

**Questions from Potential Bidders and Responses from the CT State Department of Education (CSDE) for the DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONNECTICUT MASTERY TEST (CMT) AND CONNECTICUT ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE TEST (CAPT) IN SCIENCE RFP# 15SDE0001-RFP**

<b>PART 1 OVERVIEW</b>		
<b>Section</b>	<b>Questions from Potential Bidder</b>	<b>Responses from CSDE</b>
Background and Appendix B	<p>Page 5 of the solicitation states “In addition to the large-scale external monitoring assessments (CMT and CAPT Science), the state is interested in the development of local classroom assessments to fully assess the breadth and depth of NGSS and to provide educators with timely, actionable feedback to influence curriculum and instruction.” Appendix B, Table 2 includes Local Classroom Assessments in the form of Interim Assessments, Curriculum Embedded Performance Assessment Tasks, and Formative Assessment Tools and Resources. Does the scope of this RFP include procurement of the “local classroom assessments”? If not, will that be a separate, future procurement process?</p> <p>References within the RFP indicate that a decision has not been finalized concerning the item development model—the scope of the item development expected under this contract in relation to Connecticut’s level of participation in the CCSSO Science Assessment Item Collaborative. For costing purposes, what level of effort should bidders assume for item development independent of the collaborative and what level of effort should bidders assume for working in conjunction with the collaborative?</p>	<p>Items aligned to the new science standards/NGSS for the large-scale summative and local classroom interim assessments would be developed and/or procured by the CMT and CAPT Science contractor and the CCSSO Science Assessment Item Collaborative (assuming CT joins Phase II of this project). Due to the lower stakes and less secure nature of the local classroom interim assessments, items may also come from other sources such as other states or projects willing to openly share. The method(s) of developing or procuring items under the CCSSO Collaborative have not yet been determined, but should be finalized by the start of this contract. For costing purposes, assume that 50% of the needed items would come from each source. Numbers of items will depend on various factors including the test design and types of items developed (both yet to be determined). Bidders should assume that pilot testing of items aligned to new science standards/NGSS at each tested grade (5, 8 and 10 or 11) will occur each year under this contract. This would include a variety of item types from more traditional multiple-choice and constructed response items to more innovative technology-enhanced items (e.g., <a href="#">Next Generation Science Assessment</a>). For costing purposes, assume that approximately 100-150 items would be piloted at each tested grade per year for the summative assessment. Similar levels of development/procurement and piloting would be needed for interim classroom assessments and should be included as separate pricing. Formative assessment resources are not asked for in this RFP.</p>
Background	<p>The RFP states that “Live test forms for the CMT Science (Grade 5 and 8) currently exist”. Could the CSDE confirm to proposers: How many test forms are available at each grade level? How many of these test forms are administered each year (both operationally and as emergency or breach forms)?</p>	<p>The following number of test forms have been developed and used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CMT Grade 5: 4 Forms</li> <li>CMT Grade 8: 4 Forms</li> <li>CAPT Science: 10 Forms*</li> </ul> <p>*Most of the CAPT Science test forms are no longer intact since some items from each form have been released to the public. Each year, one operational (live) test form and one replacement (breach) test form are used at each tested grade. The replacement forms for each grade are still intact.</p>

