



Queen Anne's County Public Schools

Preparing World-Class Students Through Everyday Excellence

ADDENDUM NO. 1

To: All Prospective Offerors
QACPS RFP #2022-01

From: Jacy Earls, Finance Clerk
Office of Purchasing
Queen Anne's County Public Schools

Date: July 28, 2021

*This addendum forms a part of the Contract Documents and modifies portions of the original Request for Proposal for **Website Redesign & Branding Proposal** advertised July 20, 2021 as noted below. Acknowledge receipt of this Addendum in the space provided on the Signature Sheet (Appendix I). Failure to do so may subject the Vendor to disqualification. This addendum clarifies and modifies this RFP to-date. It is the Vendor's responsibility to forward copies of this Addendum to all of his sub-vendors or manufacturers who may be affected by it. It is issued to provide information to all prospective offerors.*

This Addendum consists of 7 pages.

Question 1: Is it possible to have a technical overview of current QACPS website?

Answer: We are currently hosted using Blackboard Web Community Manager. Blackboard Web Community Manager (WCM) is a low-maintenance content management system (CMS) for our district and 14 school websites. Our website is made up of a district website and 14 school websites with an organized collection of subpages. Each page could contain one or more apps. Each app does something different: the app which is the welcome page, the content app offers the flexibility of adding text, bullets, images and links, the image app contains an image and the calendar app is only a calendar. Once someone is logged in to the Site Manager, they can change your page's layout and add or change the apps they are using but we centrally apply a theme to each top level site to keep the look consistent. More information can be found here:
https://help.blackboard.com/Web_Community_Manager
https://help.blackboard.com/Web_Community_Manager/Administrator/Get_Started/About_WCM

Question 2: When redesigning the existing QACPS website and school websites, are you looking for a new content management system as well?

Answer: We are considering all options.

Question 3: Do you want to stay with your current hosting provider? Or move to a new cloud based hosting service?

Answer: We are looking for the best solution each bidder can provide even if that means moving to a new cloud based hosting service.

Question 4: What is the budget for this project?

Answer: TBD

Question 5: Can we use open source software such as Drupal or Concrete CMS?

Answer: As long as the CMS can meet our needs and be secure we are open to using open source software for this project.

Question 6: Are there any advantages of being a Maryland State Certified Minority Business Enterprise?

Answer: Please check with your accountant/lawyer.

Question 7: Per Tab I References on page 21 of the RFP which states, “provide a minimum of three (3) reference letters from clients that the Offeror is currently providing school-to-public web site services that are similar in size and scope to this RFP.” Is this a hard requirement to have direct reference experience providing school to public website services, or can vendors substitute this with similar website services that are not for public schools?

Answer: Yes, vendors can substitute this with similar website services that are not for public schools.

Question 8: Whether companies from Outside USA can apply for this? (like, from India or Canada)

Answer: Yes

Question 9: Whether we need to come over there [USA] for meetings?

Answer: Might be required.

Question 10: Can we perform the tasks (related to RFP) outside USA? (like, from India or Canada)

Answer: Yes

Question 11: Can we submit the proposals via email?

Answer: Per page 5 of the RFP, “QACPS shall not accept any facsimile transmission or electronic submission to QACPS purchasing agents, representatives or employees as meeting the requirement of the sealed proposal. A facsimile or electronic document shall not be considered a valid response to the solicitation.”

Question 12: Can you share any budgetary information about this project with us, is there any assigned budget for this project? Or do you have a range price that we can know so we can have a better idea of the project needs.

Answer: TBD

Question 13: Do you have any CMS preference for this project like Open Source, WordPress, Drupal? Or are you open to suggestions?

Answer: No preference. We would like to remain open to see what options are available by each.

Question 14: Is there any addendum release for this project, or any changes on the due dates?

Answer: This document is Addendum #1. There is no change to the due date of the RFP at this time.

Question 15: Have you received any other questions from vendors that you may share with us?

Answer: All questions answered will be shared via addenda. Addenda notification will be posted to eMaryland Marketplace Advantage and QACPS website.

Question 16: What is the budget target (or not-to-exceed amount) you have identified for this project?

