



Pittsburgh Public Schools  
341 South Bellefield Avenue |  
Pittsburgh, PA 15213-3516  
<https://www.pghschools.org>

**The School District of Pittsburgh  
(Pittsburgh, PA)**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)**

**K-12 WORLD LANGUAGES  
PROFICIENCY ASSESSMENTS**

**Issuance Date: April 5, 2024**  
**Submission Date: May 3, 2024**

## 1. Introduction

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to solicit one or more established providers of world languages curricula to provide Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS) with evidence-based, researched, and reviewed assessment materials in World Languages that are aligned with the World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages. This RFP seeks assessment providers (“Respondents” or “Offerors”) who share a vision for ensuring that all students have access to the highest quality instructional resources aligned to the research in American Counsel on The Teaching of Foreign Languages **Proficiency Guidelines**, PA State Standards, and evidence-based practices, to ultimately increase student achievement and ensure success in college, careers, and community participation. The program should offer high-quality ACTFL aligned assessment questions with grade and age-appropriate item types aligned to speaking, reading, writing, and listening skills. The assessment system should also provide customizable reports at the district, school, grade level, classroom, and student levels. Assessments must include at least (2) tests per year in K-12 World Languages, with options to assess additionally as needed. PPS is committed to providing a high-quality education for all students therefore, this request for proposal seeks a comprehensive World Languages proficiency assessment that meets the needs of all students, including those who receive the following services: English Language Development, Specialized Learning, and Gifted.

**Adopted assessment materials will be implemented during the 2024-25 school year and all materials will need to be delivered by July 31, 2024.**

## 2. Background

The Pittsburgh Public School District is the largest of 43 school districts in Allegheny County and the second largest in Pennsylvania. The district serves approximately 20,000 students in Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 12, with approximately 60 world languages teachers. Pittsburgh Public Schools has a vision that all students will graduate high school, college, career, and life ready; prepared to complete a two-or four-year college degree or workforce certification.

## 3. Scope of Services

The requirements outlined in this RFP, although extensive, is not exhaustive and is intended to provide interested Respondents with sufficient basic information to submit proposals meeting minimum requirements but is not intended to limit a proposal’s content or exclude any relevant or essential information. Proposals should address the entire scope of services requested. In this RFP, Curricular and Instructional Assessment Materials are defined to be the comprehensive curricular and assessment materials needed for students in every classroom, aligned to the research in American Counsel on The Teaching of Foreign Languages **Proficiency Guidelines** and **World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages**, PA State Standards, evidence-based practices, and adaptable to meet the needs of students with exceptionalities and English Language Learners.

Proposals must comply with the following selection requirements as written in PPS Board Policy 106, Adoption of Instructional Materials:

- *The primary criteria for the selection of instructional materials are to address the needs of students as described in the Content Standards at each grade level. All instructional materials and supplementary materials shall reflect in both narrative and illustration a diverse American society and shall provide equal representation of African American and other cultural and ethnic groups. Adopted instructional materials should avoid stereotyped images based on race and gender. Instructional materials should reflect gender and ethnic minorities participating in leadership roles in all aspects of society. The instructional materials that are ultimately selected in each subject area must be challenging and stretch students to meet high standards.*

#### 4. Assessment and Material Requirements

- Instructional materials must be aligned to the research in American Counsel on The Teaching of Foreign Languages Proficiency Guidelines and World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages, PA State Standards, evidence-based practices, and adaptable to meet the needs of students with exceptionalities and English Language Learners. Instructional materials must be able to align with the Anticipate-Launch-Explore-Summarize instructional model.
- **World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages** are an explicit part of instruction, and the assessment demonstrates authentic connections between content standards and proficiency guidelines.
- Instructional materials are designed to build proficiency across a variety of proficiency levels with scaffolds to support student growth from one level to the next.
- Instructional materials should include teacher guidance on how to anticipate students' misconceptions and errors.
- The instructional design of the materials includes a variety of tasks that address all levels of Webb's Depth of Knowledge (DOK).
- Instructional materials must include resources that support tiered instruction in the following areas: intervention, enrichment, and acceleration.
- Integrate explicit instruction and resources to support the teaching and learning of English Language Learners.
- Digital materials include opportunities for teachers to extend learning, to personalize learning for all students, and use adaptive or other technological innovations that allow for progress monitoring and data disaggregation and reporting.
- Include digital and hard-bound print formats.