Background	Could the CSDE please specify the number and type of items stored in the current CMT and CAPT Science pilot item bank?	The following is an approximation of the number of secure multiple-choice (MC) and constructed-response (CR) items currently in the CMT and CAPT Science items banks that are aligned to the current CT Science Standards: CMT Grade 5: 300 MC and 40 CR CMT Grade 8: 350 MC and 30 CR CAPT Grade 10: 800 MC and 60 CR These items are available to develop/modify test forms aligned to the current CT science standards prior to the transition to new science standards/NGSS.
Background	Please confirm that all new item/task development will be aligned to the NGSS/new standards and that the CSDE has enough pilot items in its item bank to sustain the operational CMT and CAPT tests until the summative assessment is 100% aligned to the NGSS.	Yes, it is anticipated that all new item development will be aligned to new science standards/NGSS (pending State Board of Education adoption decision). The CSDE has sufficient numbers of items in the bank aligned to current CT Science standards to fulfill testing needs for this generation through the transition to new science standards/NGSS.
Background	Will the current bank of science items be made available in QTI 2.1 format?	Current items in the bank will be made available in APIP packages in QTI format.
Background	Please provide the number of schools that have grade 10 students, number of schools with Grade 8 students and the number of schools with Grade 5 students.	The following includes the current number of regular public schools and private special education facilities: Grade 5: 595 schools Grade 8: 390 schools Grade 10: 340 schools
Background	Approximately how many grade 11/12 students retest each year? What is the number of students proposers should budget for retesting for Grade 11 and 12?	Approximately 3,500 students retest annually on the CAPT Science in Grades 11 and 12.
Background and Appendix B	Could the CSDE please confirm: The number of students per grade expected to take the paper and pencil version of the assessments each year of the contract? The number of students per grade expected to take the online version of the assessments each year of the contract? In the base scenario for transition to online testing (e.g., starting with grade 10 in 2016, then grade 8 in 2017, and finally grade 5 in 2018), what percent of districts and students should we assume will take the option of paper-and-pencil administration during the transition period covered by this contract?	It is likely that most students will be tested using paper-and-pencil format at the start of the contract with a gradual transition to online testing over 3-4 years. The transition would likely begin with the option of online testing for students at grade 10 in spring 2016, grade 8 in 2017 and grade 5 in 2017 or 2018. For costing purposes, assume 30% of students testing online in the first eligible year with an increase of 20% annually thereafter.
Background	How many students per grade currently test online due to	Below are approximate numbers of students currently testing online for CMT and CAPT Science due to accommodations (e.g. word processor

	their accommodations?	response, text reader of items): CMT Grade 5: 4,000 CMT Grade 8: 3,000 CAPT Grade 10: 2,000 Note: more students test online at earlier grades due to the accommodation of text reader of items.
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<b>PART 2 SCOPE OF WORK: PRODUCTS AND SERVICE SPECIFICATIONS</b>		
<b>Section</b>	<b>Questions from Potential Bidder</b>	<b>Responses from CSDE</b>
Introduction/Project Timeline	Does CSDE have a preferred scheduling and tracking software package?	No.
2.2 Test Development		
2.2.2	<p>The section states that four equated test forms are required at each tested grade level. For costing purposes, should bidders assume development of four forms <u>per year</u> for each year or one form per year across four years?</p> <p>Are the four test forms mentioned the only forms that should be developed during the life of the contract?</p> <p>Page 4 of the RFP states “these forms [the grade 5 and 8 CMT forms] (perhaps with modifications) will continue to be used in future live test administrations during the time period covered by this contract.” Requirement 2.2.2 states “Assistance with the modification and/or development of four equated live test forms for the standard CMT and CAPT Science at each tested grade level.” What type of work does CSDE anticipate regarding the modification and/or development of these forms? Is it required that the forms be modified in some way each year?</p>	<p>One live (operational) test form is used per tested grade each year. The development and/or modification of four live test forms and one replacement test form per tested grade is anticipated under this contract. Test forms may require modification for several reasons including possible public release of items, unintended and/or over exposure of items, poor statistics obtained from operational testing, equating strategies involving linking items, and most importantly for this contract, transition to new science standards/NGSS. CAPT Science test forms are unique each year (with approximately 20% of items linking to the previous year’s form). CMT Science test forms are repeated intact (common items appear across forms). There are sufficient items in the CMT and CAPT Science bank aligned to current CT Science standards to develop/modify test forms as needed for this generation. New items are needed for the development and/or modification of test forms to align with new science standards/NGSS.</p>
2.2.3	<p>This section refers to a “replacement test form.” Is this in reference to a retest form, a breach form, or a just a standard test form? For costing purposes, should bidders assume that this in reference to the development of one form per tested grade or one form <u>per year</u> per tested</p>	<p>Replacement test forms are “breach” forms used in cases of testing irregularities. These forms are parallel and equated to the live forms. One replacement test form currently exists per tested grade and these replacement forms have been used for several years. Development and/or modification will likely be needed for replacement test forms</p>

