

Request for Proposals

**Evaluation of a Pre-Service Performance Assessment Exploratory Pilot and Validation of New
Teacher and Employer Feedback Survey Instruments**

RFP# 15SDE0005



PURPOSE: To conduct an external implementation study of the Connecticut State Department of Education’s exploratory pilot of a pre-service teacher performance assessment and to validate two survey instruments: the New Teacher Feedback Survey and the Employer Feedback Survey

Department Contact:	Amanda B. Turner, Ph. D. Associate Education Consultant
Date Issued:	December 08, 2015
Due Date:	December 31, 2015

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CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

**Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell
Commissioner of Education**

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) is committed to a policy of equal opportunity/affirmative action for all qualified persons. The CSDE does not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of **race, color, religious creed, sex, age, national origin, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability (including, but not limited to, intellectual disability, past or present history of mental disorder, physical disability or learning disability), genetic information, or any other basis prohibited by Connecticut state and/or federal nondiscrimination laws. The CSDE does not unlawfully discriminate in employment and licensing against qualified persons with a prior criminal conviction.** Inquiries regarding the CSDE's nondiscrimination policies should be directed to:

Levy Gillespie
Equal Employment Opportunity Director
State of Connecticut Department of Education
25 Industrial Park Road
Middletown, CT 06457
860-807-2071
Levy.Gillespie@ct.gov

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) is seeking submissions of written proposals, on a competitive basis, from qualified organizations to partner with the CSDE in the formative evaluation of 2015-2016 implementation pilot of a pre-service teacher performance assessment, as well as the validation of a feedback survey instrument for new teachers and their employers.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

At the request of Governor Dannel Malloy, and in response to Special Act 12-3, An Act Concerning Teacher Preparation, the formation of the Educator Preparation Advisory Council (EPAC) was proposed by the Connecticut State Department of Education in order to study issues and make recommendations concerning educator preparation. On March 7, 2012, the Connecticut State Board of Education authorized the Commissioner of Education, together with the President of the Board of Regents for Higher Education (or their designees), to take necessary action to establish EPAC. EPAC's charge is to advise the Connecticut State Board of Education on developing a system for the approval, quality, regulation, and oversight of educator preparation programs— with the goal of:

- Increasing the rigor and quality of teacher and administrator preparation;
- Ensuring educator preparation programs are well-aligned with the needs of Connecticut's schools and districts;
- Establishing higher standards for admittance into teacher and administrator preparation programs; and
- Meeting objectives articulated in the materials presented to the State Board of Education, to include a final report with recommendations for indicators of quality of educator preparation programs and requirements for the use of measures to ensure the competency and effectiveness of teachers and administrators¹.

[Six principles guide EPAC's work](#), and are the framework for the development of policies and regulations related to educator preparation reform. These principles cover the full cycle of educator preparation from program entry through exit and the role of the state, districts and schools in supporting the preparation of effective educators. EPAC reached consensus that these reform principles and the future policy guidelines or regulations should establish parameters but not dictate specifically how preparation programs are designed. Additionally, there should be room for preparation programs to innovate and experiment so long as they attain the goal of producing high-quality graduates who enter the profession and are able to demonstrate success as measured by Connecticut's educator evaluation and support system and other data-informed outcome measures. The re-designed system should ensure continuous improvement of preparation programs and be flexible enough to allow it to grow and change as needs arise or as program effectiveness data dictates.

Facilitated by the CSDE Talent Office, EPAC convened several subcommittees to explore each principle in closer detail. The Assessment Development subcommittee focused on Principle Five, *Program Completion and Candidate Assessment Standards*. This subcommittee reviewed a continuum of educator assessments from pre-service to in-service and identified a lack of a research-based pre-service performance assessment of pedagogical competency. In reviewing the

various research-based pre-service performance assessments publicly available, the subcommittee determined that any assessment(s) identified should go through an implementation pilot before being considered for recommendation of adoption by EPAC to the State Board of Education. Such an implementation pilot must examine the feasibility of a pre-service performance assessment, as well as identify any of the challenges and issues that surface during the course of the pilot.

