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| Assessment RFP DevelopmentToolkit – Model RFP Outline | |
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| Joseph A Martineau  Senior Associate |  |
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**Chapter I: Procurement Process and Timeline**

1. Key dates

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| **Clarifying Comments (to be deleted from the final RFP)** |
| The table below contains typical rows and columns. It should be modified to fit the state’s procurement process.  An oral presentation may be appropriate to clarify unclear items in the proposal.  Use additional lines if there are possible contract extensions years. Could be such items as deadline for the state to signal interest in a contract extension, deadline for contract extension negotiations to begin, and deadline for contract extension to be formalized. |

Table I.1. *Key Dates*.

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| Date | Description | Notes |
| <date> | RFP Released |  |
| <date> | Questions Due from Bidders |  |
| <date> | Answers Due from State |  |
| <date> | In-person Question & Answers |  |
| <date> | Proposals Due |  |
| <date> | Oral Presentations, if needed |  |
| <date range> | Notice of Award |  |
| <date range> | Contract Negotiations |  |
| <date range> | Contract Start Date |  |
| <date> | Contract End Date |  |
| <date> | <contract extension-related dates> |  |
| <…> | <...> |  |

1. <any additional boilerplate sections on procurement process>

**Chapter II: Background Information for Bidders**

1. Glossary of Terms

Table II.1. *Glossary of terms*.

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| Term | Definition |
| ALD | Achievement Level Descriptor |
| ESSA | Every Student Succeeds Act |
| LDS | Longitudinal Data System |
| PL | Performance Level |
| USIN | Unique Student Identification Number |
| … | … |

1. The State’s Educational System
   1. Structure of the Educational System

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| **Clarifying Comments (to be deleted from the final RFP)** |
| This section may be important for bidders to understand the structural, social, legal, and political context in which the work will be performed. It may help them be proactive in avoiding gaffes or mistakes in developing their bids that may seem obvious to SEA staff but require background knowledge. It may also help them develop stronger pricing models. |

This section should include background information on the following aspects of the state’s educational system:

* Formal governing structure, such as the relationships between commissioner, state agency, state board, governor, legislature.
* Regional organizational structure, such as school, district, regional agency, and state agency.
* Typical organizational structure within a school, district, and regional agency
* State education agency organizational chart with identification of key stakeholders.
* Other important agencies such as management and budget, centralized IT, auditing agency.
* Population size (e.g., number regional agencies, districts, schools (by grade span), and students (by grade).
* Student demographics (e.g., number and percent of students by grade and demographic group).
* Grade configurations (e.g., number of schools by grade configuration).
* School demographics (e.g., distribution of school size by grade span).
* District demographics (e.g., distribution of district size by grade span).
  1. Key Educational Associations

This section should include background information on key associations of educational stakeholders. This section could be omitted if desired, but may be helpful to a bidder in understanding which organizations to consider in stakeholder meetings and in recruiting panelists for such tasks as item writing, item review, rangefinding, hand-scoring, and cognitive labs.

* 1. Identifying Vendors, Client, Customers of Client, and Third-Party Stakeholders

This section should identify vendors (e.g., winning bidder(s) and any subcontractors), the client (e.g., the agency that assigns and evaluates vendor work, typically the State Department of Education or State Board of Education), the client’s primary customers (e.g., regional service district personnel, local district personnel, school personnel, parents, and students), and third-party stakeholders (e.g., legislators, governor’s office, state budget office, state procurement office, state auditor’s office, local school boards, and associations representing various roles of personnel in regional service districts, local districts, schools, parents, and students).

* 1. Appropriate Relationships Among Vendor(s), the Clients’ Customers, and Third-Party Stakeholders

This section should describe appropriate relationships between vendors and the clients’ customers as well as third-party stakeholders. For example, it may be helpful to specify that communications between vendors and the client’s customers and/or third-party stakeholders must always be approved by the client, issued jointly with the client, and/or shared with the client. Likewise, it may be helpful to specify that direct meetings between vendors and third-party stakeholders (including presentations) must always be jointly conducted with the client.

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| Bidder Response: Verify Commitment to Abiding by the Requirements Specified in this Section |
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* 1. Educational System IT Infrastructure

This section should include background information on the general state of the IT infrastructure in schools, districts, regional agencies, and the state.

* 1. <Other Important Structures in the Educational System>

1. Assessment System Background

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| **Clarifying Comments (to be deleted from the final RFP)** |
| This section may be important in helping bidders understand the legal context of the assessment system and understand the intended uses and purposes of the assessment system. |

* 1. Governing Statutes, Regulations, Rules, and Policies

For references (web links) to all major federal and state statutes, regulations, rules, and/or policies that govern the state assessment system. For example, federal-level statutes may include ESSA, IDEA, ADA, and FERPA. Federal-level regulations may include all regulations issued for the applicable major federal statutes. State statutes authorizing and governing state assessment programs may also be applicable, along with associated regulations and/or rules. In addition, state boards of education and/or departments of education may issue rules or policies that also govern the assessment program.

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| Bidder Response: Verify Commitment to Comply with Governing Statutes, Regulations, Rules, and Policies |
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* + 1. Purpose and Charge

For reference (web link) to and/or summary of language in governing statutes, regulations, rules, and/or policies that describe the purpose of the state assessment system. For example, governing documents may describe that the assessment is to be given in specific grades and subjects and may describe other required characteristics of the system, such as offering accommodations, setting a limit on testing time, etcetera. Salient language describing the purpose and characteristics may be summarized here.

* 1. Content Standards

For reference (web link) to and/or summary of the content standards underlying the assessment program so that bidders can understand the breadth, depth, and complexity of the standards the assessment system is to be based on. If the content standards need some explanation beyond what is available in the standards themselves, it should be provided here.

* 1. Goals and Theory of Action

For inclusion of the state’s goals for the assessment program and the theory of action for achieving those goals. This should be developed to the point that it is clear how the state assessment system fits into the overall educational ecosystem in the state.

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| Bidder Response: Indicate How Proposed Solutions Aid in Accomplishing Goals and the Theory of Action |
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* 1. Components

This section should include a description of all components of the state’s assessment system. It should include an explicit description of which components will be in scope versus out of scope. An example is provided below. Other characteristics of the components could include test length, number of items, size of existing item pool, desired size of item pool, etcetera… The purpose of this section is to help vendors understand the scope of the work and context in which the work will be done.

The assessment system in the state of <state name> consists of the major components in the state's assessment system as described in the table below. There are three assumed major uses that are not copied into the table below. They are (1) to measure student achievement on the content covered by the assessment; (2) to inform students, parents, teachers, policymakers, and the public about student achievement (and potentially growth); and (3) as an outcome measure for program evaluation.

Table II.3.4. Components of the State Assessment System

| Component  Name | In  Scope | Description & purpose | Timing | Anticipated  Yearly Volume | Major  Uses | Required or Optional? | Grades | Subjects |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| KEA | No | Default kindergarten entry assessment | First 2 weeks of school year | 99,700 | * Preschool program evaluation * Inform early lesson planning | Required | K | * Literacy * Numeracy * Social * Emotional * Physical |
| KEA-Alt | No | Alternate kindergarten entry assessment for students with significant cognitive disabilities (SWSCD) | First 6 weeks of school year | 300 |
| K2 | Yes | Default K-2 end-of-year assessment for the general student population | Last 2 weeks of school year | 10,000 | * Monitor programs receiving supplemental funding | Optional unless receiving supplemental K-2 funding based on KEA results | K-2 | * Literacy * Numeracy |
| K2-Alt | Yes | Alternate grade K-2 end-of year summative assessment for SWSCD | Last 4 weeks of school year |  |
| STP | Yes | Default grade 3-8 end-of year summative assessment | 3-5 weeks before end of school year | 95,000 per grade | * Across and/or within-year growth * School accountability | Required | * 3-10 * 3-10 * 4, 7, 10 * 5, 8, 10 * 3, 6, 9 | * Mathematics * Reading * Science * Social Studies * Writing |
| STP-Alt | Yes | Alternate grade 3-8 end-of year summative assessment for SWSCD | 2-7 weeks before end of school year | 1,500 per grade |
| STP-EOC | Yes | High school end of course summative assessments | Last two weeks of course | 100,000 per required course, 30,000 per elective | * Growth from previous summative test * School accountability (required tests only) | Required for required courses (courses are Algebra I, Geometry, English 11, Biology, and US History). Optional otherwise.  STP EOC-Alt exists only for required courses. | Upon course completion in whichever grade the student takes the course | * Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Statistics, Calculus * English 9, 10, 11, 12 * Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Earth Science * US History, World History, Civics, Economics |
| STP EOC-Alt | Yes | Alternate grade 3-8 end-of course summative assessment for SWSCD | 2-7 weeks before end of school year | 1,500 per required course per year |
| STP-Interim | Yes | Grade 3-8 and high school course interim assessment, mini-summative version. Uses a shorter blueprint proportional to summative blueprint | First 2 weeks of school year or course  Halfway through course or year | 10,000 per grade or course  8,000 per grade or course | * Within-year or within-course growth | Optional | 3-8 | * Mathematics * Reading * Science * Social Studies * Writing |
| STP-Diagnostic | Yes | Grade 3-8 and high school course interim assessment, modular version. Has six modules per subject based on model curriculum units in two potential unit sequences) | On-demand, up to twice per module (i.e., as unit pre-test and/or post-test) | 20,000 per module | * Customize lesson plans and/or remediation * Teacher self-evaluation |
| CAA | No | College admission assessment for the general education population (no alt assessment – addressed through STP EOC-Alt) | Last 3 weeks of March | 85,000 | * School accountability * College/technical training admission | One or the other is required | 11 | * Depends on the assessment adopted |
| WSA | No | Work skills assessment (no alt assessment – addressed through STP EOC-Alt) | Last 3 weeks of March | 15,000 |
| ACTA | No | Assessment of career and technical achievement for students in the career and technical education (CTE) program | After course or program completion, as appropriate | Between 100 and 900 per test | * CTE program accountability * Employment qualification certificate | Required for all CTE concentrators | Upon course/program completion | * <list of assessments> |
| ELPA | No | English language proficiency assessment for English learners (ELs) | Last 6 weeks of school year | From 5,000 in kindergarten to 700 in grade 12 | * EL program accountability | Required for all students categorized as ELs within the last 3 years  Required for all students categorized as ELs within the last 3 years | K-12  K-12 | * Reading * Writing * Listening * Speaking * Reading * Writing * Listening * Speaking |
| ELPA-Alt | No | Alternate ELPA for ELs who are also SWSCD | Last 6 weeks of school year | From 5,000 in kindergarten to 700 in grade 12 | * EL program accountability |
| ELPA-Screen | No | Screener for newly arrived ELs | Within 2 weeks of arrival | From 500 in kindergarten to 100 in grade 12 | * Categorization as EL or non-EL | Required for newly arrived students identified as a potential EL |
| Coach 1 | Yes | Coaching on developing formal classroom assessments and on using formal assessment results. | Year-round | 15,000 teachers and 1,000 administrators | * Improve educator assessment/data literacy and data use | Required in years 3-4 for new educators. Optional for established educators |  |  |
| Coach 2 | Yes | Coaching on developing and implementing high-quality formative assessment practices | Year round | 20,000 teachers and 1,500 administrators | * Improve educator assessment literacy and implementation | Required in years 1-2 for new educators. Optional for established educators |  |  |

