

RFI# VPS-FY14-001 – Final Version – April 10, 2014
Questions and Answers for Student Assessment System Request for Information:

Q: What system(s), if any, are currently used by Vernon Public Schools to meet these needs? What does it/do they not do today that you would like it/them to do in the future?

A: Currently, Vernon Public Schools use DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills), a locally developed reading foundations assessment, a sight word binder, locally developed process writing assessments, a locally developed performance tasks, Iowa State's math universal screens, locally developed math assessments, Fountas and Pinnell's Benchmark Assessment System, Lexia's embedded assessments, Scholastic Reading Inventory (grades 6-12, not all students) and a variety of other measures. We also contract with a private vendor who constructed and maintains our SRBI (Scientific Research Based Interventions) database which houses students' results on universal screens, "sentinel probes," and progress monitoring "dipsticks." We would like a more cohesive system of assessments that are simpler to administer and score. We would also like improved data management capabilities tied to our assessments. Furthermore, a system that suggests instructional strategies, groupings, or intervention methods could be beneficial.

Q: Is Vernon looking for a system in which they can build the assessments themselves, or are you expecting the assessments to be pre-built within the system?

A: We are looking for a system with pre-built assessments; however, we would find the ability to modify those assessments appealing.

Q: Is SIF the only integration strategy the district is will to consider, or is it simply essential that the SAS be able to integrate with Aspen and your teacher evaluation system? If so, what is your teacher evaluation system?

A: SIF is not "essential," but it is preferred. If we need to export data to a spreadsheet, then upload it to Aspen, we are willing to do so; however, secure exporting directly from the SAS to Aspen is preferable. We are currently using Bloomboard as the tool to manage educator evaluation.

Q: Is this an official RFP?

A: No, this is an RFI (Request for Information). No contract will be awarded as a result of this RFI.

Q: Is the intent of the RFI to replace in whole or part the assessment tools/products currently in place in Vernon Public Schools to measure student performance in these grades and subject areas?

A: The intent is to replace in part the assessment tools currently in place to measure student performance and growth in reading and mathematics.

Q: Is the district looking for an online platform to administer and report on district developed assessment content already being used?

A: The district is seeking an online platform to administer and report on CCSS skills and concepts as well as foundational skills and concepts. We plan to retain some of our current performance tasks, but would like to replace our universal screens and potentially some other measures.

Q: Is the district looking for a system that includes item banks, assessments, reporting and curriculum tools that address some or all of the Assessment Blueprint areas?

A: Yes. The district is looking for a system that includes item banks, assessments, reporting and curriculum tools that address core content areas

Q: The Theory of Action in the RFI indicates that “If VPS develops curriculum aligned with state and national standards, develops common assessments to measure student achievement of the curriculum, and utilizes the results from both local and state-wide assessments to revise the curriculum, then student achievement will improve.”

With the above information in mind:

1. Does VPS have an interest in using assessments provided by the selected vendor or developed by VPS for inclusion in the selected vendor’s system capable of forecasting student risk of not meeting standards as measured by the Common Core statewide test and to link that information to intervention, reteaching and enrichment activities?

A: Yes. VPS has an interest in using assessments provided by a vendor for the purposes listed. Furthermore, while not the intent of the RFI, VPS may also be interested in making some current, locally developed assessments available through the system.

Q: Is it the intent of VPS to ensure that assessments provided by the selected vendor (e.g., benchmarks) and/or assessments developed by VPS and administered and scored through the selected vendor demonstrate adequate reliability and validity?

A: Yes. Reliability and validity of assessments are of great importance to VPS.

Q: Do you know if a subsequent RFP will be issued once the responses to the RFI are reviewed by VPS?

A: Yes, a subsequent RFP will be issued once responses to the RFI have been reviewed.

Q: In addition to online administration of assessments will there be any instances where the district will have a need for offline assessments, administered offline but which can then be automatically scored and reported online?

A: The district does not anticipate a need for offline assessments.

Q: How many students do you anticipate will use the assessment system? How many teachers?

A: This assessment system will serve approximately 3250 students and 400 teachers.

Q: What is the purpose of the RFI? Will an RFP be issued subsequent to this RFI?

A: The purpose of this RFI is to gather data. The district intends to issue an RFP.

Q: The system is a teacher Candidate tracking and assessment system. Is this along the lines of what you're looking for.

A: The district is seeking an assessment system to track students' academic progress.

Q: On page 5 there are two different sets of information for who to send our response to. Which set of directions would you prefer we follow?

A: Any "inquiries" should be directed to Justin Gusy before 2:00 PM on Friday, April 10, 2014. All of those questions and answers are posted here. Information packets should be sent to Mr. Purcaro prior to 1:00 PM on Monday, April 21st. The Information packet closing date changed to April 21st because the original closing date, April 18th, fell on a holiday.

v.04-10-2014