Answer: TBD

Question 17: Do you plan to integrate e-commerce functionality? (e.g., Payment forms, donates, products, tickets)

Answer: We don't currently have any e-commerce functionality on our district or school webpages.

Question 18: We recommend using Shopify. Do you have another preference?

Answer: We prefer our digital tools to be based in the United States or at least have a branch in the United States that is bound by US law.

Question 19: When it comes to the integration of new technologies, should we recommend or provide a list of any new technologies?

Answer: Yes

Question 20: Do you have any tools such as Salesforce, Eventbrite, MailChimp? Or can you provide a list of the current tools that may need to be integrated into the new website.

Answer: We don't use Salesforce, Eventbrite or Mailchimp. The only "tool" that we are aware of is syncing a Google calendar and/or providing a view to a Google calendar or Google sheet on our website. Most schools display the weekly calendar events on their main page.

Question 21: Are there any site examples that you would want the design to be based on?

Answer: <https://www.carolineschools.org/>

Question 22: Due to the limited time to submit this by August 3rd, would it be ok to provide client references with name, number, email, and description of service instead of an official reference on letterhead? It may be difficult to obtain these letters in time to submit as many are out of the office at this time.

Answer: Yes, that is fine.

Question 23: Are okay with out of state vendors submitting a response to your RFP?

Answer: Yes

Question 24: Can you please clarify per below requirement. If vendors need to provide template samples with their proposal submittals or just part of contract deliverables?

TAB F: TECHNICAL RESPONSE TO RFP SCOPE OF WORK
(Weighted Value 20%)

Offeror shall provide a detailed plan, including approach and methodology of how the requirements set forth in the Requirements/Scope of Work will be addressed.

Offeror must provide a portfolio of design templates.

Answer: A portfolio of design templates is a good way to showcase your work but we will accept this as part of the contract deliverables.

Question 25: What made you decide it was time for a new website/rebrand?

Answer: New leadership changes.

Question 26: Can you confirm you would like to go through a logo redesign process for 15 logos?

Answer: Yes, one for the district and then the 14 schools.

Question 27: What would you want included as “rebranding” for your district and the 14 schools? Some examples of what districts typically envision include: new logo; style guide; brand book; brand voice; social media playbook; brand identity with collateral; etc. Can you provide a more detailed scope of services on this part?

Answer: Open to all ideas.

Question 28: In point 13 of the scope of services, you mentioned that you would like us to migrate your existing websites during the 2021-22 school year. Do you have a set launch date, or would you like to wait until the completion of the 2021-22 school year?

Answer: Nothing tentative. Open to suggestions with the selected vendor.

Question 29: We noticed in section 3.5, you have the Board of Education approving the proposal the day after the proposals are due. In our experience, there are typically 5 proposals submitted per such RFPs, and each proposal can run to be about 100 pages long, typically requiring more time for review, interviews and selection. With that in mind, your decision timeframe seems very short. Is there a specific need for a short turnaround?

Answer: New leadership change and they want the project to begin shortly. This is a prioritized need for the district.

Question 30: Is there a Learning Management System used by the school system?

Answer: Schoology

Question 31: Are they any Powerschool integration beyond a link to the portal needed?

Answer: No

Question 32: How many staff members will be editing the site?

Answer: District webmaster, supervisors for each of their content area portions of the district website, school webmaster for their respective school. Each teacher would have their own subpage at their respective school.

Question 33: Who will be the decision makers for the site?

Answer: The Communications Specialist and Executive Team.

Question 34: Are you using Blackboard for your current content management system?

Answer: Yes

Question 35: At the bottom of the home page on www.qacps.org, there is a sign-in button. What private functionality exists behind the login?

Answer: Gives the user the ability to edit the pages they have been assigned to. If they do register and sign in, they may have access to additional features and information. See question 40.

Question 36: Regarding "Offeror must provide a portfolio of design templates," Does this mean that bidders must produce design comps as part of the proposal submission?

Answer: We will waive this requirement.