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| Bidder Response: Verify Understanding of What is in Scope |
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* 1. Historical Review

For a summary of the number of students included in each component of the system, by grade and demographic group, and a summary of historical performance on the various components of the assessment system. This should help bidders anticipate volume and improve their cost proposals.

* 1. Existing Resources

This section is for reference (web link) to and/or summary of existing resources possessed by the state for various components of the assessment system that will be continued under a new contract. It is intended to help bidders understand what resources they may be able to leverage rather than reinventing the wheel. This should be specific to program component, and should include such items as:

* Blueprints
* Item specifications
* Item pool summaries
* Business rules
* Quality control procedures
* Quality assurance procedures
* Project schedules
* Procedures manuals (e.g., business rules, quality control, quality assurance, psychometric)
* Stakeholder manuals (e.g., test coordinator, IT coordinator, accommodations/accessibility, test security, test administration)
* Technical Reports
* TAC membership

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| Bidder Response: Indicate How You Will Leverage Existing Resources |
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* 1. Anticipated Program Changes and/or Continuation

This section is for describing whether program components are expected to continue as is, be upgrades but remain substantially similar, be discontinued, or be replaced under the new contract. This should be specified by program component and should indicate (for components that are not discontinued or replaced) what will be changed, what the contractor role will be in assisting the state to make those changes. For retained programs and those being replaced, this section should cover what resources the state expects to be delivered during the contract, and what resources the state expects to own at the end of the contract. The intent is to help bidders understand the degree of change both they and stakeholders will experience and anticipate associated problems.

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| Bidder Response: Verify Understanding of Anticipated Program Changes and Continuing Programs |
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| Bidder Response: Verify Commitment to Completing Proposed Work within Current and Planned Systems |
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1. Existing State IT Systems

This section is for briefly describing the existing state IT systems that the selected vendor will be expected to use and/or coordinate with (e.g., data systems, databases, security systems, and applications). This is intended to help bidders understand how they will need to interact with state systems so they can have greater certainty in developing a cost model.

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| Bidder Response: Verify Commitment to Interaction with Applicable Existing State IT Systems |
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1. Major Reference Documents

This section is for describing the standards that vendors will be expected to conform with and that should guide proposal development. I recommend indicating that bidders cite specific sections from these major reference sources to indicate their compliance with these major sets of standards and criteria. (and that proposal evaluation will rely heavily on the degree to which proposals are consistent with the major reference sources). The codes for vendors to use in citing sections of the major reference sources are provided in the table below. The first four lines are suggested references to include.

Table II.5. Major Reference Documents.

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| Code | Document | Available At |
| A | American Psychological Association, American Educational Research Organization, & National Council on Measurement in Education (2014). *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* | <http://bit.ly/1iczJWH> |
| B | Shyyan, V. V., Thurlow, M. L., Larson, E. D., Christensen, L. L., & Lazarus, S. S. (2016). *White paper on common accessibility language for states and assessment vendors*. | <http://bit.ly/2fIgHwm> |
| C | Council of Chief State School Officers (2014). *Criteria for Procuring and Evaluating High-Quality Assessments* | <http://bit.ly/1PObwcI> |
| D | Council of Chief State School Officers & Association of Test Publishers (2013). *Operational Best Practices for Statewide Large-Scale Assessment Programs* | <http://bit.ly/2fIlj5y> |
|  | <task force report, advisory committee report, or other applicable report> |  |
|  | <authorizing or governing statutes, regulations, rules, and/or policies> |  |
|  | <required/preferred project management standards> |  |
|  | <required/preferred IT standards> |  |
|  | <others> |  |

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| Bidder Response: Verify Commitment to Compliance with the Major Reference Documents |
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1. Principles for Proposal Development and Evaluation

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| **Clarifying Comments (to be deleted from the final RFP)** |
| Including considerable detail in this section will help bidders develop stronger substantive proposals, understand how they will be evaluated, and develop stronger cost proposals. |

I recommend that this section be used for describing overarching principles and specific factors to be used in evaluating proposals. Doing so will allow bidders to adhere to those principals during bid development. These principles might include such things as:

* Consistency with the major reference sources
* Consistency with the requirements of the RFP
* Degree to which the bidder proposes changes to the state’s standard terms and conditions (not a good thing)
* Demonstrating efforts to minimize burden on students, school staff, district staff, and state staff (in that order of priority)
* Achieving an appropriate balance between efficiency in testing time and allowing sufficient testing time for high-quality and valid measurement
* Quality, detail, and clarity of proposal
* Demonstrated capacity to carry out the proposed activities
* Demonstrated existence of and full functionality of proposed software/hardware systems
* Meeting a minimum overall score threshold in scoring of proposal quality
* The degree to which bidders comply with the directions for developing a cost proposal and uses the provided cost proposal template.
* The use of a threshold for proposal quality to be considered a qualifying proposal.
* The use of a “best value” criterion rather than a “lowest cost” criterion for selecting from among qualifying proposals.
* The use of equalized costs for evaluating cost proposals (with costs equalized to the degree possible).

Further, I recommend that states not open cost proposals that do not meet the quality threshold to avoid the issues that can come with selecting very low-cost proposals.

I recommend the state clarifies the following:

* Bidders must propose solutions that directly fulfill the requirements of the RFP, with associated pricing in the cost proposal.
* Bidders may also propose alternative solutions if they believe that have a better approach or if they have a more cost-effective approach that will meet the state’s needs. If bidders propose alternatives, they must justify why the alternative may be a better choice for the state and they must provide alternate pricing for the alternatives.
* Bidders may also propose value-added options (solutions that clearly goes beyond the requirements of the RFP without added cost). If bidders do so, they must clearly identify what options are bid as value added.

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| Bidder Response: Verify Understanding of Proposal Development and Evaluation |
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1. Principles for Cost Proposal Development

This section is for describing principles bidders should follow in developing cost proposals, such as:

* Bidding alternative options (see above.)
* Bidding value-added options (see above.)
* Describing which segments of the project should be priced separately. This is important particularly if the state is open to awarding parts of the contract to different vendors. If the state is open to that possibility, it is important for bidders to understand which sections may be awarded separately so that they don’t spread costs across those sections.
* Observing cost limits (e.g., the maximum price proposal that will be considered either overall or for each year of the contract.)

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| Bidder Response: Verify Compliance with the Principles for Cost Proposal Development |
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1. Major Project Milestone Timeline

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| **Clarifying Comments (to be deleted from the final RFP)** |
| More detail in this area will likely help bidders develop stronger cost proposals and reduce the need for contract change requests. |

This section is for providing key project milestones for each cycle of the project (for example, registration deadlines, testing windows, reporting deadlines.) Dates should be identified as non-negotiable or approximate.

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| Bidder Response: Verify Compliance with the Major Project Milestone Timeline |
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1. Contract Development

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| **Clarifying Comments (to be deleted from the final RFP)** |
| Contracts can generally be developed in two ways:  A contract that incorporates multiple documents by reference. In such a contract, there is a short document signed by both parties that describes the overall contracts, and references additional documents incorporated into the contract. In this type of contract, the short, signed contract document also typically specifies the order of precedence for the referenced documents to resolve any contradictions between documents.  An integrated contract in which any contradictions are intentionally resolved.  The recommendation made below is based on experience with integrated contracts being easier to interpret and less subject to contract change requests that contracts that incorporate documents by reference even when the contract specifies which document “wins” when documents conflict. The problem I have seen with that approach is that some documents contain problematic language that has no corollary in another document, which, had an integrated contract been developed, likely would have been caught. |

This section is for describing the approach to be used in developing and negotiating a contract after selecting a winning proposal. I recommend that contracts follow the same outline as the RFP sections, and that an integrated contract be developed. In an integrated contract, contradictions are minimized by synthesizing, for each section, the requirements of the RFP, any relevant questions and answers, the proposal response, any relevant contents of in-person presentations, and any negotiated changes.