##### 4a) Assessment Purpose and Use

- The assessment must be able to assess student learning in their language of study for speaking, listening, reading, and writing. The assessment must have reliability and validity to ensure that results represent accurate information about students for the intended use of the assessment.
- Any assessment materials should be pre-made and readily available to the teachers, to decrease preparation time.
- Assessments should:
  - Provide students and teachers with a student's current level of learning in alignment to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines.
  - Assessments must effectively measure incremental student growth through highly accurate scoring of speaking and writing, and scaled scores for listening and reading.
  - Aid teachers in better understanding how to support all students in accessing grade-level content and accelerating learning.

##### 4b) Developmental appropriateness

- Assessments should be engaging in order to accurately assess students' competency rather than their level of motivation.
- The assessment must include evidence of comprehensible input strategies

##### 4c) Item Types

###### As requirements, the World Languages Assessment must:

- Include, but not be limited to, items aligned to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines and World Readiness Standards for Learning Languages.
  - Self
  - Calendar/Time

- Colors/Shapes
  - Pets/Animals
  - School/Classroom
  - Weather/Seasons
  - Clothing
  - Food/Beverage
  - Family/Friends
  - Home
  - Places
  - Community
  - Daily Routines
  - Shopping/Stores
  - Leisure/Activities
  - Health
  - Holidays/Celebrations
  - Occupations/Professions
  - Transportation Travel/Vacations
  - Future plans
  - Past events
- Any open-ended questions be free from bias in the portrayal of ethnic groups, gender, age, cultures, religion, and people with exceptionalities.

#### **4d) Usability**

##### **As requirements, the K-12 World Languages assessment must:**

- If the assessment tool is computer-based, it includes online tools capabilities (lockdown browser, highlighter, magnifier, color contrast, etc.).
- Include features that support the access of students with disabilities and are adaptable to meet the needs of students who are blind or visually impaired, deaf or hard of hearing, those with print disabilities, and students with significant cognitive disabilities.
- Allow for flexibility in meeting the needs of a wide range of students and include accommodations for special populations, including English Language Learners, students with disabilities, including students who are visually impaired and/or deaf or hard of hearing, those with print disabilities, and students with significant cognitive disabilities, and students identified as gifted and talented.
- The vendor should provide resources related to the assessment to assist teachers in ensuring their scopes and sequences are addressing the assessment content.
- Educators must have access to baseline assessments to give students to measure growth and materials must be provided to promote students' grow across the proficiency continuum.

#### **4e) Data and Reporting**

##### **As requirements, the K-12 World Languages assessment must:**

- Assessments must include at least (2) tests per year in their language of study, with options to assess additionally as needed.
- Generate data reports that include mastery as well as growth measures.
- Assessments rubrics that are grade-level appropriate
- Data reports must contain detailed performance and progress information in both written and graphical form to facilitate the use of the scores for instructional planning and decision-making.
- Allow for district and/or teacher to view and save assessment item examples.
- Allow for exporting of test results to upload into the district Data Management System.
- Provide the district the ability to disaggregate data efficiently.

- Include reports that provide parents/guardians and others with necessary information about the progress of the learner so that they may provide support at home or outside the school setting.
- If the assessment tool is computer-based, it provides accessible digitally available student-facing, teacher-facing, and parent/guardian facing data reports in multiple languages.