	<p>grade?</p> <p>Similarly, for costing purposes should bidders assume that the “modification and/or development” of these replacement test forms is describing unique forms that will need to be built from scratch, a previously used test form being used intact, or a reconstituted form based on prior operational forms?</p>	<p>under this contract based on the transition to new science standards/NGSS. This will likely involve the modification of existing forms and their eventual replacement.</p>
<p>2.3 Test Administration</p>		
<p>2.3.1.2</p>	<p>What hours of operation is CSDE asking for daily customer service support?</p>	<p>Expected hours of operation for customer service support throughout most of the year would be 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. EST. The expected hours for customer service during the 4-week annual statewide test administration would expand to 7:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.</p>
<p>2.3.2.4</p>	<p>This section refers to production of printed practices tests. Please provide quantities for both English and Spanish versions.</p> <p>Approximately how many Spanish language students test in Grades 5, 8 and 10/11/12 for the CAPT and CMT? Please confirm that the only translated material required is the Spanish Practice Test Booklet?</p> <p>This section refers to Spanish versions of the practice test. Are Spanish versions of the regular live test forms also required?</p> <p>Section mentions the production of printed CMT and CAPT Science Practice tests in English and Spanish. Is there an expectation that operational tests and/or any other program documentation be provided in Spanish as well? Can you clarify if the paper test needs to be translated into Spanish?</p> <p>For budgeting purposes: How many Spanish practice tests should be printed per grade each year of the contract? How many Braille and large print versions of the Spanish practice tests are proposers expected to produce?</p>	<p>One practice test is printed and shipped for each student tested on CMT and CAPT Science (approximately 41,000 per tested grade). Approximately 1,000 Spanish versions of the printed practice tests are needed at each tested grade level. The practice tests are the only printed materials needed in Spanish.</p>
<p>2.3.2.4 and 2.3.3.3</p>	<p>Does CSDE prefer the use of contracted or uncontracted Braille for the CMT/CAPT Science assessment?</p>	<p>Both contracted and uncontracted Braille test booklets are produced depending on the needs of the students.</p>

2.3.2.5	Are online tests needed in Spanish?	No, Spanish versions of the live and online practice tests are not needed.
2.3.2.4 and 2.3.2.5	Does CSDE anticipate the need for committee members to review practice test items, or can it be assumed that CSDE review is sufficient?	CSDE review is generally sufficient, although as new, innovative item types are utilized the State Science Assessment Advisory and Fairness and Accessibility committees will likely be more involved in the review of sample/practice items.
2.3.2.5	It appears the practice test is more about the functionality of the system and the various item types, than about experiencing the range of content. About how many items would be required for this (or how much time would the student's have available for the practice test)?	The time and number of items for the online practice tests would depend on the types of items to be developed. Currently only multiple-choice and constructed-response items (written response or creation of graph) are on the live and practice tests, therefore the online practice tests are fairly short and only include a few items. The online practice tests should expand in the future to include additional technology-enhanced item types.
2.3.3.1	The RFP indicates that the vendor must "Produce necessary quantities of paper-and-pencil test/answer booklets based upon enrollment data (from PSIS) and overage requirements." For costing purposes, please provide estimated enrollment counts and specify the overage to be used. Does CSDE have a set overage amount of materials to be sent to districts/schools? Could the CSDE please specify to proposers what the overage requirement is? For budgeting purposes, what are the overage requirements for paper/pencil test booklets and answer booklets per grade?	There are approximately 41,000 students at each tested grade (5, 8, and 10). Current test material overages are 5% to each school and 5% to each district. These overages should be sufficient under this contract.
2.3.3.1	Please also provide estimated page counts for Grades 5, 8, and 10.	The following are approximate page counts for the live test/answer booklets: CMT Grade 5: 30 pages for test/answer booklet CMT Grade 8: 30 pages for test/answer booklet CAPT Grade 10: 15 pages per session (30 total) for test booklets 12 pages for separate answer booklet
2.3.3.3	Please provide an estimate of the number of Braille and large-print versions of the test forms to be produced. How many Braille and Large-print test versions are required	5-10 copies of Braille test materials are produced at each tested grade (varies from year to year depending on student needs). 40 copies of Large Print test materials are produced at each tested grade