In addition to reviewing pre-service performance assessments, the Assessment Development Subcommittee and the CSDE Talent Office developed new teacher and employer feedback survey instruments, in line with EPAC Principle Six, *Program Effectiveness and Accountability*. These survey instruments will elicit feedback data from new teachers and their employers relative to the training provided by Connecticut educator preparation programs. Both the *New Teacher Feedback Survey* and *Employer Feedback Survey* are aligned to the [Connecticut Common Core of Teaching Standards](#).

SCOPE OF SERVICES AND SERVICE SPECIFICATIONS

Interested parties may respond with proposals to provide services for either or both of the parts below, each of which is represented individually in the Product and/or Services Specification in the next section.

1. External Evaluation of the 2015-2016 edTPA Implementation Pilot

- A. Develop and facilitate a process to evaluate the implementation of the pre-service teacher performance assessment at each participating educator preparation program (EPP);
- B. Develop a process to collect qualitative and quantitative data to include observations of scorer trainings, focus group interviews, one-on-one interviews, and participant feedback surveys; and
- C. Analyze and present findings to the CSDE and the EPAC Assessment Development subcommittee.

2. Survey Validation

- A. Develop and facilitate a process to validate the *New Teacher Feedback Survey* and the *Employer Feedback Survey*

1. PRODUCT AND/OR SERVICES SPECIFICATIONS REQUIRED FOR PROPOSAL

Please identify clearly which of the following two parts are addressed in the submitted proposal. If submitting for both, please note that Part 4, Organizational Information, identified in the “Submittal Requirements” section below, only needs to be submitted once.

1. External Evaluation of the 2015-2016 edTPA Implementation Pilot:

The provider must work in collaboration with the CSDE Talent Office staff, EPAC members, EPAC assessment development subcommittee members, and educator preparation programs to conduct an implementation study of a pre-service performance assessment to identify the processes and support that were part of the implementation. The pilot consists of public, private, and alternate route EPPs that have developed procedures and support systems for the implementation of the pre-service teacher performance assessment.

Interested parties may respond with proposals of a formative evaluation that includes, but is not limited to the following:

A. Year 1

- a. Identification of the processes and support teacher candidates, faculty, superintendents, cooperating teachers, etc. completed each semester in preparation for completing and administering the pre-service performance assessment;
- b. Identification of the processes and supports teacher candidates completed and/or experienced throughout each semester to prepare for and complete the pre-service performance assessment;
- c. Analysis of individual EPPs' activities that support the pilot;
- d. Analysis of the differences in activities based on student, faculty, superintendents, cooperating teachers;
- e. Presentation and report of the findings to stakeholders; and
- f. Recommendations for future implementation considerations.

2. Validation of Rubrics:

The provider must work in collaboration with CSDE Talent Office staff and other CT stakeholders and partners to conduct validation studies of the *New Teacher Feedback Survey* and the *Employer Feedback Survey* to ensure that each survey instrument is aligned to standards outlined in the *Connecticut Common Core of Teaching Standards*; measures, as accurately as possible, the knowledge, skills and competencies required for effective practice; to determine whether the data elicited by these survey instruments are valid and reliable; and whether the use of these data for program approval purposes is valid. The validation process should include, but not be limited to the following:

- a. Specific questions that will be addressed and the overall approach to the validation study;
- b. A process to engage stakeholders at multiple levels and at various stages of the validation study;
- c. Examination of the properties of key quality measures (e.g., content validity) on survey instruments to determine if these instruments are psychometrically sound;
- d. Validation that the data elicited by these instruments provides information about candidate competency and relative to program effectiveness;
- e. An examination of the clarity, accuracy, absence of bias, and/or appropriateness of the survey items;
- f. Recommendations for future improvements; and
- g. A process for sharing the findings from the validation study with stakeholders.

SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

A selection committee will review and score all proposals. The following information, in addition to the requirements, terms and conditions identified throughout this Request for Proposals (RFP) document, will be considered as part of the selection process and are listed in order of relative importance. Applicants must address each of the items detailed below.

Selection Criteria:

1. Qualifications and Experience

a. Demonstrated Ability to Provide Services: Organization's Experience

Please provide a detailed explanation of the experience you or your organization has to support the CSDE as requested.

b. Demonstrated Ability to Provide Services: Dedicated Staff Working on Project

Please provide a detailed explanation of your experience to support the CSDE, as requested.

2. Methodology

a. Proposed Method of Providing Service

Please provide a detailed explanation of the methodology you will use in order to provide the services requested.

b. Proposed Resources of Providing Services

Please provide a detailed explanation of the resources you will use in order to provide the services requested.

3. Pricing

a. Proposed Pricing

Please provide a detailed budget.

b. Additional Savings and/or Sustainability Plan

Please provide an explanation of additional savings and/or increased revenues and/or logic for how your proposal will be sustainable.

4. Organizational Information

a. Financial Stability

Provide any documentation that supports your organization's past, present, and future financial stability. This may include any financial support up to and including audited financial statements.

b. References

Provide written references that support your professional capabilities.

c. Quality Assurance

Provide a narrative that describes what your organization does to maintain a high quality to its products and services.

d. Appropriate Insurance

A statement that contains a listing of current active business insurance of your organization is sufficient. Certificates of insurance are acceptable, but not required, unless a contract is awarded that specifies this need.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

I. **Contract Period**

The CSDE intends that this contract shall be in effect for a period of two years, beginning on December 31, 2015, and ending June 30, 2017. The CSDE reserves the right to extend this contract for a period up to the full original contract term or parts thereof with mutual consent between both parties.

II. **Quantities and/or Usages**

These are estimated quantities and/or usages only and in no way represent a commitment and/or intent to purchase. Actual quantities may vary and will be identified on individual purchase orders issued by the requesting state entity.

III. **Contract Award**

The CSDE reserves the right to award this Contract in a manner deemed to be in the best interest of the State and may include, but not be limited to:

- A. by item, group of items or in its entirety;
- B. geographic location to adequately service the entire State of Connecticut in the best possible manner; or
- C. multiple vendor awards.

IV. **Stability of Proposed Prices**

Any price offerings from proposers must be valid for a period of 120 days from the due date of the proposals.

V. **Amendment or Cancellation of the RFP**

The CSDE reserves the right to cancel, amend, modify, or otherwise change this RFP at any time if it deems it to be in the best interest of the State to do so.

VI. **Proposal Modifications**

No additions or changes to any proposal will be allowed after the proposal due date, unless such modification is specifically requested by the CSDE. The CSDE, at its option, may seek proposer retraction and/or clarification of any discrepancy or contradiction found during its review of proposals.

VII. **Proposer Presentation of Supporting Evidence**

Proposers must be prepared to provide any evidence of experience, performance, ability, and/or financial surety that the CSDE deems to be necessary or appropriate to establish fully the performance capabilities represented in their proposals.

VIII. **Proposer Demonstration of Proposed Services and or Products**

At the discretion of the CSDE, proposers must be able to confirm their ability to provide all proposed services. Any required confirmation must be provided at a site approved by the CSDE and without cost to the State.

IX. Erroneous Awards

The CSDE reserves the right to correct inaccurate awards. This may include, in extreme circumstances, revoking the awarding of a contract already made to a proposer and subsequently awarding the contract to another proposer. Such action on the part of the CSDE shall not constitute a breach of contract on the part of the CSDE since the contract with the initial proposer is deemed to be void and of no effect as if no contract ever existed between the CSDE and such proposer.

X. Proposal Expenses

Proposers are responsible for all costs and expenses incurred in the preparation of proposals and for any subsequent work on the proposal that is required by the CSDE.

XI. Ownership of Proposals

All proposals shall become the sole property of the State and will not be returned.

