

**Request for Proposals E-Rate Category 2 Project**  
**Mississippi Achievement School District – Humphreys Regions**

**Notice to Bidders**

Notice is hereby given to interested bidders that the Mississippi Achievement School District will receive written, sealed bids until the hour of **9:00 a.m., March 25, 2020**, at which time bids will be opened in the Board Room of the Mississippi Achievement School District at 401 Fourth Street, Belzoni, Mississippi.

**Bid Timeline**

|                                  |                           |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Letter of Intent to Bid Due Date | March 17, 2020 11:59 p.m. |
| Mandatory Pre-Bid Site Visit     | March 18, 2020 1:00 p.m.  |
| Bid Due Date and Opening         | March 25, 2020 9:00 a.m.  |
|                                  |                           |

## **E-Rate Category 2 Project (Description)**

The Mississippi Achievement School District wishes to upgrade its E-Rate eligible Category 2 equipment and cabling.

In order to be eligible to bid, all prospective bidders must attend the mandatory pre-bid conference. The pre-bid conference will be held at the Mississippi Achievement School District Office located at 401 Fourth Street, Belzoni, Mississippi. Proposals from vendors who do not attend the conference WILL NOT be considered.

At the time of the pre-bid conference, all bidders will be expected to complete and turn in the "Site Visit Information Form" furnished in this document.

The RFP will consist of Cabling and Equipment. Vendors may bid on any or all parts. Any discounts for bundled pricing or winning more than one portion of the RFP will be considered and allowed.

### **Intent to Bid**

Mississippi Achievement School District requests that all vendors interested in submitting a proposal complete the Letter of Intent to Bid that is provided at the end of this document. The Letter of Intent to Bid should be emailed to Charity Williams at [cnwilliams@masd.k12.ms.ms](mailto:cnwilliams@masd.k12.ms.ms) prior to March 17, 2020 11:59 p.m. If an email reply is not received within 24 hours, it is the responsibility of the respondent to call Charity Williams at 662-247-6000 to confirm receipt of your Letter of Intent to Bid.

Submitting a Letter of Intent to Bid does not commit you to bidding. The Letter of Intent to Bid is not a requirement to submit a proposal, however the mandatory vendor meeting is a requirement to bid.

In the case of inclement weather or other unforeseen circumstances, all vendors who have submitted the Letter of Intent to Bid will be notified of a change to the mandatory vendor meeting date or time.

### **General**

The specifications herein are provided to convey the intent of the District and do not indicate every cable or component necessary for the complete system that the proposing vendor shall provide. Technical specifications of all equipment and necessary components proposed should be provided with the bid.

Prices quoted shall be an all-inclusive solution including all applicable taxes, shipping costs, installation of equipment, configuration of equipment, any necessary cabling, training, technical support and trash removal, and represent complete installation and integration with the existing network where necessary. All equipment included in vendor's proposal must be new equipment purchased from an authorized reseller. No grey market, third party, or used equipment will be considered. Prices quoted in the vendor's response will remain in effect for a period of twenty four (24) months from the time of the contract signing.

Omissions in the proposal of any provision described herein shall not be construed as to relieve the vendor of any responsibility or obligation to the complete and satisfactory delivery, operation and support of any services.

Should the vendor have questions or find discrepancies in, or omissions from this RFP, or be in doubt to its meaning, the vendor shall at once notify Mississippi Achievement School District. All questions should be addressed to Charity Williams as outlined below. The preferred mode of contact is via email.

Charity Williams  
Mississippi Achievement School District  
cnwilliams@masd.k12.ms.us

Questions must be submitted to the email address [cnwilliams@masd.k12.ms.us](mailto:cnwilliams@masd.k12.ms.us). If a response is not received within 24 hours, it is the responsibility of the respondent to call Charity Williams at 662-247-6000 to confirm receipt of the questions. All questions and answers will be emailed to all vendors attending the mandatory vendor meeting.

### **Bid Submission Instructions**

Bids may be hand delivered or mailed to the Mississippi Achievement School District – Humphreys Region located at 401 Fourth Street, Belzoni, Mississippi 39038.

**Bids must be submitted in a sealed envelope clearly marked as follows:**

**“2020 E-Rate Bid”**

**Bid Opening: March 25, 2020 11:00 a.m.**

Envelopes not so marked will not be considered. The Mississippi Achievement School District School Board reserves the right to reject any and/or all bids and waive any informality.