	<p>for each grade level?  Approximately how many Braille test forms and answer booklets are to be produced per grade each year of the contract? How many of the large print?</p>	<p>(Note: many students requiring Large Print booklets now test online using the magnification feature).</p>
2.3.3.4	<p>Please provide an estimate of the quantities of printed Test Coordinator and Test Examiner manuals to be produced. Does CSDE have a set usage algorithm for the TCM and Test Examiner Manuals?  How many Test Coordinator and Test Examiner manuals are required?  How many printed Test Coordinator and Test Examiner manuals need to be produced per grade each year of the contract?</p>	<p>Below are estimates of the total number of Test Examiner Manuals (TEM) printed each year:  CMT Grade 5: 5,000  CMT Grade 8: 5,000  CAPT Grade 10: 7,500  The totals correspond to approximately one TEM for every 8 students tested.</p> <p>Below are estimates of the total number of Test Coordinator Manuals (TCM) printed each year:  CMT Grade 5 and 8 combined: 1,100  CAPT Grade 10: 600  The totals correspond to one TCM for each District Test Coordinator and one TCM for each school.</p>
2.3.3.4	<p>Can CSDE provide/post a copy of the supplemental Test Administration manual?</p>	<p>The 2015 supplemental Test Examiner Manuals are not posted publicly, but are available upon request. The supplemental manuals are similar to the operational manuals available on the CSDE website.</p>
2.3.4.1	<p>Page 3 of the RFP notes that districts will likely transition by grade to online and be given the option of paper-and-pencil or online administration during the transition period to online. Can CSDE provide an estimated yearly transition percentages from online to paper for a particular grade level?</p>	<p>See response to similar questions in Part 1.</p>
2.4 Processing and Scoring		
2.4	<p>Does DSDE have a requirement for storage (materials type and length of time) for paper/pencil test materials?</p>	<p>Electronic images of student responses must be kept for 5 years. The original paper-and-pencil materials can be destroyed one year after the test administration.</p>
2.4.3.2	<p>What percentage of 2<sup>nd</sup> reads does the CSDE expect on hand-scored items?</p>	<p>The CSDE expects 20% of second reads on all hand-scored items.</p>