XII. Ownership of Subsequent Products

Any product, whether acceptable or unacceptable, developed under a contract awarded as a result of this RFP shall be the sole property of the State unless otherwise stated in the contract.

XIII. Oral Agreement or Arrangements

Any alleged oral agreements or arrangements made by proposers with any state agency or employee will be disregarded in any state proposal evaluation or associated award.

XIV. Subcontractors

The CSDE must approve any and all subcontractors utilized by the successful proposer prior to any such subcontractor commencing any work. Proposers acknowledge by the act of submitting a proposal that any work provided under the contract is work conducted on behalf of the State and that the Commissioner of Education or her designee may communicate directly with any subcontractor as the State deems to be necessary or appropriate. It is also understood that the successful proposer shall be responsible for all payment of fees charged by the subcontractor(s). The successful proposer shall provide a performance evaluation of any subcontractor promptly to the CSDE upon request. The successful proposer must provide the majority of services described in the specifications.

XV. Freedom of Information Act

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

CONTRACT

This RFP is not a contract and, alone, shall not be interpreted as such. Rather, this RFP only serves as the instrument through which proposals are solicited. The State will pursue negotiations with the highest scoring proposal. If, for some reason, the CSDE and the initial proposer fail to reach consensus on the issues relative to a contract, then the CSDE may commence contract negotiations with other proposers. The CSDE may decide at any time to start the RFP process again. Thereafter, proposers will be required to sign a formal contract. The contract may include a liquidated damages clause at the discretion of the State.

INSTRUCTIONS TO BIDDERS

I. Proposal Schedule

RELEASE OF RFP	December 8, 2015
BIDDER'S CONFERENCE	Not Applicable
RECEIPT OF QUESTIONS FROM PROSPECTIVE VENDORS	December 16, 2015
ANSWER TO QUESTIONS WILL BE POSTED AS AN ADDENDUM	December 18, 2015
PROPOSAL DUE DATE	December 31, 2015

During the period from your receipt of this RFP, and until a contract is awarded, your organization shall not contact any employees of the State of Connecticut for additional information, except in writing, using the following address.

Connecticut State Department of Education
Implementation Study of Exploratory Pilot and Survey Validation
165 Capitol Avenue, Room 231
Hartford, CT 06106

II. Bidder Information

Company/Vendor _____

Bidder's Address _____

Bidder's Representative _____

Telephone Number(s) _____

Email Address _____

III. Bidder Submission

If submitting a proposal for Part 2, External Evaluation of the 2015-2016 edTPA Implementation Pilot, please submit a proposal for all services described in Section 1, Part 1 of this RFP. If submitting a proposal for Part 2, Survey Validation, please submit one proposal for all services described in Section 1, Part 2 of this RFP. If submitting a proposal for both Parts 1 and 2, please submit one proposal for all services described in the scope of services and service specifications sections of the RFP.

IV. Questions

Questions for the purpose of clarifying the RFP must be submitted in writing and must be received by 4:00 p.m. on December 16, 2015. Answers to questions received will be posted as an Addendum on December 18, 2015, on the CSDE website at <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2683&Q=320346#Talent>. Questions must be emailed to Amanda Turner, CSDE Talent Office, amanda.turner@ct.gov

V. Proposals

Proposals must include the following:

1. Submit one (1) proposal that bears the original signature of the applicant plus five (5) copies. All proposals submitted become the property of the CSDE and part of the public domain.
2. Proposals must follow the guidelines that are contained in this document and its appendices.
3. **Proposals must be received at the address below by:
4:00 p.m., Thursday, December 31, 2015.**

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

The mailing and delivery address is:

Connecticut State Department of Education
165 Capitol Avenue, Room 231
Hartford, CT 06106
Attn: Amanda B. Turner

4. Signed Statement of Assurances (Appendix A)

APPENDIX A: STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES

Statement of Assurances

PROJECT: Evaluation of a Pre-service Performance Assessment Exploratory Pilot

THE APPLICANT, _____, HEREBY ASSURES THAT:
(Insert Name)