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| Bidder Response: Verify Understanding of/Commitment to Contract Development Principles and Process |
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**Chapter III: Statement of Work**

I recommend a preamble to the statement of work that indicates that responding to the RFP indicates the bidder’s commitment to abide by the requirements of the RFP unless specifically noted by the bidder and accepted by the state. This can be helpful in contract negotiations

1. Program Management
   1. Key Contacts

This section is for identifying the key program management contacts for the state and the associated key contact for the bidder. This section should identify appropriate contacts between vendor and senior state staff and should describe appropriate procedures for issue escalation. I recommend that most day-to-day contact be at the program manager level and below, with a requirement that program managers sign off on any consequential decisions with direction from supervisors as to what decisions require their review. There should be a single program manager for the entire contract, with project managers for each major component that is generally managed separately (e.g., K-10 testing vs. college entrance, general assessment vs. alternate assessment). While this seems legalistic, it tends to avoid hurt feelings and degraded relationships between vendor and SEA when it appears (accurately or inaccurately) that one side has gone above the head of the other side in a dispute. It structures escalation so that it is not a surprise

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| Bidder Response: Fill in the Table Cells in White Below |

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| Bidder Role | Bidder Contact | State Role | State Contact |
| <Escalation Contact, Level 3> |  | <Superintendent?> | <name> |
| <Escalation Contact, Level 2> |  | <Deputy Superintendent?> | <name> |
| <Escalation Contact, Level 1> |  | <Assessment Director?> | <name> |
| <Program Manager> |  | <Development and Administration Managers> | <name> |
| <Project Manager> |  | <Content Specialist> | <name> |

* 1. Executive Management Meetings

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| **Clarifying Comments (to be deleted from the final RFP)** |
| This section is intended to ensure that the contract remains sufficiently on the radar of senior vendor and SEA officials, and that there is periodic sharing of changing policies with middle-management staff. This is key in an environment where crises of a vendor’s other clients or in other areas of the SEA may take the senior leaderships eyes off the work for long enough that issues, risks, relationships, and budgets are not adequately managed. It is also key in an environment in which front-line staff are so focused on getting the work done that they may not be aware of changes in policy. |

This section is for identifying an executive management council that meets every three to six months to evaluate the health of the program, the contract, and the relationship between the vendor and the state. During the meeting, leadership with decision-making authority can develop solutions to systemic issues identified in the evaluation, with context and advice provided by staff in operational leadership roles. I recommend in-person meetings with the vendor’s program manager and the first two escalation contacts and the associated state contacts in table III.1.1 above.

It likely will not be necessary to involve the top-level executive unless the project is in crisis. I recommend that the program managers from the state and the vendor develop a draft agenda for the meeting, with approval of the escalation contacts at least a week in advance. My experience is that this approach results in better and fewer crises.

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section |
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* 1. Documentation Repository

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| **Clarifying Comments (to be deleted from the final RFP)** |
| A thorough and well-organized documentation repository can help with assembling peer review submissions, responding to audits, responding for requests for information made by senior management, and transitioning between vendors. |

This section is for specifying the requirement for a contract documentation repository that will be available to the state at any time during the contract and transferred in a usable manner to the state at the expiration of the contract. It should require the bidder to provide at a minimum:

* The proposed solution (indicate a preferred or required solution if appropriate, such as SharePoint)
* The proposed list of roles for users (to define access and modification rights for each user)
* The proposed directory structure and directory naming conventions (to make finding documents simpler)
* The proposed file naming conventions
* The proposed cleaning and archiving process and schedule
* The proposed versioning approach
* The proposed approach to facilitating an audit of user access and modifications
* The proposed end-of-contract delivery of a logically organized, accessible, and searchable contract documentation repository

This section should also specify the types of required documentation, including:

* + - Vendor policies, such as those guiding data security, system access, data access, data privacy, background checks, physical materials security, electronic materials security, facilities security, document retention and destruction, appropriate device use, data retention and destruction.
    - Annual certification of adherence to policies.
    - Procedure manuals, including those explaining item specifications development, blueprint development, stimulus procurement/writing, item writing, item review, item pool adequacy analyses, item development targeting, test development (item selection, pool development, simulation, pre-equating, information curve fitting), internal vendor quality control procedures and criteria, vendor/state quality assurance procedures and criteria, psychometric procedures, test security procedures, annual program analysis and process improvement.

Finally, this section should clearly delineate what documents (preferably none) in the repository must not be shared with any subsequent contractor).

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Change Management

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| **Clarifying Comments (to be deleted from the final RFP)** |
| Change management often occurs in a crisis or at least a semi crisis. Knowing in advance how change management will be handled will reduce stress during an already stressful time.  Routine change management procedures should be the default. However, it is important to also have change management procedures defined for urgent issues or times of crisis that cannot be resolved in the time necessary for routine changes. Some of the safeguards in routine change management will not be possible to perform. The procedures/protocols will need to be prioritized for what must happen in any situation and what should happen but may be skipped in the moment of crisis and revisited after the fact in an emergency. |

This section is for specifying the requirements for requesting, formalizing, and implementing a contract change that affects program policy or cost. This section should include provisions for routine change management and urgent/crisis change management.

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Annual Kickoff Meetings

This section is for specifying the requirements for annual kickoff meetings. The first kickoff meeting should include the previous contractor (if possible). With an eye toward process improvement, all kickoff meetings should include a debrief to review the previous cycle for programs that will be continued. All kickoff meetings should address any major decisions affecting the next cycle, finalizing a project plan, and completing a project schedule. In the last kickoff meeting, responsibilities for the vendor will include a debrief with the state to review the final cycle of the contract with the new contractor and to finalize a transition schedule. I recommend that the state specify which state staff will attend the kickoff meetings as well as which vendor staff they expect to attend.

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Periodic Management Monitoring Meetings

This section is for specifying the requirements for routine program management meetings. I recommend a dedicated in-person program management meeting lasting at least a day every one or two months to review issues, risks, the project schedule, and to make key program management decisions. I also recommend a weekly virtual meeting to keep track of interim project progress. I recommend that the state specify who from the state will attend the in-person periodic meetings and weekly virtual meetings and the roles of the vendor staff they expect to attend kickoff meetings. I recommend that at least one in-person meeting per year be at the contractor site to inspect the site and review contractor processes.

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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1. Project Management
   1. Project Management Approach

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| **Clarifying Comments (to be deleted from the final RFP)** |
| In my experience, many vendors bid a specific PM approach, but do not conduct business using that approach. It may be appropriate contact references to determine whether the approach to project management is consistent with the bid and sufficient to minimize issues, risks, and timelines |

This section is for specifying the required/preferred project management approach and/or allowing the bidder to propose a preferred project management approach.

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Key Contacts

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| **Clarifying Comments (to be deleted from the final RFP)** |
| While this seems legalistic, it tends to avoid confusion about who can make decisions and at what level for both the vendor and SEA and connects those people at the appropriate level |

This section is for identifying key day-to-day contacts for the state on different aspects of the program. This section should identify appropriate contacts between vendor and state staff and describe appropriate procedures for issue escalation. I recommend that the corresponding contacts be expected to maintain day-to-day relationships, with the program managers required to sign off on any consequential decisions (Consequential should be defined.) There should be a single program manager for the entire contract, with project managers for each major component of the contract that is managed more or less separately (e.g., K-10 testing vs. college entrance, or general assessment vs. alternate assessment).

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| Bidder Response: Fill in the Table Cells in White Below |

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| Role | State Contact | Bidder Contact |
| Project Manager | <Name & Title> |  |
| Assessment Development Manager | <Name & Title> |  |
| Assessment Administration Manager | <Name & Title> |  |
| Math Content Lead | <Name & Title> |  |
| ELA Content Lead | <Name & Title> |  |
| Science Content Lead | <Name & Title> |  |
| Database Administrator | <Name & Title> |  |
| Applications Manager | <Name & Title> |  |
| IT Systems Director | <Name & Title> |  |
| Add rows as necessary | Roles are samples of suggested roles to include |  |

* 1. Project Scheduling

This section is for identifying the requirements for project scheduling. I recommend requiring the use of a sophisticated project scheduling tool such as Microsoft Project, with a requirement that the project schedule be updated at least once per week in advance of weekly virtual program management meetings. I recommend that the state require the project schedule to go beyond internal vendor timelines to integrate three groups into the project schedule: vendor staff (including any subcontractors), state staff, and district/school staff. I also recommend that in advance of the first kickoff meeting, the state require the vendor to conduct a requirements gathering session with state staff for developing a project schedule (a requirements gathering session is a meeting in which the vendor describes their understanding of requirements for the project, and receive feedback from the state to ensure shared understanding of requirements)

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Project management responsibilities
     1. Project management team

This section is designed to aid the state in identifying its internal project management team (if applicable) and tp aid the bidder in identifying its proposed project management team. This section also should be used to identify the specific procedures and protocols for project scheduling. I recommend requiring the use of a sophisticated project scheduling tool such as Microsoft Project, and further mandating that the project schedule be updated at least once per week in advance of weekly virtual program management meetings. I recommend that the state require the project schedule go beyond internal vendor timelines to include the integration of three groups into the project schedule: vendor staff (including subcontractors), state staff, and district/school staff. I also recommend that in advance of the first kickoff meeting, the state require the vendor to conduct at least one requirements gathering session with state staff to develop a project schedule.

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* + 1. Responsibilities

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| **Clarifying Comments (to be deleted from the final RFP)** |
| This section includes two key responsibilities. First is project management of state staff. Most vendors only informally project manage state staff or coordinate with state project management staff. Establishing appropriate channels for project managing SEA staff or coordinating that project management is important to ensure that miscommunications are avoided and deadlines don’t slip through the cracks.  Second is project management of school and district staff, which is generally not included in vendor bids. Specifying who (state and/or vendors) is responsible for what is key to avoid missed deadlines and miscommunication. |

This section is for identifying the vendor’s project management responsibilities. I recommend requiring the following at a minimum:

* Project management of bidder staff to ensure on time delivery
* Project management of state staff (if the state does not have PM staff), or coordination with the state PM staff (if the state has PM staff)
* Project management of school and district staff (including coordination with state PM staff if applicable)
* Issuing reminder notices to state, school, and district staff sufficiently in advance of deliverable due dates to give adequate lead time for on-time delivery
* Escalation reminder notices to state, school, and district staff on the day before a due date for those who have not yet delivered.
* Final notices to state, school, and district staff on the morning of the due date for those who have not yet delivered.
* Follow-up notices and contacts for missed deliverables
* Weekly report on the critical path
* Weekly report on the status of issues and risks
* Employing the escalation protocols when deliverables are at risk

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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1. Finalizing Theory of Action (if applicable)

The purpose of this section is to list the requirements for assisting the state in developing, modifying, and/or finalizing the state’s theory of action. I recommend at least a review of the theory of action, where the theory of action must include cost-benefit analyses for each type of stakeholder in the system (e.g., high-level state policymaker, district administrator, district staff member, local school board member, school administrator, school instructional staff member, business owner, parent, student). The cost-benefit analyses should weigh the utility of the information gained from the assessment system for each type of stakeholder against the burden upon the stakeholder to make the system function appropriately. For further information, see Erika Hall's presentation on theory of action for education evaluation systems: for further information (available at <https://ccsso.confex.com/ccsso/2014/webprogram/Presentation/Session4012/Hall_CCSSO%20TOA_2014_FIN.pptx>).