2.4.3	Would CSDE entertain the use of machine-scored Technology Enhanced items to replace hand-scored Constructed Response items in the future?	Yes, the CSDE is open to considering various technology-enabled or enhanced items and the use of machine-scored and artificial intelligence (AI) scoring for use with the assessments. The proposal should describe these innovative item types and scoring methodologies.
2.4.5	What is the extent of the training materials for items slated for field testing in 2015? Will these require any augmentation for operational scoring? (Referenced in Section 2.6 also).	Scoring training materials will be developed for all constructed-response items pilot tested in spring 2015. This will likely include item specific rubrics, anchor sets and a short practice set for each item. Additional student responses (for practice and qualifying sets) will need to be added for operational scoring.
2.5 Data Analysis and Reporting		
2.5	Standard setting is not mentioned in the RFP. Should the proposed provider plan for a cut score meeting? What is Connecticut's plan for Standard Setting or revisiting standards if the state transitions to NGSS?	While the timeline for transitioning to new science standards/NGSS and aligned assessments is uncertain, it is likely that standard setting procedures will be needed under this contract. The contractor should plan for a standard setting meeting involving CT educators to set cut scores at each tested grade. The Bookmark method is likely to be used for setting standards.
2.5	Will the reports from the CMT and CAPT assessments need to be posted on the CTreports site, provided to and posted on the SBAC reporting site, or provided via the Science vendor's website?	The bidder should assume that all CMT and CAPT Science reports will need to be included in the online, interactive reporting system asked for in section 2.5.10 (separate pricing requested).
2.5.6	Should we assume that tests will be post equated each year using linking items?	Yes, test forms will be post equated using common items.
2.5.8	Would the NCSC contractor produce the reports or would this contractor?	The contractor will produce printed student reports and permanent record labels for the CMT and CAPT Science Skills Checklist under this contract.
2.5.11	Please confirm that Program Overviews, Interpretive Guides, released items and scored student response packets are online documents only – no paper/pencil versions?	CMT/CAPT Science Program Overviews, Interpretive Guides and released items and scored student response packets are online documents only – paper-and-pencil versions of these documents are not required to be printed by the contractor.
2.5.14	Is the feedback being collected via a cog lab or survey? Would the vendor be responsible for collecting feedback and/or an analysis and summary of the feedback?	The feedback on pilot testing would likely be in the form of surveys completed by participating students and teachers. The contractor would be expected to summarize the results of these surveys. If the use of new, innovative items types are proposed, this may require the use of

		cognitive labs to obtain feedback.
2.5.17.2	What is the stipend amount currently used for TAC members in CT?	TAC members have been paid at a rate of \$1,500 per day. This rate may need to be raised to keep up with industry standards.
2.6 Next Generation Science Assessment Development		
2.6	What is the size of the current CMT/CAPT Science item pool? Will the CMT/CAPT Science items received by the current contractor be aligned to any new science standards that may be adopted by CT? Will CMT/CAPT Science items be available for use on the newly developed NGSA, given that they meet agreed-upon acceptance criteria?	See response in Part 1 for information on the current CMT and CAPT Science item bank. Items currently in the bank are unlikely to be used in the next generation of science assessments. In spring 2015, some CMT and CAPT Science items aligned to the NRC Science Framework/NGSS are being pilot tested at grades 5, 8 and 10. Approximately 40 items per tested grade (mixture of multiple-choice, constructed response and technology-enabled items) are being pilot tested. Statistics on these items are not available at this time and will affect their potential use on future test forms.
2.6	Would CSDE be amenable to a schedule that had the elementary grade, and perhaps the middle, going live with an NGSS aligned assessment earlier than 2018?	The CSDE has not yet determined the timeline to transition the science assessments from the current CT science standards to the next generation. It is possible the timeline might include at least a partial transition of the assessment to be aligned to new science standards/NGSS prior to 2018 (as shown in Appendix B).
2.6.2	Should the proposed provider propose any outside consultants for the \$20,000 stipend, or does the Department already have someone in mind?	The CSDE is open to the bidder providing a proposed outside consultant, but this is not required.
2.6.3	How many unique operational forms should vendors plan to support via pilot testing of NGSA items?	This will depend on the assessment transition plan and timeline which has not yet been determined. For costing purposes, bidders should plan for two operational test forms aligned to new science standards/NGSS at each tested grade under this contract.
2.6.3	What is the rate of pay proposers should use for the Expert Reviewers?	Expert reviewers are paid at a rate of \$75 per hour (\$600 per day). This rate may need to be raised to keep up with industry standards.
2.6.3 – 2.6.6	Please identify proposers' budgetary responsibilities for activities related to the review and approval of items by the State Science Assessment Advisory Committee, Fairness & Accessibility Advisory Committee, and Expert Reviewers (i.e., stipends/substitute reimbursements, travel, meals, facilities, accommodations).	For the State Science Assessment Advisory Committee and Fairness & Accessibility Advisory Committee, the contractor will be responsible for meeting costs (rental of facility, meals, audio-visual equipment). There are no costs associated with substitute reimbursements, stipends, travel or accommodations for committee members. There are no costs associated with expert reviewers beyond paid stipends.