As an alternate submission mechanism, bids may be submitted through secure electronic submission. Vendors wishing to submit their proposal via secure electronic bidding should email Charity Williams for electronic submission instructions. If a response is not received within 4 hours, it is the responsibility of the respondent to call Charity Williams at 662-247-6000 to confirm receipt of the request.

Bidders must submit one (1) original and two (2) copies of their full response along with one (1) electronic copy.

The first page in the bid submission packet must be the Bid Worksheet. The worksheet will show the vendor’s total cost for ALL schools. In addition to the Bid Worksheet, Vendors MUST provide quotes submitted on the vendor’s standard quote form and broken down by school to facilitate the new E-Rate C2 Requirements. Failure to comply may result in bid disqualification.

Bids must include the following:

The “Bid Worksheet” completed and signed by the bidder. Note, the “Bid Worksheet” is a total for all schools. Individual quotes divided by school must be provided to accommodate the new E-Rate C2 budget requirements. In the occurrence of discrepancies between the total costs and line item costs, the line item cost will be deemed to be the correct cost.

(THE BID WORKSHEET MUST BE THE FIRST PAGE IN THE BID SUBMISSION DOCUMENTATION)

Required Documents as listed in this RFP.

It is the sole responsibility of the respondents to ensure their responses arrive in a timely manner. Late arrivals will be rejected. The Mississippi Achievement School District is not responsible for delays of any commercial carrier or delays incurred by the respondents. Oral, telephone, or electronically transferred bids will not be considered. Signatures on the proposals must be in longhand and executed by a principal duly authorized by the vendor to make a contract.

PLEASE NOTE: Common Carriers, UPS and FedEx, in the Belzoni, Mississippi area generally do not deliver overnight packages on time. The Mississippi Achievement School District will not be responsible for nor will it accept bid responses delivered after the deadline.

### **Evaluation Methodology**

The Mississippi Achievement School District will award a contract based on the vendor submission that best meets the needs of the Mississippi Achievement School District with regard to the current Technology Plan, future growth, RFP specifications, and not necessarily the lowest price even though price will be the priority factor. The following factors may be considered when evaluating responses:

- Price, based on 5-year cost of ownership estimate (to include base price, renewal fees and additional support fees)
- Strength of References
- Adherence to Technical Specifications
- Technical Certifications of Vendor Staff
- Number of Service Staff within close proximity to Belzoni, MS
- Vendor response time
- Turnkey Solution
- Ease of Use
- Preference will be given for prior positive experience with the Vendor

The above is not an inclusive list

### **Vendor Qualifications**

The Mississippi Achievement School District may make such investigations as deemed necessary to determine the ability of the bidder or subcontractors or suppliers to perform the work, and the bidder shall furnish to the Mississippi Achievement School District all such information and data for this purpose as the Mississippi Achievement School District may request. The Mississippi Achievement School District

reserves the right to reject any bid if the evidence submitted by or investigation of such Bidder fails to satisfy the Mississippi Achievement School District that such bidder is properly qualified to carry out the obligations of the contract and/or to complete the work contemplated therein within the time required.

The bidder is specifically advised that any person, firm or other party to whom it proposes to award a subcontract or purchase order under this contract must be acceptable to the Mississippi Achievement School District.

The successful vendor (contractor) must have or be certified with the following:

- Be able to supply all products and services
- Be an authorized dealer in the State of Mississippi for all products
- Have current liability insurance and workers compensation insurance (certificates of insurance must be furnished by winning bidder within 10 days of award)
- Provide the documentation of the vendor's employee certifications
- Participate in the mandatory vendor meeting. Any bid submitted by a vendor who does not complete the mandatory pre-bid conference will not be considered. There will be no exceptions.
- Provide an E-Rate SPIN
- Provide at least 3 references for projects of the same scope and size
- To ensure the highest level of quality possible, all bidders must hold the ISO 9001:2008, ISO 2015, or ISO 9004:2009 (collectively referred to as "ISO-9001 certification"). The ISO-9001 certification requirement is a pragmatic step to ensure this organization purchases from a quality bidder. ISO 9001 is the world's most widely recognized quality management system (QMS) certification. Over one million companies are certified in over 170 countries. ISO 9001 defines requirements for companies who are committed to ensuring that their products and services are of the highest quality possible. The bidder's legal name must be listed on the cover page of the official ISO-9001 Certificate of Registration or the bidder must be an affiliate of the firm listed on the official ISO-9001 Certificate of Registration. An affiliate is defined as a firm who directly owns and controls or is under common ownership and control with the firm listed on the official ISO-9001 Certificate of Registration. Common ownership must be a minimum of 25% equity control. If an affiliate firm is listed on the ISO 9001 Certificate of Registration, the bidding firm must submit a letter detailing the affiliate relationship between the two firms

## **Financing**

This project will be subsidized by the E-Rate program and is therefore subject to funding availability and contingent upon E-Rate funding. Due to the extended period of time it could take for the District to receive a funding commitment from USAC for this project and possible unforeseen financial circumstances, any contract arising from this RFP will also be contingent upon the District's availability of funds at the time of funding for the non-e-rate portion of the project. The District also reserves the right

to increase or decrease quantities requested in this RFP to adhere to the District's needs at the time of funding.