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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1. Content Frameworks/Content Standards
   1. Documentation of Content Framework/Standards Development

This section is to specify that procedures/processes used for developing content frameworks must be documented and kept updated with any changes. The documentation must:

* Describe procedures/processes in enough detail to allow replication by another entity
* Be updated as needed at each annual kickoff meeting
* Be owned by the state
* Be transferred to the next vendor at the transition meeting (the first annual kickoff meeting for the next contract)

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Content Standards and Annotations

This section is for sharing with bidders the content standards on which assessment programs are based. This should include the following:

* The provenance of the content standards (e.g., derived from the common core with minor revisions, or developed independently by the state)
* A summary of the structure of the content standards
* A link to the full set of content standards
* A summary of the structure of any annotations/repackaging of the content standards, such as content specifications or identification of standards eligible for large-scale measurement (if the state needs the vendor to assist in the process of annotation/repackaging, this should be noted here)
* A link to the complete annotations of the content standards (as applicable)

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
| Include this bidder response box only if the state needs the vendor to assist in the process of annotation/repackaging. |

* 1. Claims

This section is for sharing with bidders the claims to be supported by the assessment programs covered by the RFP, and/or for delineating the bidder’s requirements to assist the state in developing supported claims. Identifying claims is a key component of evidence-centered design (see Mislevy, Almond & Lukas, 2004, for a brief introduction, available at <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED483399.pdf>). However, even if evidence centered design was not used in test development, it is important to know what the state expects to claim about its students based on test scores.

Example claims can be found for the Smarter Balanced assessment consortium at <https://www.smarterbalanced.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Smarter-Balanced-Mathematics-Claims.pdf>. Similarly, claims can be found for the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (PARCC) at <http://www.parcconline.org/assessments/test-design/ela-literacy/ela-performance-level-descriptors>.

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
| Include this bidder response box only if the state needs the vendor to assist in the process of developing or refining claims. |

* 1. Achievement Level Descriptors

This section is for sharing with bidders the Achievement Level Descriptors (ALDs) used by the programs covered by this RFP, and/or for delineating a vendor’s responsibility to assist the state in implementing a process to develop and/or validate ALDs. I recommend that several types of ALDs be addressed, such as policy, range, target, and reporting ALDs as described in Egan, K. L., Schneider, M. C., & Ferrara, S. (2012). Performance level descriptors: History, practice and a proposed framework. In G. Cizek (Ed.), *Setting Performance Standards*, Second Edition (79–106).

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
| Include this bidder response box only if the state needs the vendor to assist in the process of developing or refining ALDs. |

* 1. Item Type Selection

This section is for sharing with bidders the appropriate item types for use in the programs covered by this RFP as derived from the claims, ALDs, and content standards (or their derivatives,) and/or for delineating the bidder’s requirements to assist the state in developing and carrying out a process to identify appropriate item types.

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
| Include this bidder response box only if the state needs the vendor to assist in developing and/or implementing a process to identify appropriate item types |

* 1. Test Blueprints

This section is for sharing with bidders existing test blueprints and requirements for vendor to assist the state in developing and carrying out a process to evaluate and improve existing blueprints. It may also be used to describe requirements for vendor to assist the state in developing and implementing a process to develop test blueprints consistent with the content standards, claims, ALDs, and available item types. Blueprints may incorporate the following characteristics:

* The number of test forms (for fixed form testing)
* The number of forms at each stage (for multistage adaptive testing)
* Security features, for example
  + Many forms (for fixed form testing and multistage adaptive testing)
  + Item exposure limits (for item adaptive testing)
* Coverage of aspects of content standards or extensions/annotations of content standards, for example
  + Claim, reporting category, assessment target, standard
  + Domain, strand, cluster, standard
* Intended cognitive process/demand addressed (e.g., DOK)
* Item type
* Item difficulty range
* Information curve target
* Number or range of items in each cell of the blueprint and each rollup category of the blueprint

For fixed-form (paper and multistage-adaptive) and item-adaptive tests with a sufficient item pool, blueprints should be highly detailed to ensure a consistent experience for each student. For relatively sparse item banks in item-adaptive testing, the blueprint may require some flexibility. This can be accomplished by providing ranges of items (rather than strict targets) in the most granular cells of the blueprint to account for constraints of the item pool. However, states should ensure that the ranges are not so wide that they create considerable differences in student testing experiences.

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Estimated Testing Time

This section should include estimates of testing time for continuing programs (including a description of how the estimates were calculated). It should also include, if applicable, targets for testing time for all programs, requirements for bidders to provide estimated testing time for new blueprints, requirements to monitor testing time for each cycle, and/or to update the process for estimating testing time. Testing time should be defined clearly, indicating whether it is only time students spend responding to the test or whether it includes time for reading instructions, breaks from testing, and pre-test activities such as interest inventories that accompany college entrance tests.

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Qualifications

This section is for the vendor to show that they have successfully performed similar work on content frameworks on a similar scale and timeline:

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| Bidder Response |
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1. Item Development
   1. Documentation

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| **Clarifying Comments (to be deleted from the final RFP)** |
| This is often treated by bidders as proprietary information. It is important for states to have this information so that it can be used in peer review and audits. |

This section specifies that all item development procedures/processes must be documented and kept updated with any changes. The documentation must:

* Describe procedures/processes in enough detail to allow replication by another entity
* Be updated as needed at each annual kickoff meeting.
* Be owned by the state
* Be transferred to the next vendor at the transition meeting (the first annual kickoff meeting for the next contract)

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Item Specifications/Task Models

This section is for sharing requirements for item specifications and/or task models. This should include the structure of the specifications, the granularity and method of connecting to the various content frameworks (e.g., content standards, annotations of standards, claims, ALDs, and blueprints), and model items for each specification to guide item development.

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Cognitive Labs or Other Studies to Ensure Assessment Elicits Target Cognition

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| **Clarifying Comments (to be deleted from the final RFP)** |
| Cognitive labs or some other type of study providing similar information is critical for validity evidence based on alignment/content. |

This section is for sharing requirements for cognitive labs or other appropriate interaction studies. This should include requirements for the following:

* Required/proposed procedures
* Required/proposed analysis methods
* Required/proposed format for reporting results of studies with associated recommendations for improvement of item development
* Required/proposed process for strategically selecting model items to use in studies (e.g., targeting novel item types, existing item types for which cognitive labs have not been performed, innovative uses of item types as represented in item specifications, item types or specifications with high failure rates in item review, etcetera)

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Item Development Needs Analysis
     1. Analysis of needs for new item pool

This section is for sharing requirements for analyzing item development needs for a new item pool (if applicable). This should include requirements for the following:

* For fixed-form testing: methodology for estimating item development needs for each blueprint element for the specified number of forms
* For multistage adaptive testing: methodology for estimating item development needs for each blueprint element for the specified number of stages, the specified number of levels within each stage, and the specified number of forms within each level within each stage
* For item adaptive testing: methodology for estimating item development needs by lowest-level granularity of blueprint cells to create a pool that can satisfy the blueprint for all students while maintaining item security and desired measurement characteristics.
* Overages in item development to account for items and item families not surviving item review committees.
* Overages in item development to account for challenges in targeting item difficulty to meet needs for measurement precision (e.g., target test information curves for fixed-form and multi-stage adaptive testing; adequate measurement precision for all students with item-adaptive testing)

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* + 1. Analysis of existing item pool adequacy

This section is for sharing requirements for analyzing enhancement needs for an existing item pool. This should expand on the previous section by:

* Identifying how the vendor will take advantage of statistics from the existing pool and from past examinee populations to identify targeted item development needs. This is done through analysis of both simulated and actual test forms (for fixed form and multistage adaptive testing) or through analysis of both simulated and actual test administration (for item adaptive testing)
* Address issues identified in the analyses of the existing pool regarding the ability to fulfill requirements, including blueprint match, security requirements (item exposure rates or ability to build enough forms), rarely or unused items/item families, and adequate information/measurement precision
* Analyze issues related to blueprint match, test security, and measurement precision by achievement (e.g., by scale score/theta, by deciles, by quintiles) to ensure that mean values do not disguise problems on the extremes
* Analyze issues of rare use or non-use of items and/or item families to diagnose issues in the item development process and/or blueprint development process.
* A report identifying targeted item development needs and recommending potential improvements in the item development process
* A process by which the results of the report will be incorporated directly into the next round of item development to maximize the state’s return on investment.

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Stimulus Procurement/Custom Development

This section covers independent items requiring stimuli, item families requiring shared stimuli, and performance tasks linked to a common scenario or topic. It also covers items, item families, and performance tasks linked to multiple topics (e.g., a family of items associated with multiple reading passages to address intertextual reading comprehension).

* + 1. Characteristics of appropriate stimuli

This section is for describing the characteristics of appropriate stimuli. This might include such items as reading level (e.g., lower than grade level for non-reading tests, on grade level for reading tests), vocabulary restrictions, passage length, digits of precision for tables and graphs. This may also include descriptions of the need for paired, tripled, or quadrupled stimuli (e.g., for addressing intertextual comprehension in reading or ability to synthesize both tabular and graphical information in math or science)

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* + 1. Potential stimulus procurement

This section is for describing the requirements for procuring appropriate stimuli. This might include acceptable sources of stimuli and approval procedures to ensure that no extraneous materials are paid for. I suggest requiring or suggesting the use of the copyright clearance center as it tends to reduce state costs and increase the length of approvals.

