive basis, from qualified organizations to partner with the CSDE in the design, development and delivery of a system to provide online curricular and instructional resource management specific to core content (e.g., English/language arts, science, mathematics, social studies) to be integrated with the [CT Learning Hub](#); a statewide repository of resources universally accessible to educators, parents, and students. The system resources will serve approximately 528,000 students and 52,000 educators in K-12 statewide.

Scope of Services and Service Specifications

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to solicit proposals from qualified vendors to establish a multi-year contract for an online Curricular and Instructional Management System (CIMS). The vendor selected by the CSDE will be expected to design, develop, and implement the CIMS to be integrated with the [CT Learning Hub](#) as the centralized repository for all online and offline content universally accessible by districts, schools, teachers, parents, and students. The successful vendor will demonstrate a clear understanding of the current digital learning landscape at a state and local level.

The CSDE is soliciting vendors to provide a supplemental digital curricula solution for English language arts (ELA), mathematics, science, social studies, electives, world language, Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS), Scientifically Research-Based Interventions (SRBI) and English Learners (EL) Advanced Placement (A) International Baccalaureate and Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. This is to be done by providing educators with tools to advance student learning and create learning spaces that are designed to:

- increase student engagement;
- support all educational standards;
- provide all students with the opportunity to engage with digital curricula, interactive supports, and adaptive assessments; and

- close the “digital divide” by ensuring all students demonstrate proficiency beyond 21st century skills and technology.

Digital curricula should be well suited to the unique teaching and learning requirements of a 1:1 onsite or remote environment and display sufficient flexibility in digital delivery and access to support a variety of device and technical configurations that may be present in the district.

The CSDE will be the primary representative for the CT Learning Hub and contents. The CSDE will provide oversight of the vendor and will assist in all matters of the project coordination and decision-making. The CSDE will maintain ownership, right, title and interest in all data stored and generated. The vendor will be responsible for developing and instituting detailed multi-year plans for CIMS State-wide implementation with consideration of impact on districts, communication plans, professional learning, and program evaluation to help ensure a successful statewide virtual learning system. Current expectations are that the vendor will provide service on-site and virtual professional learning with after installation support.

The scope of services must be provided over a three-year period; up to \$2,200,000 for a three year contract.

Interested parties may respond with proposals to provide the following services:

Instructional Management

The CIMS must provide districts instructional content and resources such as auto-generated activities, learning sequences, or projects with supplemental source content for reading and knowledge development. Digital activities or learning sequences must be customizable to student need or strength, by grade, content, standard or learning target. All student user resources must have correlated answer keys. Students must have access to a variety of instructional activities including simulations, games, and interactive tools for doing mathematics, reading, writing, listening and speaking, and language.

Assessment Management and Administration

The CIMS must support item bank access, creation, management, and administration with data collection for individual user screening, formative and progress monitoring assessments. The assessment feature will incorporate assessment items of multiple types. The CIMS will:

- provide a standards based universal screener;
- provide a unified platform to create, administer, track, and report results of student assessments;
- allow for assessments delivery via OMR, plain paper, clicker and/or online testing utilizing a secure test tunnel;
- deliver results in real-time for analysis;
- adaptive branching to identify targeted level of need and strength by standard and level of mastery;

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- provide a variety of formative and summative assessment options that can be modified for classroom use; and
- provide meaningful feedback, and assessments that are aligned to the Smarter Balanced, NGSS, and SAT assessments.

Student Assessment Data - Reporting and Analysis

The CIMS must enable users to perform both simple and complex data analysis and produce actionable reports to inform decision-making at the district, school, and classroom level. The CIMS will:

- deliver district-customizable interactive dashboard views of Student Performance Indicators (SPIs);
- create a single, centralized, web-based source of information for district administrators and school leadership;
- offer multiple measures of student performance including marks, standardized tests, and benchmark tests;
- minimize time and resources spent creating and distributing reports by replacing the need to manually create reports, with an automated system; and
- assessment outcomes identify next level of learning sequence and identify content specific to need or strength.