1. The applicant has the necessary legal authority to submit a proposal in response to this RFP and to contract for the provision of the services described therein.
2. The filing of this application has been authorized by the applicant's governing body, and the undersigned official has been duly authorized to file this application for and on behalf of said applicant, and otherwise to act as the authorized representative of the applicant in connection with this application.
3. The activities and services for which assistance is sought under this RFP will be administered by or under the supervision and control of the applicant.
4. The project will be operated in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws and in compliance with the regulations and other policies and administrative directives of the Connecticut State Board of Education and the State Department of Education; Fiscal control and accounting procedures will be used to ensure proper disbursement of all funds awarded.
5. The applicant will submit a final project report (within 60 days of the project completion) and such other reports, as specified, to the State Department of Education, including information relating to the project records and access thereto as the State Department of Education may find necessary;
6. The Connecticut State Department of Education reserves the exclusive right to use and grant the right to use and/or publish any part or parts of any summary, abstract, reports, publications, records, and materials resulting from this project;
7. The applicant will protect and save harmless the State Board of Education from financial loss and expense, including fees and legal fees and costs, if any, arising out of any breach of the duties, in whole or in part, described in the application;
8. At the conclusion of the contract period, the applicant will provide for an independent audit report acceptable to the CSDE in accordance with Sections 7-394a and 7-396a of the Connecticut General Statutes, and the applicant shall return to the CSDE any monies not expended in accordance with the approved program/operation budget as determined by audit;

9. Required Contract Language:

(1) For the purposes of this section, "Commission" means the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities. For the purposes of this section, "minority business enterprise" means any small contractor or supplier of materials fifty-one percent or more of the capitol stock, if any, or assets of which is owned by a person or persons: (a) who are active in the daily affairs of the enterprise, (b) who have the power to direct the management and policies of the enterprise and (c) who are members of a minority, as such term is defined in subsection (a) of Connecticut General Statutes Section 32-9n; and "good faith" means that the degree of diligence which a reasonable person would exercise in the performance of legal duties and obligations. "Good faith efforts" shall include, but shall not be limited to, those reasonable initial efforts necessary to comply with statutory or regulatory requirements and additional or substituted efforts when it is determined that such initial efforts will not be sufficient to comply with such requirements. For the purposes of this section, "sexual orientation" means having a preference for heterosexuality, homosexuality or bisexuality, having a history of such preference or being identified with such preference, but excludes any behavior which constitutes a violation of part VI of chapter 952 of the general statutes.

(2) (a) The contractor agrees and warrants that in the performance of the contract such contractor will not discriminate or permit discrimination against any person or group of persons on the grounds of race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, sex, mental retardation or physical disability, including, but not limited to, blindness, unless it is shown by such contractor that such disability prevents performance of the work involved, in any manner prohibited by the laws of the United States or the State of Connecticut. If the contract is for a public works project, the contractor agrees and 20 warrants that he will make good faith efforts to employ minority business enterprises as subcontractors and suppliers of materials on such project. The contractor further agrees to take affirmative action to insure that applicants with job related qualifications are employed and that employees are treated when employed without regard to their race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, sex, mental retardation, or physical disability, including, but not limited to, blindness, unless it is shown by the contractor that such disability prevents performance of the work involved; (b) the contractor agrees, in all solicitations or advertisements for employees placed by or on behalf of the contractor, to state that it is an "affirmative action-equal opportunity employer" in accordance with regulations adopted by the commission; (c) the contractor agrees to provide each labor union or representative of workers with which such contractor has a collective bargaining agreement or other contract or understanding and each contractor with which such contractor has a contract or understanding, a notice to be provided by the commission, advising the labor union or worker's representative of the contractor's commitments under this section and to post copies of the notice in conspicuous places available to employees and applicants for employment; (d) the contractor agrees to comply with each provision of this section and Connecticut General Statutes Sections 4a-62, 32-9e, 46a and 46a-68b to 46a-68k, inclusive and with each regulation or relevant order issued by said commission pursuant to said sections; (e) the contractor agrees to provide the commission on human rights and opportunities with such information requested by the commission, and permit access to pertinent books, records, and accounts, concerning the employment practices and procedures of the contractor as related to the provisions of this section and section 46a-56.