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* + 1. Custom stimulus development

This section is for describing the requirements for custom development of appropriate stimuli. This might include qualifications for stimulus writers, recruitment of stimulus writers, an agenda outline for writer workshops, writer training materials, initial stimulus review criteria, criteria for monitoring writer performance, process for providing writer feedback, , process for developing a cadre of master writers, procedures and criteria for stimulus acceptance and payment, involvement of state staff in stimulus acceptance, approving payment to ensure quality and a process for dismissing writers as necessary .

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Item Writing

This section is for describing the requirements for item writing. This should include:

* Qualifications for item writers (including state resident, state teachers if desired)
* Recruitment of item writers (include any desirable demographic representation)
* An agenda outline for writer workshops
* Writer training materials, including the criteria by which items will be evaluated
* Initial item review process and criteria
* Process for monitoring writer performance
* Process for providing feedback to writers
* Process for routing items back to writers for revision (to meet alignment and quality requirements)
* Process for dismissing writers as necessary
* Process for developing a cadre of master writers
* Procedures and criteria for item acceptance and payment
  + I suggest that no item be accepted without being deemed to measure a different standard or DOK than was assigned.
  + I suggest that state staff be involved in final acceptance of items to ensure quality and address potential conflict of interest inherent in the same vendor assigning items, reviewing items, and being paid for items accepted.

In addition to the requirements above, I suggest that item writers be required to develop an item description in addition to developing the item itself. In the description, the item writer would justify why the item stimulus is appropriate for the standard/DOK assigned, how the item stem is appropriate for the content standard and DOK, how incorrect options (if applicable) represent common misunderstandings, and how the tasks the examinee must perform matches the standard and DOK assigned.

I also suggest that for constructed response items, either standard scoring rubrics be used for a given item specification, or that the item writer be required to develop a scoring rubric and sample responses at each score point on the rubric

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Stimulus and Item Review
     1. Committees

This section is for describing the committees to be used and their purposes. I recommend a content review committee and a fairness review committee (incorporating bias, sensitivity, and accessibility review) though it is reasonable to separate out accessibility from bias and sensitivity review.

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* + 1. Qualifications for committee facilitators

This section is for describing the requirements for committee facilitators (e.g., Do you want facilitators to always be vendor staff? Or do you want the vendor to work with committee members to become facilitators with backup from vendor staff? What experience and education must a facilitator have?)

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* + 1. Committee membership and qualifications

This section is to describe the requirements for committee membership (including the number of members) and qualifications that committee members of distinct types must have. I recommend that educators expert in a given content area work in content review committees for their area of expertise. I recommend a broader base of perspectives for the fairness review committees. I recommend the following perspectives be considered:

* Educators
  + Field of practice
    - General education
    - Special education, dealing with various specialties
    - Bilingual/English language
  + Locale of teaching assignment (rural, town, suburban, urban)
  + Gender
  + Race/ethnicity
* Civil rights advocates (with perspectives important in the state; note that including such perspectives is not a de facto endorsement of the viewpoints, it represents due diligence to ensure that to the maximum degree possible attempts have been made to ensure that any potentially biased, sensitive, or inaccessible content has been removed from the test). Organizations involved in civil rights advocacy can be found at <http://www.civilrights.org/about/the-leadership-conference/coalition_members/>. I recommend considering advocates for the following issues for inclusion in committee membership
  + Race/ethnicity
  + Political persuasion (e.g., liberal and conservative legislators and/or activists)
  + Gender
  + Sexual orientation/identity
  + Immigrant status
  + Migrant status
  + Disability

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| **Clarifying Comments (to be deleted from the final RFP)** |
| Including civil rights advocates has not typically been done in item reviews. Item reviews have instead typically relied on educators that in some way represent different communities. I recommend advocates because their lens is likely to be more advocacy-based than education-based and may therefore see issues clouded by employment in the field of education. |

I also recommend that for each group (educators and civil rights advocates) the qualifications for participation be defined in advance of recruitment.

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* + 1. Committee recruitment and finalization

This section is for requirements for recruiting members of each committee (including each desired perspective) and for finalizing and maintaining committee membership over time.

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* + 1. Data free and data-based stimulus/item review workshops

This section is for requirements for conducting stimulus and item review workshops. It should address the following:

* Facilitator training
* Annotated agenda for meetings of each type of committee
* Data analyses to be conducted in advance of the workshop, with associated criteria for flagging items for review (for data-based workshops)
* Item information to be provided to the committee (for both data-free and data-based workshops)
* Committee member training (paying attention to tensions that can arise among advocacy groups with conflicting agendas).
* Item review procedures. I recommend that every item be reviewed and rated independently by each panel member before engaging in group discussions and consensus. For content review committees, I recommend the following process (capturing associated data) to produce independent item alignment reviews:
  + Independent activities

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| **Clarifying Comments (to be deleted from the final RFP)** |
| If members of the content review committee independently identify the best matching content standard(s) and level(s) of cognitive demand (e.g., DOK), those ratings can be used in documenting alignment without a separate alignment study. However, this would require that item reviewers not see the content standard(s) or level(s) of cognitive demand intended for the item until after providing their initial ratings. |

* + - Review of the item as it is rendered on the page or on screen without alignment metadata (but with item performance data, for data-based workshops)
    - Identify best matching content standard (or extension/annotation of content standards)
    - Identify best matching DOK (Depth of Knowledge or some other designation of cognitive demand)
    - Review item metadata (including intended content standard, intended DOK, and item description developed by the item writer justifying how the it matches the intended content standard and intended DOK.
    - If the intended content standard and/or DOK does not match the independently-rated best matching standard or DOK, rate the degree to which the item also matches the intended standard and/or DOK based on the justification provided in the item description.
    - Rate the content accuracy of the item
    - Describe any problems identified with the item (free-form text response)
  + Facilitated group consensus review activity
    - Develop and capture consensus on content accuracy, any problems identified with the item, best matching content standard, best matching DOK, and (if needed) the degree to which the item also matches the intended content standard and intended DOK

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* + 1. Process for monitoring member performance

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| **Clarifying Comments (to be deleted from the final RFP)** |
| I recommend that states monitor the performance of their committee members to ensure that comfort and familiarity does not result in unaddressed inadequate performance. |

Requirements for monitoring member performance to improve poor performers, eliminate consistently poor performers, and develop a cadre of master committee members.

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Stimulus/Item Development/Review Meeting and Payment Logistics

Requirements for handling meetings, paying participants, and invoicing for item development should include the following:

* Bidder responsibilities for hosting meetings (including meeting space, coffee, meals, and breaks)
* Bidder responsibilities for paying stipends to item/stimulus writers (I recommend a minimal stipend for each stimulus/item assigned and initially submitted for review, with a more substantial stipend for each item accepted by the vendor and state into the pool for item review.
* Bidder responsibilities for paying stipends to item reviewers (I recommend a daily stipend)
* Bidder responsibilities for paying substitute teacher fees for stimulus/item writers and item reviewers (if applicable)
* Bidder responsibilities and allowable rates for reimbursing writers and reviewers for associated travel, lodging, and meal costs.
* Criteria for advancing items to data-free item review, field testing, data-based item review, and into the operational pool.
* Invoicing for item development (I recommend allowing a set price for hosting each stimulus writing, item writing, and stimulus/item review meeting, with a minimal invoiceable price for each item submitted by a writer, and incremental prices for advancement to data-free item review, field testing, data-review, and into the operational item bank so that items are only paid for to the degree that they survive the development process. It may be necessary to specify that if insufficient items from an item family [e.g., a performance task, items attached to a passage] survive the process, the items cannot be advanced to the operational item pool).
* Safeguards to ensure that item reviewers’ individual and consensus ratings remain independent to address the potential conflict of interest of paying the vendor for each item as it progresses through the development and review process. There are two reasons for this recommendation. First is to avoid conflict of interest in which vendors would be paid for panelists approving marginal items. The second is to ensure that panelists’ ratings can reasonably be used for alignment analyses without conducting a costly separate alignment study.

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Item Development and Banking Software

If the vendor will be using its own software, this section is for the bidder to provide a detailed description of its item development and banking software platform. This should include screenshots for critical functions and descriptions of connections to other IT systems.

If the vendor will be required to build item development and banking software for the state to own, this section is to describe in technical detail the item development and banking software the bidder will be required to develop.

If the vendor will be required to use a specific state-owned or third-party-owned platform, this section is to describe in technical detail the platform the vendor will be required to use.

You may want to put in some requirements here to ensure consistency between different item rendering engines and to ease the transition to another vendor at the end of the contract. Such requirements might include the following:

* General QTI/APIP compliance
* QTI/APIP compliant exports
* XML exports
* Rendering functionality consistent with the administration platform
* Item types that must be supported
* Prohibition on use of proprietary and/or non-QTI/APIP compliant tags
* Metadata that must be captured
* Item statistics that must be captured
* The workflow process for items as they mature from item assignment through item writing, data-free committee review, field testing, data-based committee review, operational testing, release, and/or retirement.