Instructional and Curricula Resource Management

The CIMS must provide districts with online curricula and instructional content that can be integrated within local learning plans delivered onsite, blended, or extended remote virtually. The solution will allow users to access content by role, grade, content (one or more), standard, domain, or practice. The CIMS will:

- provide for student users to access content by way of universal screening, adaptive mapping to course content, or learning modules with embedded thresholds for completion (mastery or competency based);
- provide teachers access to and utilization of the provided materials;
- enable teachers to create their own instructional materials (e.g., learning plans, lesson plans, and resources) aligned to standards;
- provide functionality that gives teachers the accessibility to design, manage, and track classroom instructional practice to ensure individual student mastery of standards;
- allow teachers to develop learning plans and differentiate instruction based on student performance at the individual, group, and classroom level;
- deploy standards-aligned statewide curricula and instructional resources for integration with local curricula; and
- link to individual learning plans at the classroom level.

The CIMS may:

- assign course modules or projects based on teacher inputs for role, grade, content and standards; and

- provide customizable instructional resources for teachers to generate and share with students and families through the district level learning management system.

Parent Communication Tools

The CIMS must embed family and community engagement tools. The CIMS must provide:

- school to home communication tools in the form of template letters or student reports that can be shared through multiple modes;
- downloadable reports in multiple languages to be shared through multiple modes; and
- tutorials for parents to support their understanding of the resources.

Digital Tools Training

The Vendor must provide a detailed professional learning plan crafted to assist the CSDE, districts, and schools in becoming capable users of the digital instructional and curricula products in conjunction with their new and existing hardware (e.g., interactive whiteboards, document cameras, mobile labs, etc.). Training related to digital instructional and curricula should incorporate research-based instructional strategies.

Using a “train-the-trainer” model, the vendor will work in partnership with the CSDE to develop and provide professional learning to trainers on the use and integration of instructional and curricula resources. The vendor will deliver the training under the auspices of the Chief Academic Officer. Training shall include, but is not limited to:

- functionality and technological capabilities of the device related to the service being provided;
- basic use of the included content, software, and applications;
- functionality and technological capabilities of included content, software, and applications;
- concrete examples of how to use the resource to support teaching and learning;
- specific training on trouble-shooting; and
- specific training for families and community.

Additionally, the vendor will work in partnership with the CSDE to prepare the CSDE technical team to meet the state and district support requirements. Training shall include but is not limited to:

- preventative maintenance;
- fixes and updates to software, firmware, microcode, etc.; and
- trouble-shooting Internet connectivity.

Online access to training resources for digital instructional and curricular support should be made available by the Vendor. The vendor will provide a means by which the CSDE administration can monitor the use of the digital instructional resource and curriculum by user and provide needed training.

Additional Requirements

The Vendor must provide a description of how the CIMS:

- aligns to the Connecticut Core Standards;
- delivers culturally responsive and racially diverse curricula and instruction digitally and dynamically;
- uses powerful technology tools to engage and support student learning;
- supports all learners (e.g., learners with varying need and strength, English learners, students with IEPs, and advanced learners); and
- includes licensing for all included content and content updates for the length of the contract.

Technical Requirements

All work done under the resulting contract must meet all technical, security, data, accessibility and privacy standards in effect with the CSDE at the time of implementation including but not limited to those outlined below. Requirements and expectations regarding identity management, security, and data confidentiality are addressed below:

- User Interface (UI)
 - Teacher UI intuitive ease
 - Student UI
 - Accessibility
 - Multiple windows
 - Page refresh
 - Browser support
- Course Management
 - Searchable curricula resources
 - Support educational and technical standards
 - Resource/Course development and content authoring with ease
 - Course management – creation of master class, copying multiple sections, customization
 - Archival of course materials year-to-year
 - Shared bank of course materials
 - Video, audio, multi-media content
 - Conditional/Adaptive release
 - Gradebook
 - Multi-lingual/Foreign language support
 - Vendor provided instructional content materials
 - Collaborative learning
 - Communication features (i.e., discussion forums, “post first” capability, web conferencing, chat, ePortfolios, notifications, etc.)
 - Content distribution features