The Mississippi Achievement School District requires that the winning bidder provide the USAC Service Provider Invoice (SPI) method for invoicing.

### **Disqualification of Bidder**

The Mississippi Achievement School District reserves the right to award to other than the lowest bidder when, in the judgment of the District administration, it is in the best interest of the District to do so. A Bidder may be disqualified for such reasons as:

1. Bidder's failure to sign Bidder's Proposal Form or to otherwise properly complete the Proposal Form
2. Bidder's failure to attend and complete the mandatory pre-bid conference
3. Bidder being in litigation with the Mississippi Achievement School District.
4. Bidder having defaulted on a previous contract
5. Bidder having preformed unsatisfactorily on a previous contract, including but not limited to the Bidder's failure to fulfill the warranty obligations of a previous contract with the Mississippi Achievement School District.
6. Bidder's failure to include documentation for required certifications and authorizations

The above is not an inclusive list.

**The Mississippi Achievement School District will strictly adhere to the rules and regulations of the E-Rate program and State of Mississippi Procurement Law when evaluating bid responses.**

## **Cabling and Rack Specifications**

### **Cabling**

All cable and cabling components including jacks and patch panels used in this proposal will be Category 6 rated.

- Bid must include cabling and all necessary components (patch cables, patch panels, jacks and mounts, crimp ends, racks, etc.)
- Current cables and patch panels may not be used for this project unless they are Cat 6 Rated cables.
- If the racks in the IDF or MDF are not large enough to accommodate the additional Cat 6 Patch Panel, racks should be quoted. All racks and/or cabinets should be of sufficient size to accommodate the Extreme or equivalent switches and e-rate eligible equipment.
- Racks should be wall mount enclosed racks unless otherwise specified at the site visit.
- Bid must include cost of labor and installation.
- Any cables run by the vendor will be terminated into a patch panel and labeled.
- Patch cables from the patch panel to the switch will be Cat 6 cables and will be provided by the vendor.
- Vendor must supply 20-year manufacturer's warranty.
- Proposed fiber runs should be Multimode unless distance requires Single mode.
- Fiber run proposals should include all necessary components for termination, connection to equipment and full functionality of the fiber connection.
- Necessary Closet Cleanup or Relocation will be addressed at the walkthrough

## **Wiring Information**

### **Drop Ceilings**

Cable can be bundled without any conduit but it must be off the ceiling using hooks.

### **Open Ceilings**

The cable may be run out-of-sight along the beams if needed.

### **Walls**

If cable is run along an open wall, it must be in Ivory Panduit or similar enclosure.

## **Cable**

Cable must be the same color throughout the System and it must not be either Blue or White. Cable must be rated as Cat 6.

## **Equipment Specifications**

The Mississippi Achievement School District is requesting an all-inclusive solution including all applicable taxes, shipping costs, installation of equipment, configuration of equipment, training, technical support and trash removal, and represent complete installation and integration with the existing network where necessary. All equipment included in vendor's proposal must be new equipment purchased from an authorized reseller. No grey market, third party, or used equipment will be considered. Prices quoted in the vendor's response will remain in effect for a period of twenty four (24) months from the time of the contract signing.

The vendor will be required to configure all equipment in this proposal. They will configure VLANs to the specifications of the Mississippi Achievement School District Information Technology Department as part of this proposal. Currently there are multiple VLANs operating on the District network. The Vendor will also be required to communicate and work with the WAN and Internet vendor at time of installation so that the WAN and Internet vendor at time of installation owned and controlled WAN switch works properly with the VLAN configurations on the proposed switches.

The below specified equipment does not include every part, piece, and accessory necessary for the system to be fully functional. Please ensure that all bids include all support, warranty, cables, power cords, etc necessary for a total solution. Please ensure any ineligible items are clearly marked as ineligible on the bid. If any item quoted is partially eligible, please provide cost allocation showing the eligible amount and the ineligible amount with justification for the cost allocation method.