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Qualifications

This section is for the vendor to show that they have successfully performed item development work on a similar scale and timeline:

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| Bidder Response |
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1. Test Development
   1. Documentation

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| **Clarifying Comments (to be deleted from the final RFP)** |
| The requirements around documentation are intended to help with audits, peer review, and transition from one vendor to another. There should be no vendor black boxes into which the state has difficulty seeing. |

This section is to specify requirements that all test development procedures/processes must be documented and kept updated with any changes. The documentation must:

* Describe procedures/processes in enough detail to allow replication by another entity
* Be updated as needed at each annual kickoff.
* Be owned by the state
* Be transferred to the next vendor at the transition meeting (the first annual kickoff meeting for the next contract)

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Fixed form item selection (includes multistage adaptive)

Use this section to specify requirements for fixed-form item selection (including multistage adaptive). The requirements should address the following:

* Development of test maps (e.g., database table or spreadsheet with one record per item for every form). Item records should include all associated item statistics and metadata (such as form ID, item position, item family ID, item ID, associated stimuli IDs, correct answer, item type, maximum item score, allowable item scores, item function [e.g., field test, operational], equating item flag, core vs. matrix representation flag, item enemies, etcetera). Describe all desired item data to be listed in test maps.
* Simulation design for multistage adaptive tests to evaluate measurement precision across multiple achievement ranges (e.g., deciles)
* Method for developing information curve target for new tests
* Method for achieving information curve matching (and pre-equating design, if appropriate) for continuing tests, including
  + Projected test information curves compared to target
  + Projected conditional standard error of measurement curves
  + Projected marginal reliability by ability range (e.g., decile) and overall
  + Projected classification accuracy by ability range (e.g., decile) and overall
  + Projected classification consistency by ability range (e.g., decile) and overall
* Method for selecting items to match the blueprint
* Process for operational item selection
* Process for vertical and/or horizontal linking item selection
* Process for field test item selection
* Software used for test development (open source preferable, commercially available OK, proprietary problematic)
* Code used for test development
* Outline of test development report (including analysis of alignment and projected measurement precision)

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Item-adaptive item pool selection

Use this section to specify requirements for operational adaptive item pool selection. The requirements should address the following:

* Item selection methodology
* Test administration simulation design to evaluate adequacy of the selected item pool to meet blueprint requirements and achieved desired measurement precision across all ranges of student achievement (e.g., deciles).
* Finalization of adaptive algorithm values that depend on the simulation design
* Outline of report of simulation design, implementation, results, and implications.

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Manual Development

Use this section to specify requirements for developing stakeholder manuals. The requirements should list the required manuals (e.g., district and/or school test coordinator, district and/or school IT coordinator, district and/or school accommodations/accessibility coordinator, test administrator, test security, security compliance forms

This section should also provide an outline for each manual and/or require the bidders to propose a detailed outline for each manual.

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Training

Use this section to specify requirements for in-person and online training for the various roles. The number of trainings and anticipated numbers of participants should be shared (including historical numbers if available). The training regimen for all roles should include test security training. There should be links to agendas and materials for existing training the state feels is useful , and bidders should be required to provide annotated agendas/outlines for training meetings and/or online training modules. Sample training materials and/or mockups should also be required.

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Qualifications

This section is for the vendor to show that they have successfully performed similar test development work on a similar scale and timeline:

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| Bidder Response |
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1. Test Administration
   1. Documentation

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| **Clarifying Comments (to be deleted from the final RFP)** |
| The requirements around documentation are intended to help with audits, peer review, and transition from one vendor to another. There should be no vendor black boxes into which the state has difficulty seeing. |

This section is to specify requirements that all test administration procedures must be documented and kept updated with any changes. The documentation must:

* Describe procedures/processes in enough detail to allow replication of the process by another entity
* Be updated as needed at each annual kickoff meeting during the section of the meeting in which the previous cycle is debriefed and process improvements are discussed.
* Be owned by the state
* Be transferred to the next vendor at the transition meeting (the first annual kickoff meeting for the next contract)

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Item-adaptive testing
     1. Adaptive algorithm

Use this section for any requirements the state has regarding the adaptive algorithm, and to indicate that the bidder must include a detailed description of and rationale for such characteristics as

* Starting rules
* Estimation rules
* Item (item-adaptive) or level (multistage adaptive) selection rules
* Stopping rules
* Exposure control
* Additional constraints

The algorithm should be described in thorough detail such that all aspects of are clearly understandable and their functions can be appropriately evaluated.

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Handling irregularities
     1. Defining irregularities

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| **Clarifying Comments (to be deleted from the final RFP)** |
| Most contracts I have seen are severely lacking in this department, meaning that only a few types of irregularities are well defined, creating confusion when others occur. |

Use this section to define what constitutes a test administration irregularity, which at a minimum could include the following types of irregularities:

* For all types of testing
  + Physical interruptions (e.g., power outage, tornado warning, snow day)
  + Psychological interruptions (e.g., traumatic events)
  + Misadministration (e.g., inadvertent or intentional failure to follow manual instructions)
  + Prohibited behavior (e.g., inappropriate behavior that may result in voiding scores)
  + Suspected cheating (e.g., intentional security breach).
* For paper-based testing
  + Spoiled answer documents
  + Special handling
* For internet- and/or computer-based testing
  + Vendor system failure
  + Vendor system slowdown
  + Vendor system intrusions
  + Client system failure
  + Client system slowdown
  + Client system intrusions
    1. IT and data systems for detecting and responding to irregularities

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| **Clarifying Comments (to be deleted from the final RFP)** |
| A key aspect of this section is defining the data that will be available on demand for responding to the distinct types of irregularities. Vendor systems are typically developed to support the smooth running of the system in the absence of irregularities. States need vendors to enhance data and reporting systems to on-demand extract data files and reports that are immediately useful for responding to irregularities. |

Use this section to provide requirements for bidders to describe their IT and data systems that will be used to detect potential irregularities, as well as IT-based and data-based procedures for responding to detection of potential irregularities.

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* + 1. Responding to irregularities

Use this section to provide requirements for bidders to describe their procedures for responding to the types of irregularities as described above.

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Disaster Planning and Recovery

Use this section to provide requirements for bidders to describe disaster planning, procedures, and readiness. This should include at a minimum the following:

* Defining disaster, including thresholds at which high-volume irregularities become disasters.
* IT and data systems for detecting and responding to a disaster
* Communication plan
* Detecting a disaster
* Stopping the disaster
* Resuming testing
* Communicating options for systems and students affected by the disaster
* Assisting in choosing between options for systems and students affected by the disaster

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| **Clarifying Comments (to be deleted from the final RFP)** |
| The last two key components of this section are almost universally left out of bids, resulting in considerable delays in obtaining data to help the state communicate well during and after a disaster. |

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Qualifications

This section is for the vendor to show that they have successfully performed similar test administration work on a similar scale and timeline:

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| Bidder Response |
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1. Item Scoring
   1. Documentation

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| **Clarifying Comments (to be deleted from the final RFP)** |
| Will help with audits, peer review, and transition from one vendor to another. Should make all other subsections of this section transparent. There should be no vendor black boxes into which the state has difficulty seeing. |

This section is to specify requirements that all item scoring procedures/processes must be documented and updated with any changes. The documentation must:

* Describe procedures/processes in enough detail to allow replication of the process
* Be updated as needed at each annual kickoff meeting.
* Be owned by the state
* Be transferred to the next vendor at the transition meeting (the first annual kickoff meeting for the next contract)

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Non-artificial-intelligence-based (e.g., rule-based) automated scoring

This section is to specify desired requirements for all aspects of automated scoring that do not rely on artificial intelligence, including items such as paper-based multiple-choice items, computer-based selected response items, rule-based scoring for innovative or technology enhanced item types. The requirements should cover the following:

* For paper-based administration
  + Scanning procedures
  + Procedures for transforming scanned images into scorable data
  + Procedures for human review of ambiguous scanned images/data
  + Procedures for scoring data derived from scanned images
  + Quality control procedures for all steps
  + Criteria for successful quality control
  + Quality assurance/user acceptance testing procedures and criteria
* For computer-based administration
  + Requirements for telemetry data capture
  + Requirements for response data capture
  + Scoring rule-development procedures for each item type, item specification, or item as appropriate
  + Readable, electronic documentation of each unique set of scoring rules
  + Quality control procedures for testing completeness of scoring rules (including the use of creative and unexpected responses)
  + Criteria for successful quality control
  + Procedures for responding to unsuccessful quality control
  + Quality assurance/user acceptance testing procedures and criteria

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| **Clarifying Comments (to be deleted from the final RFP)** |
| None of the empty bullets listed above are generally well-defined for innovative item types. Look for the vendor to provide a strong and detailed response to this section justifying item scoring rules and quality control procedures for innovative item types. |

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Constructed Response Rangefinding (and anchor/training paper selection)

This section is to specify desired requirements for all aspects of rangefinding (as both an anchoring activity and an activity to develop training materials for scoring). This should include procedures, relevant sample annotated agendas, and relevant sample materials used for

* Rangefinding paper selection
* Rangefinding panel training
* Rangefinding workshops
* Rubric finalization
* Selection of anchor/validity papers and/or artificial intelligence scoring engine training corpus

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Hand-scoring

This section is to specify desired requirements for all aspects of hand-scoring. This should include the following:

* Qualifications for hand-scorers (including any desired experience, education, and demographics)
* Recruitment procedures
* Annotated training agenda, procedures, and materials
* Criteria for successful completion of training
* Monitoring validity (including randomly seeding validity/anchor papers)
* Monitoring reliability (including inter-rater reliability)
* Monitoring rater drift
* Procedures and criteria for identifying poorly performing raters
* Procedures for remediation and/or dismissal of poorly performing raters
* Procedures for re-rating papers graded by poorly performing raters
* Requirements for double-reading and resolution or sampling rate for double reading
* Requirements for handling and/or escalating exceptional circumstances, including
  + Hard-to-score papers (e.g., highly creative papers, difficult to read handwriting, poor spelling)
  + Assigning conditions for aberrant responses (e.g., off-topic but well written, written in a foreign language)
  + Alert papers (e.g., those that describe danger and/or commission of a serious crime against self or others)
* Mock or sample daily, weekly, and final hand-scoring quality monitoring summaries

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Artificial intelligence scoring

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| **Clarifying Comments (to be deleted from the final RFP)** |
| This is typically not well developed. Look for a strong vendor response justifying their approach (or non-approach) to this artificial intelligence scoring.  Also, it may be tempting to not do read-behind procedures. State should carefully consider whether the vendor has adequate evidence that it is reasonable to do so. |

This section is to specify desired requirements for all aspects of artificial-intelligence-based scoring. This should include the following:

* A thorough description of the procedures/analyses used in AI-based scoring
* Scoring engine training procedures and/or scoring rule development procedures, including routing for human scoring any papers that fall into these exceptional categories:
  + Hard-to-score papers (e.g., highly creative papers, difficult to read handwriting, poor spelling)
  + Assigning condition for aberrant responses (e.g., off-topic but well written, written in a foreign language)
  + Alert papers (e.g., those that describe danger and/or commission of a serious crime against self or others)
* Scoring engine monitoring procedures, including sampled papers for human read-behind and analysis
* Criteria for successful AI-based scoring
* Procedures for responding to missed quality criteria
* Mock or sample daily, weekly, and final AI scoring monitoring summaries

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Qualifications

This section is for the vendor to show that they have successfully performed item scoring work on a similar scale and timeline:

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| Bidder Response |
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1. Psychometrics
   1. Documentation

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| **Clarifying Comments (to be deleted from the final RFP)** |
| Will help with audits, peer review, and transition from one vendor to another. Should make all other subsections of this section transparent. There should be no vendor black boxes into which the state has difficulty seeing. |

This section is to specify requirements that all psychometric procedures/processes/analyses/code must be documented and kept updated with any changes. The documentation must:

* Describe in enough detail to allow replication of the process by another entity
* Be updated as needed at each annual kickoff meeting during the section of the meeting in which the previous cycle is debriefed and process improvements are discussed.
* Be owned by the state
* Be transferred to the next vendor at the transition meeting (the first annual kickoff meeting for the next contract)

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Psychometric Software

This section is to specify requirements for psychometric software used. I recommend commercially available software (good) or open-source software such as that developed in R (better). This is to allow for transition from vendor to vendor without the inconsistencies introduced by using different software or proprietary code.