Question 37: While we understand the desired subdomain approach for individual schools with the new website, we have found other existing subdomains such as qacpsprogressreports.qacps.org, iep.qacps.org, helpdesk.qacps.org. Can we consider these subdomains out of scope for this project?

Answer: Yes

Question 38: A Google search for site:www.qacps.org indicates approximately 5,940 results. Does this sound accurate? Can you elaborate on how many pages you envision needing to be migrated to the new website?

Answer: Around 115-120 for the district webpage and around 30-80 per school (14). It is possible to have one for each teacher (500-600).

Question 39: Do you have a preferred content management system for the new site? Would you be open to a multi-site instance of the open-source Drupal platform for the new site?

Answer: Open

Question 40: The current website(s) have a login component. Is this just for the staff, or are students and/or parents expected to be able to log in to the new site?

Answer: As a registered user, you can access details specific to you and register for calendar events or see an activity stream that displays information personalized for them based on their selections, called subscriptions. They'll see announcements, blog posts, upcoming events, headlines, and photos from sites they've subscribed to.

Question 41: How many stakeholders will be involved in approving deliverables such as wireframes and designs, and what is your anticipated turn-around time for approvals?

Answer: The Executive Team and Information Technology will be approving deliverables and the turnaround time will be based upon meeting times as well as if we have all the information to make a decision.

Question 42: Is there an established budget for this project? We can work within a wide budget range, but the more clarity we have on this front will help us better provide a tailored budget offering and allow QACPS to make an "apples-to-apples" comparison of proposals more easily.

Answer: No set budget yet.

Question 43: What legacy custom functionality must be brought over to the new website?

Answer: We are not aware of any legacy custom functions.

Question 44: Aside from Active Directory Federated Services, can you describe any other third-party integrations that are expected to be part of this project, as well as the level of integration for each?

Answer: Another we use for other products is Google sign sign-on which is acceptable for this project.

Question 45: Will staff from QACPS and from each school be available to support some of the content migration? This is typically a piece of website redesign efforts that can have an unfavorable impact on the overall project budget and timelines. Also, when staff is involved in supporting content migration efforts, it can also help them be best prepared for how to use the new website prior to launch.

Answer: We could involve our Communications Officer and school Webmasters to help with content migration. We could see them training the schools and then the teachers would take care of migrating their website.

Question 46: For the rebranding aspect of the project, should we assume a rebrand and new logo for QACPS and each of the 14 schools?

Answer: Yes, most likely.

Question 47: Are there any existing brand guidelines, colors, or fonts that need to be adhered to for any of these entities?

Answer: Each current site does have one of their school colors used.

Question 48: From a project timeline perspective, would establishing fonts and colors for each of the schools so that subsequent website design and development can proceed, with logo designs being approved during the website development phase, be an acceptable approach to QACPS?

Answer: Yes

Question 49: Will the approval process for the logos be centralized or distributed among each school?

Answer: Schools will have input.

Question 50: Does QACPS have any recent website user feedback it could provide prior the proposal deadline?

Answer: We are not aware of any website user feedback.

Question 51: Is QACPS OK with continuing to leverage Google Translate for language translation?

Answer: It is what we are currently using and we have not heard of a need for a change.

Question 52: Is a contact form expected to be part of the project? If so, should there be one for QACPS and for each school? Also, if so, please elaborate on whether contact info should be sent any third-party platform or simply by email.

Answer: Not all of the schools use the contact us app. They simply have a subpage with the school information, principal name, phone number, fax number and a contact email address.

Question 53: Because of summer vacations and scheduling, would it be possible to send letters of recommendation electronically by the August 3rd 11 a.m. due date?

Answer: Yes

Question 54: Is there a target launch date, and if so, what is driving that date? Also are there any blackout periods we should factor into a project plan as it relates to meetings and QACPS approvals of deliverables?

Answer: No targeted launch date. We want to do this right. We anticipate the District Website to be completed first then the individual schools. No planned blackout periods.

Question 55: Given that we have experience with all aspects of this RFP from a strategy, user experience, design, and development perspective, would letters of recommendation that came from an organization other than school-to-public web site be acceptable?

Answer: Yes

*** END OF ADDENDUM NO. 1 ***