

RFP #19-003, RESCORING AUDIT - GRADES 3-8 ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (ELA)
AND MATHEMATICS TESTS QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Questions and Answers Summary – Round 1

Please note: below are answers to most questions received. Additional answers to questions related to the State of New York Agreement will be posted next week.

FISCAL

Q1. Page 16 of the RFP and the “ELA Math Years 1-5” tab of the cost proposal file both indicate that the term of the first year is expected to begin on March 1, 2019, but the “Summary” tab of the cost proposal file indicates January 1, 2019 as the expected start date...please clarify? If the “Summary” tab is in error, should bidders correct the date, or will NYSED release an updated Cost Proposal file?

Answer: The date written on the “Summary” tab is an error. A corrected file has been posted.

Q2. We are responding to the above referenced RFP. I do not see Appendix B: Budget or Appendix C: Payment and Reporting Schedule included in the RFP or posted on the NYSED website. Are these files or links to files that should be included with the RFP?

Answer: The Appendix B: Budget and Appendix C: Payment and Reporting Schedule will be created after award. These appendices are not a part of the RFP.

M/WBE

Q3. What is the best way to express my interest in serving as the WBE to meet the subcontracting goal?

Answer: Please contact MWBE@nysed.gov.

PROGRAM

Q4. The following documents must be submitted in separate, sealed envelopes...**CD ROM** containing the technical, cost, submission and M/WBE proposals (page 2). Will NYSED accept a flash drive instead of a CD-ROM?

Answer: Yes.

Q5. CD-ROM containing the technical, cost, submission and M/WBE proposals submitted, **using Microsoft Office**. (page 2). Will NYSED accept all the required forms (Submission Documents and M/WBE Documents) to be submitted as PDF rather than MS Office?

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Answer: Forms requiring signature (Submission Documents and M/WBE Documents) may be submitted as a PDF file. The technical and cost proposals should be submitted in MS Office (Word and Excel).

Q6. The contractor must include information on where the scoring will occur, the staffing arrangements at the scoring site(s), and how the CBT student response will be presented. (page 9). Would NYSED be open to vendors proposing scoring models other than site-based?

Answer: No

Q7. The contractor is responsible for responding to questions from any consortium leader regarding the scoring consortium audit report for at least six weeks after the reports are received by the scoring consortium leaders. (page 10). Please provide the historical numbers of questions about the scoring consortium audit report from consortium leaders, to allow contractor to plan for appropriate levels of staffing.

Answer: The 2019 administration of the NYS Grades 3-8 Tests will mark the first year that scoring consortium leaders will be provided with scoring consortium audit reports. Consequently, we are not able to provide historical background regarding the number of questions about the audit reports that the audit contractor will most likely receive from scoring consortium leaders.

Q8. Within four months of the receipt of student responses, the contractor must submit to NYSED electronic data files containing the local score and the audit rescore for each student and item. (page 10). We are expecting that the images of the student responses will be in a separate file from the local score. Given that assumption, how will the local score be provided to the audit contractor and will there be a unique identifier to link the response and local score?

Answer: For the 2017 and 2018 test administrations, the student responses were provided to the scoring audit contractor as JPEG image files. These were accompanied by CSV index files. The CSV file is used by the scoring audit contractor to associate the file name for each JPEG image to the student through the unique New York State Student Identification System (NYSSIS) ID number and the student's school code number. The local scores will be provided to the scoring audit contractor by NYSED in a file that includes the student's NYSSIS ID, the student's school information, and the local score for each of the student's responses. For the future, the test development contractor and the scoring audit contractor will work together to find a mutually agreeable file layout for the index files.

Q9. Any documents, web-based information and applications development, or programming delivered pursuant to the contract or procurement will comply with New York State Education Department IT Policy NYSED-WEBACC-001...are accessible to

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persons with disabilities. (page 15). Does the Technical Report for the scoring audit need to be tagged to meet the stated policy?

Answer: Yes

Q10. Requirements of Education, Section 2-d: Bidders should complete items #3 and #6 of the Appendix S-1 and return with their technical proposal for review. (page 15). In the Appendix S-1 form, it appears that bidders should complete items #2 and #5 rather than #3 and #6. Is that correct?

Answer: The form posted with the RFP had a numbering error and will be reposted. Bidders must complete the box identifying subcontractors (originally part of item #2, but now identified as #3) and the box identifying where and how data will be stored and protected (originally called #5, but now #6).

Q11. Contract Period...The contract resulting from this RFP will have a term of five years, anticipated to begin March 1, 2019 and to end February 29, 2024. (page 16). The RFP states a contract start date of March 1, 2019. We presume if there is a delay in contract execution which impacts the delivery schedule, the contractor will not be held in breach for the delayed deliverables and we further presume NYSED would collaborate with the contractor to reach revised mutually agreeable delivery dates. Is this correct? If not, please explain.

Answer: This is correct.

Q12. Although there is no provision in the RFP for delays in performance as a result of a force majeure event (events beyond the contractor's reasonable control including without limitation, acts of God; acts or omissions of governmental authorities or NYSED or any third party; strikes, lockouts or other industrial disturbances; acts of public enemies; wars; blockades; riots; civil disturbances; epidemics; floods; hurricanes; tornadoes; and any other similar acts, events, or omissions), does the NYSED acknowledge that such delays in performance would not constitute a breach of the contract?