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- Customization features
- Multiple course templates
- Assessment
 - Creation
 - Shared bank
 - Ability to import third party data
 - Assessment features (i.e., quizzes, diagnostics, rubrics, ePortfolios, mobile assignment grader, import/export rubrics, SCORM Scores, etc.)
 - Student tracking
 - Reporting
 - File management
 - Web 2.0 integration
- District Faculty to Faculty Communication
 - Direct email from faculty
 - Direct commenting on assignments
 - Direct communication to custom groups created by faculty
 - Flag to alert students to new communication from faculty on home screen
 - Ability to observe student use and progress on course content
 - Offline grading
 - Lesson planner feature
 - Web/Video conferencing
 - Academic analytics capabilities
- Student to Faculty Communication
 - Direct email
 - Assignment/Homework dropbox
 - Social networking
 - Faculty ability to preview documents in platform
- Student to Student Communication
 - Student ability to create lists/groups
 - Archived to comply with legal requirements
 - Collaborative tools
 - Social networking
- Back Office Support
 - Integration
 - Parent portal
 - Parent email
 - Frequent product upgrades
 - Mobile application

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- Help
- Search
- System administration
- User data
- Scalability
- Maintenance
- Backup/Restore/Upgrades
- Software as a Service (SaaS)
- Ability to integrate third party systems/tools – open API
- Ability to customize product for CSDE
- After installation end user support
- After installation admin Support

- Value Add
 - Analytics at the district level
 - ePortfolio capabilities – Multi-year
 - Activity quests or problem-based/challenge-based learning

- System/Technical Requirements
 - Accessible and operated from multiple end-user platforms and devices using multiple web browsers and commonly used operating systems with the capacity to handle high usage
 - On-line help options that can be updated on an ongoing basis as needed
 - High-quality graphic user interface (GUI) tested for usability according to industry best practices and that is Section 508 compliant (accessibility compliance)
 - Role-based user access to system functionalities and available data
 - Data schemas with consideration for CSDE's existing functional specifications
 - Functionality at state, district, school, and program levels
 - Common printing solutions such as Adobe Acrobat or Nitro for printing functionality and exportable reports in multiple formats
 - Meets all technical, security, web accessibility and privacy standards in effect with the CSDE at the time of implementation, including but not limited to Section 508 and Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
 - Integration supports with a single-sign-on authentication and provide role-based authorization controls to different aspects of the application/lottery system (i.e., manager for multiple magnet schools should be able to sign in once and toggle access between locations)
 - Meets industry standard for accessing all browsers and platforms
 - Data elements compatible to CSDE formatting
 - Error messages that are user-friendly and advise of possible corrections and ability to create master list of all error messages and rules for CSDE review

- FERPA confidentiality statement acknowledgement upon each sign-in to the system
- Allows for standard printing, printing to secure/password protected PDF for FERPA compliant emailing, and options for translating all required documents into other languages per regulatory requirements

Minimum Qualifications

The Vendor must meet the following minimum qualifications to be considered:

1. The Vendor must have at least three (3) years of successful experience providing curricular and instructional management for State Education Agencies (SEA) or Local Education Agencies (LEA) information technology projects.
2. Provide an executive summary (no more than ten pages) of response to RFP, emphasizing any unique aspects or strengths of vendor.
3. Describe no more than three (3) similar education projects vendor has conducted. References should be provided as well.
4. Provide a detailed narrative of the implementation schedule, and pricing that will be used for the project.
5. Completed Appendix A

Work Plan

A Work Plan should detail the specific methods, tasks, and activities proposed to be undertaken in order to fulfill the scope of the work described. Any anticipated, theoretical or practical problems associated with the completion of the project must be discussed. Solutions, alternatives, or contingency plans related to these problems must also be proposed.

Additionally, the Work Plan must include task initiation and completion schedules, as well as responder's proposed staff assignments. The responder shall list and identify subcontractors, if any, and delineate their role(s) in relation to the Work Plan. Describe the project management methodology that will be used throughout this implementation.