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Psychometric Model and Calibration

This section is to specify requirements for the psychometric model(s) to be used. It could cover such issues as model selection (and associated justification), dimensionality and subscoring, measurement invariance, model fit, and item calibration procedures.

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Classical and IRT-based field test item analyses for content and fairness review

This section is to specify requirements for item analyses to be performed on pre-operational items (e.g., standalone or embedded field tests). This should include any item analyses performed in support of content review or fairness review (bias, sensitivity, accessibility) such as distractor analyses, p-values, item total correlations, DIF, and any other types of item analyses. It should specifically address flags for each type of analysis to be highlighted in data review sessions with item review committees.

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Classical and IRT-based operational item analyses for identification of potential issues

This section is to specify requirements for item analyses to be performed on operational items as quality assurance checks to catch potential problems with operational items (e.g., an error in the scoring key, a problem with the display of the item, etcetera).

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Test development analyses (information/CSEM, reliability, precision, classification accuracy and consistency)

This section is to specify that requirements for test development analyses be performed as tests are assembled. This is to evaluate such issues as projected match to target test information curves, projected CSEM curves, projected reliability (curves), projected classification accuracy, and projected classification consistency.

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Operational test form/event analyses (actual information/CSEM, reliability, precision, classification accuracy and consistency)

This section is to specify requirements for analysis of specific test forms (fixed form and multistage adaptive testing) or of the collection of test events (item adaptive testing) to show actual target test information curves, CSEM curves, reliability (curves), classification accuracy, and classification consistency and to compare those values to projected values.

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Test Scoring

This section is to specify requirements for test scoring. This should include procedures for the following:

* Detecting abnormal responses (e.g., inattentive students, poor fit) and reporting on their prevalence
* Detecting and dealing with problematic paper answer documents (e.g., use of pen rather than pencil or otherwise spoiled answer document that must be evaluated visually)
* For item-adaptive assessment: dynamic achievement estimation
* For multi-stage assessment: end-of-stage achievement estimation
* Final achievement estimation
* Total scoring
* Subscoring

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Scaling and Equating

This section is to specify requirements for scaling and equating. This should include procedures for the following:

* Selecting a scaling method
* Anchoring the scale (e.g., is there is a specific value that should be associated with the “proficient” cut score in every grade for horizontally equated tests, or is there a specific standard deviation you desire in a given grade, or is there a range of scores you want all scores to fall within)
* Procedures for scaling equated theta scales
* Use (or non-use) of a vertical scale
* Selecting an equating method (with associated justification)
* Analyses for evaluating equating in each cycle
* Analyses for evaluating equating against the base year (including item and scale drift analyses)
* Criteria for successful equating and flags for problematic equating
* Proposed responses to flags for problematic equating
* Proposed approach to independent replication of equating. There are four typical approaches, ranging from useless and inexpensive (1) to high quality and costly (4), as follows:

1. Two analysts in the same company use the same code to run the same analyses on different machines
2. Two analysts from the same company write their own code using the same program to run the same analyses on different machines
3. Two analysts from the same company write their own code using different programs to run the same analyses on different machines
4. Two analyses from different companies write their own code using different programs to run the same analyses on different machines

Levels 1 and 2 are insufficient to address potential idiosyncrasies in analysts and software. Level 3 is acceptable if a report is provided and independence of the two analyses can be guaranteed because it addresses idiosyncrasies of the analysts and potential bugs in the software used. Level 4 is the gold standard. In either level 3 or 4, any inconsistencies between results of the two analyses must be jointly reconciled after the initial independent analyses have been completed.

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Qualifications

This section is for the vendor to show that they have successfully performed similar psychometric work on a similar scale and timeline:

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| Bidder Response |
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1. Standard Setting
   1. Documentation

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| **Clarifying Comments (to be deleted from the final RFP)** |
| Will help with audits, peer review, and transition from one vendor to another. Should make all other subsections of this section transparent. There should be no vendor black boxes into which the state has difficulty seeing. |

This section is to specify requirements that all psychometric procedures/processes/analyses/code must be documented and kept updated with any changes. The documentation must:

* Describe in enough detail to allow replication of the process by another entity if standards need to be reset.
* Be owned by the state
* Be transferred to the next vendor at the transition meeting (the first annual kickoff meeting for the next contract)

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Foundations

This section is to specify requirements for standard setting. This should include procedures for the following:

* Proposed method and associated justification (or process for selecting a method)
* Approach to integration of policymakers throughout the process to avoid a standard setting activity that results in cut scores that are rejected, considerably modified, or that policymakers accept but are unhappy with
* Approach to panelist recruitment and selection
* Approach to panelist training
* Approach to integration of external benchmarks
* Approach to considering and addressing potential conflicts of interest of all participants in the process
* Approach to vertical articulation

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Standard Setting Plan

This section is to specify requirements for plan for standard setting. This should include procedures for the following:

* Timeline for each component of the standard setting plan (components might be advance meeting with specific policymakers, meetings with panelists, follow-up meeting with policymakers)
* Outline of the activities for each component and day within component of the standard setting activities, incorporating the foundations described above
* Draft a complete plan with the state
* Review the plan with the state’s technical advisory committee (TAC)
* Revise the plan based on TAC feedback
* Carry out the activities
* Outline for a comprehensive standard setting report (including evaluations)
* Facilitate the work of an independent standard setting evaluator with full and real-time access to meetings, documents, and data
* Present the outcome to the state’s TAC
* Revise the report based on TAC feedback

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. External evaluator

This section is to specify requirements for an observer to participate in reviewing the standard setting plan, observing all standard setting activities, and developing a report evaluating the quality of the process. It should specify a maximum bid amount for this work as a pass-through between the SEA and an external evaluator independent of the vendor to be chosen by the state. It should also specify a requirement to include the external evaluator in any relevant meetings and/or communications.

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Qualifications

This section is for the vendor to show that they have successfully performed similar standard setting work on a similar scale and timeline:

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| Bidder Response |
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1. Reporting
   1. Documentation

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| **Clarifying Comments (to be deleted from the final RFP)** |
| Will help with audits, peer review, and transition from one vendor to another. Should make all other subsections of this section transparent. There should be no vendor black boxes into which the state has difficulty seeing. |

This section is to specify requirements that all reporting procedures/processes/analyses/code must be documented and kept updated with any changes. The documentation must:

* Describe in enough detail to allow replication of processes.
* Be owned by the state
* Be transferred to the next vendor at the transition meeting (the first annual kickoff meeting for the next contract)

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Consideration of audiences

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| **Clarifying Comments (to be deleted from the final RFP)** |
| This has not been a state testing assessment program’s typical strong point. This is typically considered after all the design work is done. This work should be done in conjunction with the design work and should inform the design work. |

This section is for specifying requirements for the reports to be developed and/or revised specifically with the intended audiences in mind. It should refer to the theory of action and associated intended uses of the score reports. It should also include focus groups evaluating the perceived usefulness of existing/proposed score reports, with an evaluation criterion of whether each report answers the “so what” question for its intended audience(s), meaning “so now that I have seen the report, how can I use that information in a productive manner for my purposes?”

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Reporting elements

This section is to specify requirements for the types of information to be included on reports, including such items as scale scores, performance levels, subscores, and growth measures.

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Accounting for error

This section is to specify requirements for accounting for measurement error on score reports, including balancing the need for subscore reporting with minimizing misinterpretation and minimizing perception that subscores are useless.

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Online dynamic reporting system

This section is to specify requirements for an online reporting system. It could the following considerations:

* Roles (e.g., state, regional agency, district administrator, district central office staff, school administrator, teacher, parent, policymakers/general public)
* Privacy (e.g., role-based need to know analysis, FERPA considerations, suppression rules)
* Types of reports (e.g., group summary [state, region, district, school, classroom], roster [school, classroom], individual reports)
* Drilldown from summary to roster to individual reports and vice versa
* Question-based navigation (e.g., Multiple layers of questions regarding “What do you want to know?” and “Who do you want to know it about?” to guide report users to the data that will satisfy their needs).
* Simple navigation system for navigating in and out of question-based approach or drill-down approach
* Interpretive guidance (general help for interpreting a report) and assistance (contextual help for interpreting specific values on a live report)

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Paper reports

This section is to specify requirements for any necessary paper reports (such as parent reports, permanent record reports if needed). Paper reports should be limited to the degree possible to avoid unnecessary cost and delay in reporting.

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Data files

This section is to specify requirements for any data files to be hosted for download by stakeholders. Each type of report should have all associated data elements presented on the report included in one or more data files, but data files may include additional data elements not included on reports. Each data file must be accompanied with a code book and guidance to users on using the data files for analyses.

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Reporting timelines

This section is to specify requirements for reporting timelines.