2.6.4.2	What is the rate of pay proposers should use for the educators to attend training sessions and develop science performance tasks?	The rate of pay should be \$200 per day.
2.6.5 and 2.6.6	Are the State Science Assessment Advisory Committee and the Fairness and Accessibility Committee standing committees formed by the CSDE or other authority in Connecticut? Or is it the responsibility of the prospective provider to establish representative panels of stakeholders for content reviews and bias and sensitivity reviews? Are these the bodies used for what are commonly referred to as content reviews or bias and sensitivity review?	These are standing committees formed by the CSDE. The CSDE selects members and is responsible for any changes to membership over time. These committees are what might otherwise be referred to as content review and bias/sensitivity review committees.
2.6.5 and 2.6.6	Should the prospective provider account for any kind of stipend for committee members?	Members of the State Science Assessment Advisory Committee and the Fairness and Accessibility Committee are not paid stipends.
2.6.7	Should we assume that all pilot tests involve embedded items in the operational test, or is there an opportunity for a standalone field test?	Pilot test items are not embedded in operational test forms. Piloting is done using stand-alone test forms.
2.6.7	Will CDSE assist in the recruitment of schools to participate in the pilot test samples?	For pilot testing, schools are randomly selected to generate a representative sample of students. The sampling plan must be reviewed and approved by the CSDE. Generally, piloting is required of schools. If piloting is voluntary, the CSDE would assist with the recruitment of schools.
2.6.7	Could CSDE clarify what responsibility the vendor would have regarding the observation of pilot testing?	The feedback on pilot testing would likely be in the form of surveys completed by participating students and teachers. The vendor would be expected to summarize the results of these surveys. If the use of new, innovative items types are proposed, they may require the use of cognitive labs to obtain feedback.
2.6.7	Are full and/or glossary translations required for the Science assessment? If so, please specify what language(s) for full translations and/or glossaries and whether translations are intended as part of the pilot testing	Translations are not required for live or pilot testing.
2.6.7	What student supports are required for piloting testing (e.g., Braille, text-to-speech, American Sign Language)?	Text-to-speech is preferred for pilot testing (depending on costs and feasibility). Braille and American Sign Language are not required for pilot testing.
2.6.10	How does the CSDE review pilot data results/statistics?	The CSDE conducts an internal review of all pilot test results. While not