Work Plan Outline

- I. Qualifications and Experience
 - A. Demonstrated ability to provide services: Organization's experience
 1. Provide a detailed explanation of the experience your organization has to support the CSDE in the above activities as outline.
 2. Provide a detailed explanation of the experience and capacity within your organization, and of specific staff working on the proposed project, to support the CSDE as outlined.

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3. Provide a reference list with contact information for states and districts where your organization has implemented similar CIMS.
 4. Highlight your experience in the field of education CIMS.
 - B. Demonstrated ability to provide training and support to CSDE, districts, and schools
 1. Provide a detailed explanation describing how the entity proposes to implement, train and support CSDE staff, districts, and schools through a scheduled system rollout. Provide a sample project implementation and training plan which includes specific project phases, milestones, roles, and responsibilities of all parties involved.
 2. Describe in detail the onsite in-person regional training methodology to be deployed, including the groups to be trained, training group size, topics covered, expected outcomes, training session duration, and training delivery methods.
 3. Describe in detail any ongoing 'online' training modules for skill refreshers, new staff member certification, and/or new system features.
 4. Develop a train-the-trainer module to increase district/school capacity to train school-level users.
- II. Methodology
- A. Provide a detailed explanation of the methodology you will use to provide requested services
 - B. Provide a detailed explanation of the resources you will use to provide the requested services
- III. Pricing
- A. Provide budget narrative and an itemized, detailed budget including costs associated with the completion of each major component area outlined in the statement of work as well as overall total costs.
 - B. Provide your cost proposal to the state by including a breakdown of all costs, including but not limited to the portion of vendor salaries being funded, consultants, implementation, training, help desk, scheduled maintenance, etc.
 - C. The cost information should be cross referenced to the technical requirements in order to facilitate the determination of costs associated with each major requirement and activity.
 - D. Upfront costs, such as start-up or implementation costs must be separate from maintenance and support costs, technology upgrades, and new feature enhancements.
 - E. Be sure to include any software licensing costs of third party software used in the solution, if applicable.
- IV. Organizational information
- A. Financial stability: Provide any documentation that supports the organizations past, present, and future financial stability. This may include any financial support up to and including audited financial statements.
 - B. References: Provide written references that support your professional capabilities.
 - C. Quality assurance: Provide a narrative and evidence that describes what your organization does to maintain a high quality to its products and services.

- D. Appropriate insurance: Provide a statement that contains a listing of current active business insurance of the organization is sufficient. Certificates of insurance are acceptable, but not required, unless a contract is awarded that specifies this need.

A selection committee will review and score all proposals. The following information, in addition to the requirements, terms, and conditions identified throughout this RFP Document, will be considered as part of the selection process. All proposals responding to this statement of work should address each of the items detailed below in their submitted work plan/proposal. To be considered for this procurement, all work plans/proposals in PDF format must be received by [Irene Parisi \(Irene.parisi@ct.gov\)](mailto:Irene.parisi@ct.gov) no later than 5:00 p.m., Monday, September 28, 2020.

LATE PROPOSALS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. EXTENSIONS WILL NOT BE GRANTED.

Freedom of Information Act

All of the information contained in a proposal submitted in response to this RFP is subject to the provisions of Chapter 3 of the C.G.S. Sections 1-7 et seq. and the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), C.G.S. Sections 1-200 et seq. The FOIA declares that, except as provided by federal law or state statute, records maintained or kept on file by any public agency (as defined in the statute) are public records and every person has the right to inspect such records and receive a copy of such records.

Questions

Questions for clarifying the RFP must be submitted in writing and must be received by 4:00 p.m., on September 4, 2020, to the State of Connecticut. Answers to questions received will be posted as an Addendum on September 8, 2020, on the CSDE web site. Questions must be e-mailed to [Irene Parisi \(Irene.parisi@ct.gov\)](mailto:Irene.parisi@ct.gov).

Appendix A

Vendor Proposal Requirements

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Appendix A: Vendor Proposal Requirements

The Vendor must respond to each item listed. The following matrix lists major curricula areas for which the CSDE is seeking programs suitable for 1:1 onsite and remote learning environments. Use this form to provide a description of each product included in your digital curricula solution, including grade levels and if the product is a core or supplemental offering.