(3) Determination of the contractor's good faith efforts shall include but shall not be limited to the following factors: the contractor's employment and subcontracting policies, patterns and practices; affirmative advertising; recruitment and training; technical assistance activities and such other reasonable activities or efforts as the commission may prescribe that are designed to ensure the participation of minority business enterprises in public works projects.

(4) The contractor shall develop and maintain adequate documentation, in a manner prescribed by the commission, of its good faith efforts.

(5) The contractor shall include the provisions of subsection (2) of this section in every subcontract or purchase order entered into in order to fulfill any obligation of a contract with the state and such provisions shall be binding in a subcontractor, contractor or manufacturer unless exempted by regulations or orders of the commission. The contractor shall take such action with respect to any such subcontract or purchase order as the commission may direct as a means of reinforcing such provisions including sanctions for noncompliance in accordance with this section and Connecticut General Statutes Sections 4a-62, 32-9e, 46a-56 and 46a-68b to 46a-68k, inclusive; provided if such contractor becomes involved in, or is threatened with litigation with a subcontractor or contractor as a result of such direction by the commission, the contractor may request the State of Connecticut to enter into any such litigation or negotiation prior thereto to protect the interests of the state and the state may so enter.

(6) The contractor agrees to comply with the regulations referred to in this section as the term of this contract and any amendments thereto as they exist on the date of the contract and as they may be adopted or amended from time to time during the term of this contract and any amendments thereto.

(7) (a) The contractor agrees and warrants that in the performance of the contract such contractor will not discriminate or permit discrimination against any person or group of persons on the grounds of sexual orientation, in any manner prohibited by the laws of the United States or the State of Connecticut, and that employees are treated, when employed, without regard to their sexual orientation; (b) the contractor agrees to provide each labor union or representative of workers with which such contractor has a collective bargaining agreement or other contract or understanding and each contractor with which such contractor has a contract or understanding, a notice to be provided by the commission on human rights and opportunities advising the labor union or workers' representative of the contractor's commitments under this section, and to post copies of the notice in conspicuous places available to employees and applicants for employment; (c) the contractor agrees to comply with each provision of this section and with each regulation or relevant order issued by said commission pursuant to section 46a-56 of the Connecticut General Statutes; (d) the contractor agrees to provide the commission on human rights and opportunities with such information requested by the commission and permit access to pertinent books, records and accounts, concerning employment practices and procedures of the contractor which related to the provisions of this section and section 46a-56 of the general statutes.

(8) The contractor shall include the provisions of subsection (7) of this section in every subcontract or purchase order entered into in order to fulfill any obligation of a contract with the state and such provisions shall be binding on a subcontractor, contractor, or manufacturer unless exempted by regulations and orders of the commission. The contractor shall take such action with respect to any such subcontract or purchase order as the commission may direct as

a means of enforcing such provisions including sanctions for noncompliance in accordance with section

46a-56 of the general statutes; provided, if such contractor or contractor becomes involved in, or is threatened with, litigation with a subcontractor or contractor as a result of such direction by the commission, the contractor may request the State of Connecticut to enter into any such litigation or negotiation prior thereto to protect the interests of the state and the state may so enter.

The signature of the authorized official on the Statement of Assurances Signature Page indicates the intent to comply with the provisions referenced in each section. Assurances not agreed to by the authorized official must be identified on a separate sheet with a rationale for the disagreement.

I, the undersigned authorized official, hereby certify that these assurances shall be fully implemented.

Signature _____

Name (typed) _____

Title (typed) _____

Name of Organization _____

Date _____