	Does the CSDE review the data with its vendor; do the State Science Assessment Advisory Committee and Fairness and Accessibility Committees meet; or other?	typically done in the past, results (e.g., p-values) from the piloting of new, innovative item types aligned to new science standards/NGSS will likely be shared with the State Science Assessment Advisory Committee and Fairness and Accessibility Committee.
2.6.10	The RFP references the Rasch model, but then also describes multiple parameters. Is a 2PL or 3PL model acceptable or does the department want the data analyzed using Rasch?	The CSDE would like to continue the use of the Rasch model for analyses and reporting for the first year or two. However, the goal is to transition to the 2PL (GPC) model for the transition to new science standards/NGSS. The transition plan would be determined during the second year of the contract.
2.6.13	Are there any constraints vendors should be aware of surrounding the interim assessments? Will there be a penalty for proposing an overly-ambitious approach?	The vendor should not be overly ambitious regarding the time needed to complete interim assessments (e.g., no more than 60 minutes per module) or the costs associated with their development and administration. There will not be a penalty for proposing any approach, but the CSDE will need to consider the cost and feasibility of all approaches.
2.6.13	What grade levels are covered by the interim assessments? Should interim assessments be assumed for each grade 3-10/11?	The interim classroom assessments should measure standards assigned to grades 3-11.
2.6.13	Does CDSE have an expectation for the quantity of modules created or the amount of time required to complete a module? For budgeting purposes, how many interim assessments should proposers assume per grade each year of the contract? Is an end-of-year assessment included in this total or additional for each grade?	The quantity of interim classroom assessments would likely be 3-4 modules per year. Each module would likely take students 30-60 minutes to complete. It would be preferable if interim assessment modules could be reconfigured to also be used as end-of year assessments, at least in non-tested grades (i.e., 3, 4, 6, 7, 9).
2.6.13	Does CSDE anticipate the need for committee members need to review modules, or can it be assumed that CSDE review is sufficient?	The State Science Assessment Advisory and Fairness and Accessibility committees would likely be involved in the review of items and modules used in the interim classroom assessments.
2.6.14.2	Since AI is desired for the interim assessment, will previously scored papers be made available to train the AI engine?	Previously scored student responses from the 2015 online pilot test will be available.
2.6.14	If the "local classroom assessments" are included in the scope of this RFP: a. Understanding that requirements (design, delivery, scoring, security, accommodations, etc.) for	a. Requirements for the CMT and CAPT Science summative assessments would likely be similar for interim classroom assessment modules, although the item types and the test design may differ. The interim classroom assessments may be able to utilize a greater variety of item

	<p>summative assessments and formative assessments often differ, should we assume the summative requirements for the CMT and the CAPT apply to the “local classroom assessments?”</p> <p>b. Can we assume classroom teachers would score the performance based tasks, or is the state interested in professional hand scoring of components of the “local classroom assessments?”</p> <p>c. Can vendors apply only to the “local classroom assessments” portion of this RFP?</p>	<p>types and design features that are not feasible for the summative assessments.</p> <p>b. Classroom teachers will be expected to score their own students work on science performance tasks.</p> <p>c. Bids will not be accepted only for the local classroom assessments.</p>
2.6.14.2	(Table 2 page 27) For the period of time AI scoring is not in place for interim assessments, is it acceptable for teachers to be expected to score any CR items on these assessments?	Yes.

<b>PART 3 PROPOSAL APPLICATION AND SELECTION</b>		
<b>Section</b>	<b>Questions from Potential Bidders</b>	<b>Responses from CSDE</b>
3.1.5	<p>3.1.5 The RFP states, “Staffing information will be submitted on the task allocation forms provided.” When will the task allocation forms be provided?</p> <p>3.1.5 Q1: Did Connecticut include the correct Task Allocation Pricing Form in the RFP?</p> <p>Are the cost forms on the website the correct documents to use for this bid? The forms indicate that they are for the “New England Assessment Consortium” and include references to New Hampshire and Vermont. Please clarify if these are the forms that bidders should use to submit costs, or if new forms specific to this RFP will be issued.</p> <p>Please confirm the worksheets in the “task_allocation_form.xls” to be used.</p> <p>Will other New England Assessment Consortium states be taking the CMT and CAPT assessments in Science?</p>	<p>Bidders should use the revised Task Allocation Form (dated 2-19-15) that has been posted. Ignore the earlier form and references to the New England Assessment Consortium. This is a Connecticut-only RFP and contract.</p>
3.1.3	Can you elaborate on the requirement for a 3rd party security audit?	As stated in section 3.1.3, “The proposer’s response should include an independent external report summarizing a third party security audit