Please complete the description and all details of digital curriculum functionality and technical specifications included here.

The Vendor must then align the submitted products to meet those needs and provide information on each program’s instructional design and technical specifications as noted.

Please complete the following chart and include as an attachment

CSDE Curriculum Area	Detailed Description of Capacity to provide materials for Curriculum Area requested
ELA K – 8	
Math K – 8	
Science K – 8	
Social Studies K – 8	
Computer Science K – 12	
Physical Ed K – 12	
Health/Wellness K-12	
ELL/ESL K – 12	
English 9 – 12	
Algebra	
Geometry	
Advanced Mathematics	
Biology	
Physics	
Chemistry	
Forensics	
Civics	
American History	
Ethics	
World History	
Economics	
Advanced Placement	
Career and Tech/CTE	
Music K-12	

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Art K-12	
Electives Content Courses	
Special Ed K – 12	
SRBI/Credit Recovery	
Foreign/World Languages	

Appendix B
Evaluation

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Appendix B: Evaluation

The evaluation of the proposals will be accomplished by an evaluation team, to be designed by CSDE – Academic Office, which will determine the proposal most advantageous to the Agency. Proposals that pass preliminary screening and minimum qualifications will be evaluated based on information provided in the proposal. The evaluation will be conducted according to the evaluation rubric below.

The left column includes elements and sub-categories for which reviewers will be evaluating proposals. Points in parenthesis are maximum points available for each sub-category. Reviewers will divide the total points possible in each sub-category into three sections – Excellent/Average/Poor, and award points accordingly. For example, if there are 10 points possible in the sub-category, 8-10 points would be available for *Excellent* responses, 4-7 points for *Average*, and 1-3 points for *Poor*. Note that if no evidence for a sub-category is evident, 0 points should be awarded. Total points in each category will be the sum of the sub-category scores.

RFP Element	Points Awarded	Rationale	Total Points
1. Executive Summary (10):			
Provides overview of entire project (4)			
Describes qualifications and expertise and strength in supporting the an SEA and LEA			
Lists project objectives, which relate to goals of the CSDE, Reopening Plan, Reimagining CT Classrooms and CT Learning Hub			
Includes reasonable timeline			
2. Instructional and Assessment Management System (35):			
Describes technologies available to support CSDE and onsite or remote, virtual learning			
Description of features available in relation to those requested			
Description of assessment management, administration, reporting and analysis features			
Communication Tools			
3. Curriculum/Learning Management System (35):			
Completed Appendix A (10)			
Describes the solution(s) that support teachers and administrators in accessing curricula			
Summarizes functionality of system			

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4. Digital Curriculum, Instructional and Assessment Resources (30)			
Describes each product included in the vendors digital curriculum solution			
Summarizes how the product will support 21 st Century Skills, teaching and learning, and flexibility in digital delivery			
Summarizes the alignment of products to state and national educational standards (CT Common Core, Next Generation Science, Social Studies Frameworks, Computer Science) and Smarter Balanced Assessments (SBA), SAT			
5. Integrating Existing Infrastructure (30)			
Technical Requirements Met			
Describes ability to integrate 3 rd party systems/products identifying specific products that can be integrated			
Summarizes ability to customize to meet the needs of CSDE			
Describes functionality for teachers, administrators, students and parents			
6. Digital Tools Training (25):			
Provides a detailed professional learning plan to assist CT teachers, administrators and support personnel			
Describes models for providing professional learning			
Explains how the professional learning plan will help teachers acquire skills and competencies to use new technologies/curricula			
Describes the after installation support provided to CSDE			

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7. Understanding of CSDE Plan for Reimagining CT Classrooms and Sensible Assessment Practices (15)			
Demonstrates evidence of having researched CSDE			
Demonstrate evidence of having read the CSDE Reimagining CT Classrooms for Continuous Learning			
Demonstrate evidence of having reviewed the CT Learning Hub			
8. Cost of Services (20):			
Provides detailed spreadsheet of costs for each product by category or function			
Value Added (25):			
Activities Quests or Problem-Based/Challenge-Based learning Web Site/Content Management System			
ePortfolio			
Well-written			
			Total