#### 4g) Support, Training, and Professional Development

- The proposal shall describe the initial training and professional development necessary to begin implementation of the proposed assessment system. The training plan should include mechanisms to train district teachers and central staff who, in turn, will train school staff and provide support districtwide, including availability of digital professional learning tools.
- The proposal shall allow respondent representative(s), in a timely manner, to work on a regular basis with district/school personnel to answer all questions regarding production or financial matters pertaining to the individual services required.
- What is the training required to prevent drift in assessment administration processes?
- What is the cost and how often does research show that refresher training is required?
- Can it be administered in large groups? If not, how long does the assessment take per student?
- What are the trainings provided for the use of the results for the individual students?
- How can assessment results be leveraged by the teacher to examine self-practice and improvement?
- How can the results be referenced by school and district leaders to examine school wide growth and performance,

#### 5.1 Proposal Submission and Deadline

All proposals must be submitted electronically to Ameeta Schmitt, at [aschmitt2@pghschools.org](mailto:aschmitt2@pghschools.org) by **5:00 PM EST on May 3, 2024**, with “World Languages District Assessment” as the subject line. Proposals, including any/all attachments and cover letters, should be submitted as a single PDF document. In addition, digital access to all program materials must be provided. Proposals should be submitted in accordance with the proposal guidelines outlined in this RFP. Pittsburgh Public Schools reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, waive irregularities, and to select the proposal that is determined to be the most advantageous to the school district. Late proposals will not be accepted. Proposals submitted via hard copy or fax will not be accepted.

#### 5.2 Timeline

- The Pittsburgh Public Schools is requesting proposals from experienced and qualified firms to provide the services described herein. Selection of the firm will be made based upon proposals submitted. There may also be presentations or interviews (may be conducted remotely). A timetable for the selection process is provided below:

RFP Issued	April 5, 2024
Proposals Due	May 3, 2024
Presentations (If requested)	May 14, 2024 May 15, 2024 May 16, 2024
Approval by the Board of Directors	May 22, 2024
Notification of Board Recommendation to Applicant Finalist	By May 23, 2024

Upon the release of this RFP and during the conclusion of the selection process, there shall be no communication between any prospective respondents, their lobbyist(s) or agent(s) and any employee of PPS or its elected Board of Directors, except as provided for in the RFP. Any violation of this provision by any prospective firm and/or its agent shall be grounds for immediate disqualification.

All proposal packages shall be submitted to PPS as follows:

Ameeta Schmitt  
World Languages Supervisor of Curriculum & Instruction  
Greenway Professional Development Center, Room 223c  
1400 Crucible Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15205  
**Email:** [aschmitt2@pghschools.org](mailto:aschmitt2@pghschools.org)

### **5.3 Proposal Introduction**

- **Cover Letter:** Provide the name, mailing address, e-mail address, and telephone number of the firm submitting the proposal. The cover letter must be signed by an authorized officer of the organization.
- **Table of Contents:** Clearly identify material contained in the proposal by section and page number.
- **Introduction:** Provide an overview of the company and its programs' effectiveness related to this RFP. Share data-based evidence of high student outcomes from prior and current school districts with similar student demographics as Pittsburgh Public Schools.
- **Program Overview:** Provide an overview of the program and its core components.
- **Independent External Evaluations** – For example EdReports, Evidence for ESSA, or What Works Clearinghouse.
- **Confirmation Certification of EBE Compliance:** Include the EBE participation percentage.

### **5.4 Evaluation Criteria and Selection Process**

- The contract will be awarded to the qualified proposer whose proposal is most advantageous to PPS, based on the evaluation criteria specified below. The overall evaluation feedback from reviewers will guide PPS in making an award decision based on the evaluation criteria.
- PPS reserves the right to request an interview from those companies determined to be in a competitive range and shall use the information derived from these interviews, if any, in its evaluation.
- An evaluation committee, including but not limited to math teachers, principals, chief academic officer, curriculum and instruction staff, assistant superintendents, district-level staff, board members, parents, and community members, will review the proposals. The role of the evaluation committee is to review and assess to what extent submitted proposals meet the evaluation criteria and to make a recommendation. The contract will be awarded to the qualified bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the district. The evaluation criteria will be considered but will not be the sole factor used to determine the successful bidder.