Bids for all equipment must include cost of configuration, installation and training on configuration and maintenance for the Mississippi Achievement School District Information Technology Department. Bids should also include any necessary accessories, parts or components required to make the system work, i.e., patch cables, SFPs, support, licenses, etc.

### **Switches**

Proposed Switches must be Extreme or EQUIVALENT. Any alternative equipment quoted must be fully compatible with the district's existing network equipment. Proposal should include all switches, SFPs, licensing, cabling, support and startup service needed for the project upgrades. The district would like to evaluate the cost difference between POE and POE Plus, therefore both options should be quoted. Quantities per school will be available at the mandatory site visit.

### **Access Points**

Proposed Access Points must be Extreme with license and software or equivalent. Any alternative equipment quoted must be fully compatible with the district's existing network equipment. Proposal



should include all licensing, cabling, support and startup service needed for the project upgrades. Quantities per school will be available at the mandatory site visit.

## **UPSs**

Proposed UPSs must be APC or equivalent. Any alternative equipment quoted must be fully compatible with the district's existing network equipment. Proposal should include all licensing, support and startups service needed for the project upgrades. Quantities per school will be available at the mandatory site visit.

## **Managed Internal Broadband Services**

In addition to the equipment purchases to include installation, configuration and training, the Mississippi Achievement School District is seeking proposals for Managed Internal Broadband Services as defined in the 2020 E-Rate Eligible Services List for the Wired and Wireless LAN infrastructure including all new and existing access points, controller, switches, routers, firewall, etc.

All Contracts should be quoted as a Monthly Recurring Charge (MRC). Please indicate any E-Rate eligible costs and all e-rate ineligible costs in proposal. Include any up front costs (NRC) and indicate which portion of that cost are e-rate eligible and any e-rate ineligible costs.

Contracts will have a 5-year term from July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2025. If the project is not funded until after July 1, 2020, the contract will be in effect from the day of notification of funding from USAC until June 30, 2025. The Mississippi Achievement School District will not be responsible for the Monthly Recurring Fees for months prior to a funding commitment from USAC. The contract is also contingent upon annual funding by USAC. If at any time during the contract term, USAC denies funding, the contract may be terminated without penalty.

Please provide a narrative describing your Managed Services to include remote network monitoring capabilities, reporting capabilities, trouble ticketing procedures, availability and response time if an engineer is required on site.

If proposal is totally or mostly on site support, please include estimated or guaranteed (indicating whether hours are estimated or guaranteed) number of hours per month an engineer will be on site.

## **Other Considerations**

The Mississippi Achievement School District welcomes proposals that may not meet these specifications exactly. However, such proposals must explain in detail how the alternative proposal will meet the

general specifications of this RFP and why the District should consider such an alternative. If the explanation and reasoning satisfies both the District Administration and members of the IT department of the Mississippi Achievement School District, then the proposal will be considered as if it meets specifications.

Due to the fast pace of technology, equipment and new technology is constantly emerging. Since the earliest the Mississippi Achievement School District expects to receive funding for their Category 2 project is August 1, 2020, and because many things can change with technology and within the School District, the Mississippi Achievement School District will require that the awarded vendor complete a new walk through of all facilities after funding notification to reassess the technologies quoted and the schools' needs. If technology and needs have changed from the time of acceptance of the winning proposal, Service Provider agrees to work with the school to submit a service substitution to USAC for updated equipment and services.

### **Current Equipment**

- All current equipment will remain the property of the Mississippi Achievement School District regardless of its use or non-use in the successful proposal.
- The vendor will be responsible for reconfiguration of the Mississippi Achievement School District's existing switches if any switch configuration is required to make the new wired or wireless system function properly or to integrate the LAN Switch upgrade with the existing equipment

### **Current Network Bandwidth and WAN Configuration**

The Mississippi Achievement School District is currently using INLINE WAN Circuits and Internet Access.

The winning vendor for the Category 2 project must be willing to work with the Category 1 providers to ensure that the Category 2 equipment will integrate and work seamlessly with the Category 1 services and demarcation equipment.

### **E-Rate**

This proposal request is for services to be subsidized under the Universal Services E-Rate Program for Schools and Libraries. No purchase order will be issued, no installation will occur and no services will be provided until approval of the form 471 application AND approval by Mississippi Achievement School District for the District's non-e-rate portion. If District funds are not available for the District portion, all contracts will become null and void and the project will not be implemented.