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Training

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| **Clarifying Comments (to be deleted from the final RFP)** |
| States have typically not done well in this area. This might be combined with data and assessment literacy workshops that address a larger population of tests than statewide standardized tests. |

Use this section to specify requirements for in-person and online training for the various audiences in using dynamic reports (for basic users) and data files (for advanced users). The number of trainings and anticipated numbers of participants should be shared (including historical numbers if available). The training regimen for all roles should include modules on protecting data security and privacy. There should be links to agendas and materials for existing training the state feels is useful, and bidders should be required to provide annotated agendas/outlines for training meetings and/or online training modules. Sample training materials and/or mockups should also be required.

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Qualifications

This section is for bidders to demonstrate their experience with similar reporting work on a similar scale and timeline.

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| Bidder Response |
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1. Test Security
   1. Documentation

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| **Clarifying Comments (to be deleted from the final RFP)** |
| Will help with audits, peer review, and transition from one vendor to another. Should make all other subsections of this section transparent. There should be no vendor black boxes into which the state has difficulty seeing. |

This section is to specify requirements that test security procedures/processes/analyses/code must be documented and kept updated with any changes. The documentation must:

* Describe in enough detail to allow replication of processes by another entity.
* Be owned by the state
* Be transferred to the next vendor at the transition meeting (the first annual kickoff meeting for the next contract)

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Procedures and Protocols

This section is for requirements around test security. It should include the following sections:

* Internal vendor/subcontractor security
  + Policies
  + Procedures
  + Audit procedures and timing
  + Security audit reports
* Data security in transit to/from state and/or subcontractors
* Test administration security
  + State statute, regulation, rule, and/or policy that provides authority and/or leverage to protect test security (could be as simple as assumed authority to invalidate scores upon determining they have been compromised)
  + Existing test security policies
  + Need for review and/or improvement of existing test security policies or development of test security policies
  + Existing test security procedures
  + Need for review and/or improvement of existing test security procedures or development of test security procedures
  + Electronic test security monitoring (e.g., monitoring the internet and social media for secure test content)
  + On-site test security monitoring
  + Multi-faceted approach to security
    - Prevention (e.g., visible test security activities, deep item pool, large number of forms, training, policies, manuals)
    - Detection of potential security breaches (including forensic analyses, whistleblower hotlines and/or other reporting mechanisms)
    - Procedures and criteria for evaluation of potential severity (upon detection)
    - Investigation of potential security breaches (should differ by potential severity and should be conducted by qualified investigators)
    - Procedures and criteria for determination of severity upon investigation
    - Procedures for following up on determination of severity (including determination of sanctions if any, and long-term monitoring if appropriate)

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. Qualifications

This section is for bidders to demonstrate their experience with similar test security work on a similar scale and timeline.

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| Bidder Response |
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1. Validation Argument and Peer Review Support

This section is for requirements to assist the state in validating the assessment (system). It should include the following:

* Development of an interpretive argument from the theory of action
* Development of a catalog of validity evidence necessary to support the interpretive argument
* Development of a research agenda to realize the catalog of evidence necessary
* Specific one-time and ongoing research studies to be carried out to satisfy the research agenda
* Link to any existing evidence in support of a sound validity argument
* Detailed proposed outline for a technical report that summarizes all aspects of the program, with the organizing framework being the validity argument
* Annual update to the technical report
* Incorporation of peer review requirements in catalog of necessary validity evidence, research agenda, and technical report.
* Support offered to the state for preparing and following up on peer review submissions

Note that each aspect listed above should have its own bidder response box so that it is clearly addressed in the proposal.

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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1. Communication support

This section is for requirements to assist the state in developing communication plans and materials. I suggest that bidders be required to

* Develop (in conjunction with state policy and communication leadership) a template for a strategic communication plan for use by the state (this should include multiple rounds of requirements gathering, review, and modification)
* Similarly develop a template for a strategic outreach/coalition building plan
* Describe assistance to be provided by the bidder to the state in developing, finalizing, and implementing strategic communication and/or outreach plans
* Describe assistance to be provided by the bidder in developing additional communication resources (e.g., periodic communications that can be derived from the same template, email blasts, listservs, online discussion forums)

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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1. Appropriate communications with state stakeholders

This section is for requirements to describe the appropriate relationships between the SEA, vendor, legislature, governor, state board, and education associations. I recommend at least the following be required:

* Notification at least a week in advance of a meeting between the vendor and/or subcontractors and stakeholders other than the SEA.
* Invitation to any meeting between the vendor/subcontractors and stakeholders other than the SEA.
* Provision of an agenda for the meeting at least 2 business days in advance of the meeting
* Prohibition of direct or indirect lobbying of stakeholders other than the SEA on any issue that may affect a current or future contract without express permission from the SEA.

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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1. State Technical Systems

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| **Clarifying Comments (to be deleted from the final RFP)** |
| Including technical details in this section will likely help bidders develop stronger cost proposals and reduce the need for contract change requests related to IT systems. |

* 1. Existing Systems

This section is for describing aspects of the state’s technical systems that the vendor will need to engage with. I suggest the following be covered:

* Standards
  + Any applicable IT standards adopted by the state
  + Any applicable security standards adopted by the state
* Data systems
  + Systems to be hosted by the bidder on behalf of the state
  + Required integration of vendor and state systems (e.g., for direct data read/write)
* Web applications
  + Existing systems owned or used by the state (including single sign on and/or role-based security log-in)
  + Systems to be hosted by the bidder on behalf of the state
  + Required integration of vendor and state systems (e.g., for passing credentials, seamless navigation from vendor to state systems and vice versa)

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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* 1. System Modifications and New Systems to be Built

This section is for describing any planned modifications to state systems or new state systems. This section should

* Describe in detail intended modifications to existing systems
* Describe in detail intended new system development
* Describe in detail intended timelines for new system development and/or system modifications
* Indicate which new system development will be the responsibility of the bidder
* Indicate which new systems and/or modified systems will be hosted by the bidder, and responsibilities for hosting during system modification.
* Indicate what system modifications will be the responsibility of the bidder
* Indicate responsibility for coordination with any third party vendors that will be responsible for building new systems or modifying existing systems.

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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1. Independent evaluation/replication contractor

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| **Clarifying Comments (to be deleted from the final RFP)** |
| This may appear to be an extraneous requirement. However, it requires a relatively small investment that considerably reduces the likelihood of extremely costly errors. |

This section is for states that desire to incorporate independent evaluation (e.g., of standard setting) and/or independent replication (e.g., of calibration, scaling, and equating) but don’t want to create a separate contract for this work. I recommend that this section specify the following:

* A subcontractor be identified to perform the work
* The subcontractor’s relationship with the primary contractor will be minimal, in that the subcontractor will receive direction solely from the state, and the state will have the sole authority to direct payment be made to the subcontractor.
* The primary contractor will be able to specify an overhead rate for handling flowthrough payment to the subcontractor, but may not delay payment once directed by the state.
* The primary contractor may not give or modify any directions to the subcontractor provided by the state
* Signed guarantee of independence of the subcontractor by both the primary contractor and subcontractor
* Requirements for what services are to be provided by the independent evaluation/replication subcontractor (e.g., independent evaluation of standard setting, replication of item calibration, scaling, and equating procedures).

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements. This Includes Maintaining the Independence of the Independent Evaluator. |
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**Chapter IV: Managing Risk**

1. Conflict of Interest

This section is for addressing conflict of interest. I suggest it cover the following:

* State conflict of interest policies and procedures
* Bidder conflict of interest policies and procedures
* Rules of engagement for bidder communication with state stakeholders and policymakers (see appropriate communication with state stakeholders section above)

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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1. Issue and Risk Management

This section is for sharing requirements for issues (known problem) and risks (potential problems). I recommend that it address the following:

* Software used for issue and risk management
* Procedures and criteria for tracking, prioritizing, and reporting on issues and risks
* Procedures for managing, mitigating, and escalating issues and risks
* Procedures for escalation of issues and risks
* Procedures and requirements for periodically updating SEA staff of issues and risks important for their level of responsibility in the SEA.

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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1. Fiscal Management

This section is for sharing requirements for fiscal management of the contract. I recommend that it address the following:

* Contract changes (no payment unless contract change is approved)
* Certification of satisfactory work completion
  + Internal quality control procedures across all aspects of the contract
  + Certification of completion of internal quality control procedures
  + Joint vendor/client quality assurance/user acceptance procedures across all aspects of the contract
  + Certification of satisfactory completion of quality assurance/user acceptance procedures
* Invoicing criteria (OK to invoice when certification of satisfactory work completion is provided)
* Invoicing procedures (I suggest that this be done by line item to ease audits, to avoid vague invoices, and to ease review and approval of invoices)
* Payment procedures

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| Bidder Response: Describe Proposal for this Section, Including Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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**Chapter V: Terms and Conditions**

1. Penalties

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| **Clarifying Comments (to be deleted from the final RFP)** |
| It is important for the state to have some form of penalties in the contract to address deficient performance, non-performance, or damage caused. At the same time, it is important for the state to consider the cost implications of severe penalties.  The balance the state must strike is a penalty that is sufficiently substantial to be mildly threatening to the contractor if performance is not adequate but not so much as to create a sour relationship, and would be viewed by stakeholders as sufficiently compensatory if the vendor creates a major issue but not so much as to discourage cost-effective bids. |

This section is for describing any penalties associated with defective deliverables, missed timelines, and interruptions to testing.

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| Bidder Response: Describe Commitment to Comply with Requirements |
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1. Bid Evaluation Process

This section is for describing the bid evaluation process. If there is considerable interest in this toolkit, I may develop a model bid evaluation process.

1. <boilerplate sections>

**<Other Chapters as Needed>**

1. <boilerplate sections>
2. <additional custom sections>

**Chapter <last>:** **Cost Proposal**

This chapter is to point the vendor to the “Bidder Instructions for Completing the Cost Proposal Workbook” and the Cost Proposal Workbook.” This section should also notify bidders how pricing will be equalized across bidders in a fair manner. Finally, it should include any necessary boilerplate sections.

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| Bidder Response: Certify Compliance with Principles for Proposal Development and the Use of the Cost Proposal Workbook |
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