		and certification that includes any security flaws that were discovered and how they have been corrected.” This external report should have reviewed the areas further identified in section 3.1.3 as they relate to FERPA.
3.1.3	Are you looking for application and/or operating system vulnerability identification and remediation process or something different?	The external report should certify ability and identify weaknesses as well as corrective action, related to any aspect of the management of student level data as required by FERPA.
3.1.6	Does CSDE have a target budget for this RFP?	No specific amount of funding has been allotted for this contract. The CMT and CAPT Science (statewide summative assessment only) currently operate on an annual budget of approximately \$4 million.
3.1.6	Does CSDE require the budget to be under separate cover or included in the technical proposal?	The budget can be included in the technical proposal.
3.1.6	Are there any specific pricing forms to be used?	There are no specific pricing forms that must be used. Proposed budgets should be organized around the major areas of work in the RFP with separate pricing for specified services and products.
3.4.7	In the eyes of CSDE, what would constitute an “inaccurate award”? Please specify/clarify how CDE will determine the accuracy of awards.	An inaccurate or erroneous award is one that is based on any information that is later determined to be inaccurate. A standardized process of collecting and scoring the information for all proposals is used to remove the possibility of such an award.
3.4.14	Are vendors able to take exception to any of CSDE's contract terms? There is no mention of this currently in the RFP.	The State of Connecticut has standard contract language that CSDE can not authorize changes to. The rationale for providing this “boiler plate” information in the RFP is to inform proposers of language that will be contained in a contract that will result from the RFP process.

<b>PART 4 APPENDICES</b>		
<b>Section</b>	<b>Questions from Potential Bidders</b>	<b>Responses from CSDE</b>
A	What fields/subfields does CSDE consider “science-related”? Please enumerate specific fields/disciplines that would meet CDE’s criteria for acceptability?	The preference is for scorers to have at least a bachelor’s degree in a STEM (science, technology, engineering and/or mathematics) field or K-12 education involving STEM. Other related fields/disciplines would be negotiable. The goal is to have sufficient numbers of qualified and trained scorers and the CSDE will not be overly restrictive with scorer’s backgrounds.

A	<p>Summary table on page 27 of the RFP – Are there current CMT and CAPT items in the Connecticut item bank that are currently aligned to NGSS that would fill the 33% (in 2016-2017 column) or do those items come from contractor development and pilot testing in 2015-2016?</p>	<p>Some items aligned to NGSS are being pilot tested in spring 2015. Depending on the results, these items could be used on operational test forms as early as 2016 (unlikely since an NGSS adoption has not yet been made). It is unlikely that sufficient items will be available from the spring 2015 pilot test to fulfill the 33% NGSS alignment in 2016-17. Additional item development and pilot testing in 2015-16 will be needed.</p>
A	<p>Please verify that the test blueprint for Grade 8 does not match the table on page 20.</p>	<p>The correct test blueprints for the CMT Science at grades 5 and 8 are shown in Appendix A on page 21 of the revised RFP currently posted.</p>
B	<p>2015-16 Pilot Next Generation Science Assessment (NGSA) items and tasks: Has the current contractor developed NGSS-aligned pilot items and tasks to hand off to the new contractor for 2016 piloting, which is noted in the 2015-16 column in the table at the bottom of page 27 of the revised RFP?</p>	<p>There may be some items developed for the spring 2015 pilot that need revision and could be available to pilot in spring 2016. Generally, items to be pilot tested in spring 2016 would need to be developed under this contract. Items developed/procured through the CCSSO Science Assessment Item Collaborative will likely be pilot tested in Connecticut in spring 2016 as well.</p>
C	<p>Could the CSDE please clarify the extent of the "acceptable independent audit report" that the contractor would have to provide to the CSDE at the end of the contract period? Would it be similar to audits provided for federally funded programs?</p> <p>Will the funding for these programs (CMT and CAPT Science) be managed like a federal program?</p> <p>Could the contractor use its current auditors for such task?</p>	<p>The independent audit report should comply with federal single audit requirements found in OMB Circular A-133.</p> <p>Funding for this program may be provided by state or federal funds and as such, may be required to be operated as a federal program.</p> <p>CSDE cannot determine the qualifications of independent audit firms.</p>