### **6.0 Platform and Solution Requirements**

- Is your online platform compatible with Clever?
- Does your program have a method of effective use within blended learning to promote independent work and teach direct instruction for large and small groups?
- Does your platform provide real-time data reporting in a dashboard with progress reports at the standard and skill level?
- Can your online program be customized to a variety of student proficiency levels?
- Does your platform have the ability to create learning paths that specifically meet the needs of individual students?

## **6.1 Product Information**

- Software product name
- Complete Product Description
- Current release version and length this product has been on the market. If you are presenting multiple products to meet our business requirements, please specify for each product.
- Total customer sites that are currently using the current version of the product, particularly with a client of our size. Please indicate if any of them are in Pennsylvania.
- Product licensing structure

## **6.2 Technical Specifications**

- Is this a web-based application or would the product need to be installed on premises?
- What browsers are compatible with this product?
- If locally hosted and installed on premises, what are the recommended/required hardware and operating system platforms for deployment.
- If locally hosted, what are the recommended/required Relational Database Management System for deployment.
- If locally hosted, do you recommend a dedicated server to support your application?
- How much bandwidth is required for connectivity?
- Is external access required?
- What ports does the application/website use?
- What are the URLs?
- Is the website HTTPS?
- How frequently are system back-ups created?
- What Operating System does the application use?
- What database does the application use?
- Do we need to purchase end user devices?
- What is the authentication method?
- How are logins managed?
- What, if any, 3rd party vendors or stakeholders involved and what is the expiration?
- Are SSLs involved and what is the expiration?
- Do we need to be aware of any legal or regulatory constraints?
- Is there inherent risk, weakness, or data threats?
- Data protection – sharing data social medial policy.
- Data privacy – what are the rules for personally identifiable information, protected health information, and other private data?
- Encryption rules?
- Do you support Clever as a single sign-on using our Active Directory (Azure)?
- What data is needed from other district systems?
- What data will be provided to other district systems?
- How often does data need to be exchanged?
- How are changes in the data handled?
- Students transferring schools, staffing changes, etc.
- How can we ensure the security of the data during exchange?
- Is there a mitigation process established?
- Is there any existing metadata, definition, or classifications of the data elements?
- Is there an existing data dictionary?
- What is the Right to Know procedure?

### **6.3 Data Exchange**

- Do you support nightly automated loads to and from your system (we have high mobility and systems must reflect at least a day-behind state)? If not, how do you reflect current student assignment and provide teachers/educators with appropriate access to student data.
- Rostering & data import into your system (in order of preference) – provide the import specifications for each method that you support for review by IT team.
  - Do you support ed-fi integration (if yes what version & have you accomplished this with)?
  - Do you have 1EdTech One Roster integration (1.1)?
  - Do you support clever integration?
  - CSV/flat file (provide import specifications)
- Integration with Learning Platforms:
  - Does your product support standardized mechanisms for import into an LMS (for example 1EdTech LTI certification)?
  - Is your product certified for the 1EdTech Learning Tools Interoperability (LTI) standard?
  - Identify locations that you have worked with that have successfully integrated your product with the district’s current LMS (currently Schoology)?
- Integration into testing platforms
  - Does your product integrate with assessment platforms?
  - What certifications does your product have for these integrations?
- Exporting data from your system? (Provide data export specifications and data dictionaries for review by IT and DREA team).
  - This must be provided in an automated, regular data load to the district that does not require staff time or intervention.
  - Ed-fi (what version and what organization have you accomplished this with)
  - API (provide documentation to include what endpoints are included in the API)
  - FTP (provide export specifications)
  - Verify that your nightly export.
    - Is provided in an automated, regular data load to the district that does not require staff time or intervention?
    - Provides individual user level information related to student usage and staff usage explain what elements address the following:
      - Fidelity of usage for students (e.g., daily time logged-in, daily time on task, lessons/segments completed, metrics providing insight into student growth)
      - Staff usage
      - Student and staff audit trails
  - Describe your data access/permissions at a minimum address:
    - How you automate the process for access provision
    - How do you establish data access and permissions for teachers and school administrators?
    - How do you establish permissions for district administrators?
    - Provide your auditing capabilities (click paths, change log, etc.)