Answer: Yes.

Q13. Approximately when (month/date) will the vendor receive responses for rescoring? (page 9)

Answer: The contractor will most likely receive student responses in July or August of each year.

Q14. What format and approximate file size are the images of the student responses? Will there be multiple images per student response? (page 9)

Answer: For the 2017 and 2018 test administrations, the student responses were provided to the scoring audit contractor as JPEG image files. There will be only

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one image file for each student response. For the future, the test development contractor and the scoring audit contractor will work together to find mutually agreeable file sizes but there will continue to be a single image for each response.

Q15. Does rescoring involve single readings only? (page 9)

Answer: The procedures used for rescoring should be similar to the procedures used for the local scoring of the operational computer-based tests. The audit rescoring should entail single readings of each student response except for the conducting of read-behinds. Questions should be assigned to scorers such that each scorer scores no more than roughly 1/3 of the constructed-response questions on the test. The read-behind process for this testing program is described on page 45 of the [School Administrator's Manual](#) and on pages 6 and 22 of the [Scoring Leader Handbook](#).

Q16. What are the qualifying standards for raters? (page 9)

Answer: As stated on pages 21-22 of the RFP, "Raters hired by the contractor should have at least a bachelor's degree AND a minimum of 15 college credits in the subject area of the test being rescored or teacher certification from any state to teach the subject area of the test being rescored. For raters rescoring elementary-level tests (Grades 3-6), teacher certification in elementary education may be substituted for up to six of the required college credits in the subject area."

Q17. Can NYSED provide a sense of the number of emails/calls/questions expected from consortium leaders regarding the scoring consortium audit report? (page 10)

Answer: The 2019 administration of the NYS Grades 3-8 Tests will mark the first year that scoring consortium leaders will be provided with scoring consortium audit reports. Consequently, we are not able to provide historical background regarding the number of questions about the reports that the audit contractor will most likely receive from scoring consortia leaders.

Q18. Are there required hours during which the contractor must be available to address questions related to the consortium audit reports? (page 10)

Answer: No. However, inquiries should be responded to within 72 hours.

Q19. Is the expectation that the current test contractor will upload student response images to the selected vendor's SFTP site? (page 11)

Answer: Yes

Q20. If the current test delivery vendor changes during the time of this contract, will the data and images delivery format and delivery mechanism remain the same for the audit vendor?

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Answer: If the current test delivery vendor changes, the new test delivery vendor and the audit scoring vendor will work together to find mutually agreeable data and image formats and delivery mechanism.

Q21. Will the vendor be expected to send out notification memos to schools and districts that are being sampled? Or would a memo need to go out to the Computer Based Scoring Consortia?

Answer: No. It will not be necessary for the scoring audit contractor to notify school districts or scoring consortium leaders to advise them that they are included in the audit.

Q22. Will any ancillary materials need to be created to accompany the Consortium Reports? Interp. Guides, memos, etc.

Answer: Yes. The scoring audit contractor will need to prepare and provide a cover letter to accompany each consortium report. NYSED will collaborate with the scoring audit contractor on the content and wording of this cover letter.

Q23. How will the information about which students' tests were scored by which scoring consortium be communicated to the rescore audit vendor? (page 10)

Answer: This information will be provided to the scoring audit contractor by NYSED within the file that includes local scores.

Q24. "The contractor will be responsible for rescoring constructed response items from ELA and Mathematics Tests in Grades 3-8, entered by students on computer." (page 8). Will the student responses provided be primarily text based or images of responses?

Answer: JPEG image files of student responses will be provided to the audit scoring contractor.

Q25. "The contractor's work plan must provide the logistical details of how the contractor will receive the images for selected student computer-based constructed-responses from NYSED's 3-8 ELA and Mathematics test development contractor and prepare all computer-based student responses for rescoring." (page 9). Can NYSED clarify the file format of how the majority of responses will be received?

Answer: For the 2017 and 2018 test administrations, the student responses were provided to the scoring audit contractor as JPEG image files. These were accompanied by CSV index files. The CSV file is used by the scoring audit contractor to associate the file name for each JPEG image to the student through the unique New York State Student Identification System (NYSSIS) ID number and the student's school code number. For the future, the test development contractor

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and the scoring audit contractor will work together to find mutually agreeable file sizes and the layouts for the index files.

Q26. “The contractor must include information on where the rescoring will occur, the staffing arrangements at the **scoring site(s)**, and how CBT student responses will be presented.” (page 9). Is NYSED open to proposals employing a distributed scoring model where no scoring site, and the associated cost thereof, is present?

Answer: No.

Q29. “Raters hired by the contractor should have at least a bachelor’s degree AND a minimum of 15 college credits in the subject area of the test being rescored or teacher certification from any state to teach the subject area of the test being rescored.” (page 9). Is NYSED open to a hiring plan that allows the hiring of raters with documented, previous scoring experience in a subject area in lieu of some of the college credits in said subject area?

Answer: No.