### **Right to Reject**

The Mississippi Achievement School District reserves the right to accept or reject all proposals or sections thereof when the rejection is in the best interest of the District. The Mississippi Achievement School District reserves the right to award without further discussion. Therefore, responses should be submitted initially with the most favorable terms the vendor proposes. The Mississippi Achievement School District reserves the right to reject the proposal of a vendor who has previously failed to perform properly or completed on time contracts and to reject the proposal of any vendor who in the opinion of the Mississippi Achievement School District, is not in a position to adequately perform the contract. The Mississippi Achievement School District reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, any part or

parts of a proposal, waive any technicalities/informalities, increase or reduce quantities, make modifications or specifications, and award any or the entire contract in a manner that is in the best interest of the Mississippi Achievement School District. Contracts will be awarded for each part of the RFP to the vendor or vendors submitting the proposal determined to be in the best interests of the Mississippi Achievement School District.

**SITE VISIT INFORMATION FORM**

**(Type or Print ONLY)**

*(Vendors should bring this completed to the site visit)*

|                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <b>NAME OF COMPANY</b>         |  |
| <b>ADDRESS OF HOME OFFICE</b>  |  |
| <b>CITY OF HOME OFFICE</b>     |  |
| <b>STATE OF HOME OFFICE</b>    |  |
| <b>COUNTY OF HOME OFFICE</b>   |  |
| <b>9 DIGIT HOME OFFICE ZIP</b> |  |
| <b>PHONE # OF HOME OFFICE</b>  |  |
| <b>Federal EIN</b>             |  |
| <b>DUNS Number</b>             |  |
| <b>E-Rate SPIN number</b>      |  |

**CONTACT Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**CONTACT Phone Number** \_\_\_\_\_

**CONTACT Email Address** \_\_\_\_\_

By signing below, the vendor acknowledges that the prices listed on this sheet are the prices being bid for this project and that the vendor understands that portions of this Project may be funded from E-Rate Funds. This project is subject to funding availability and contingent upon E-Rate funding.

PRINTED NAME \_\_\_\_\_ TITLE \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNED \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

## BID WORKSHEET

### PRICING INFORMATION (Total Cost for ALL Schools)

**(THIS DOCUMENT MUST BE THE TOP PAGE OF YOUR SUBMISSION)**

You must submit a standard quotation for EACH school in addition to this worksheet.

**MUST FILL IN THE TOTAL PRICE FOR THE ENTIRE ERATE ELIGIBLE PORTION OF THE PROJECT BELOW.**

E-Rate Eligible PROJECT TOTAL PRICE for Cabling \_\_\_\_\_

*(This is the total of all schools)*

E-Rate Eligible PROJECT TOTAL PRICE for Equipment \_\_\_\_\_

*(This is the total of all schools)*

**DO NOT INCLUDE INELIGIBLE COSTS IN THE ABOVE TOTALS. PRICING ON THIS PAGE IS FOR ERATE ELIGIBLE PRODUCTS AND SERVICES ONLY**

In the occurrence of discrepancies between the total costs listed above and costs from the itemized quotes per school, the costs from the itemized quotes will be deemed to be the correct cost.

Please provide a master line item pricing show sheet with your bid showing the price for each item quoted quantity 1 and any alternative items proposed.

## Required Documents

Bid Worksheet and Service Provider Quotes broken down by School

Specifications for the proposed hardware and software

References

Documentation of the vendor's certifications

E-Rate SPIN number

Qualifications and training of vendor technical staff

Trouble Ticketing Procedures and Escalation Process

Any other documentation required previously in this document

If the proposal does not meet the stated specifications, the vendor must include a detailed proposal along with a detailed explanation as to why the vendor believes the proposal will meet the stated needs of the Mississippi Achievement School District and why the district should consider their proposal.

## DISTRICT BUILDING INFORMATION

| Site                                | Street Address    | City        |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| Humphreys County High School        | 700 Cohn Street   | Belzoni, MS |
| Lonnie Hayes Administrative Complex | 401 Fourth Street | Belzoni, MS |
| Humphreys County Junior High        | 810 Cohn Street   | Belzoni, MS |
| Ida Greene Elementary               | 209 Fourth Street | Belzoni, MS |
| O. M. McNair Elementary             | 910 Church Street | Belzoni, MS |
|                                     |                   |             |
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**LETTER OF INTENT TO BID**

Charity Williams

Mississippi Achievement School District  
cnwilliams@masd.k12.ms.us

662-247-6000

Reference: Mississippi Achievement School District 2019 E-Rate Bid

This letter is to notify you that it is our present intent to submit a proposal in response to the above referenced RFP. The individual to whom information regarding this RFP should be transmitted is:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State & Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_

*Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Title*