### **6.4 Data Security and Destruction**

- The district does not allow organizations to maintain copies of student data provided by the district or generated in the system by our students beyond the scope of the contract. What are your procedures to ensure that all student data is destroyed and eliminated from your system?
- What are your policies and processes for the use of individual student data for anything outside of the delivery of the service provided by your platform?
- Security, privacy, and other agreements must be in addendums to the contracts the contract and agreement shall not reference agreements housed on websites or other changeable mediums– they may not be changed without approval and agreement from the school board.
- The application must include the following:
- The frequency of data exchange must be nightly.



- The data exchange must be automated.
- The program must have data available to support fidelity of usage (minutes logged-in, time on task, lessons/segments completed and student growth)

## **7. Technology Cost**

- What is the entire cost of implementation? You may attach a separate budget sheet if you prefer.
- One-time cost?
- Ongoing yearly cost?
- Customization rate?
- Report's development costs?
- Is there an additional cost for training?
- Is there an additional cost for support?
- What is the cost associated with integrating other third-party providers?
- If your solution is a cloud-based service, is there a service-level agreement and uptime guarantee? If not, do you provide any discount for the customers?
- Do you provide any contractual flexibility and price discount if either party decides to terminate?

### **7.1 Overall Program Cost**

- Include overall costs for the entire assessment and materials including but not limited to instructional materials and guides, interventions, assessments, professional development, program setup, delivery service, and related materials.

### **7.2 ELIGIBLE BUSINESS ENTERPRISE (EBE) PARTICIPATION**

- **EBE Goal**

An aspirational Eligible Business Enterprise (EBE) goal of 10%, for business diversity spend, has been assigned for this contract opportunity.

An EBE is a collective of firms that are certified in one or more of the following business diversity categories, registered.

in our online EBE directory, and used to track the District's diversity spend:

- Minority Business Enterprise (MBE)
- Women Business Enterprise (WBE)
- Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE)
- U. S. Small Business Administration 8(A)

- **Proposed Business Diversity Utilization**

- Is your firm a certified MBE, WBE, DBE or 8(a) firm? If so, please provide proof of current certification from a certifying entity. Self-certification is not accepted.
- Please also provide detailed information regarding any additional business entity that will assist in completing the scope of work as defined by this solicitation. This should include the:
  1. Company Name
  2. Company Contact (including title, email, and phone number)
  3. Scope of Work
  4. Dollar Amount & Percentage of Contract
  5. Company Diversity Type (provide proof for each certified firm) oMBE, WBE, DBE, 8(A), Diverse but not certified, N/A

- **Good Faith Effort**

If no portion of this contract will be awarded to a diverse business, specifically \$0 or 0% diversity spend, please provide detailed information addressing your firm's culture for business diversity & inclusion.

1. Diversity Spend: How much money did your company spend with certified MBE, WBE, DBE and/or 8(a) firms last year? What was the diversity percentage based on your total spend?

2. Diversity Count: What is the total number of MBE, WBE, DBE and/or 8(a) firms that your company contracted with last year? Please itemize by each diversity type as well.
3. Membership: Are you a member of any supplier/business diversity organizations? If so, please share the name of the organization and provide details concerning your level of involvement with that organization.

For additional documentation related to EBE policies, the proposer should visit the District's website at: <https://www.pghschools.org/mwbe> or contact Paula B. Castleberry, Minority/Women Business Coordinator at [pcastleberry1@pghschools.org](mailto:pcastleberry1@pghschools.org).