

Merced City School District
Request for Application (RFA) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
Updated February 10, 2026

Question (Q): Is this only for organizations working on the school campuses?

Response (R): No. Vendors may conduct their program at another location.

Q: Will the Request for Application webinar slides be shared?

R: Yes. The slides will be available on this website as soon as responsible:

<https://www.mercedcsd.org/departments/educational-services/state-and-federal-programs/contracted-service>
[S](#)

Q: What are the date ranges you're expecting the programs to be run?

R: MCSD is identifying vendors that can provide service beginning as soon as June 2026.

Q: Are there any funding restrictions such as vans?

R: Vendors may not purchase vehicles (vans) with District funding for their programming, respectively.

Q: What date do you expect funding announcements to be made?

R: Each January, the Governor of California releases his budget projections for school districts to begin planning for the subsequent school year. MCSD will inform prospective vendors of funding as soon as responsible.

Q: What resources are available to support the district's vision for PBIS/MTSS/SEL?

R: Resources for more information can be found by following the hyperlinks: [PBIS](#) / [MTSS](#) / [SEL](#)

Q: "School Site Listing"... not clear on what this is. Please advise

R: The "School Site Listing" (Attachment A) is a document vendors can use to list the sites that they would like to provide service at.

Q: Should I give a tutorial on the details of the program requirements to my artists (employees/staff)?

R: MCSD expects its vendors, and their employees, to be knowledgeable of our Vision, Mission, and Goals. Providing your employees with a 'tutorial' or 'training' is ideal.

Q: Based on the prior years, what recommendations would the District have for vendors on how to do these types of programs better?

R: Programs that provide specific and detailed information about their infrastructure, provide highly-qualified (educated, trained, and experienced) staff, utilize research-based methods, strategies, and materials, and communicate well lead to excellent programming.

Q: From MCSDs lessons in working with vendors, are there any things you wish vendors would do to make their applications easier to read and score?

R: MCSD desires its Prospective Vendors to use clear and concise language that describes how their program aligns with the District's Vision, Mission, and Goals. Similarly, Prospective Vendors should use precision when describing how their program will improve student outcomes (achievement, attendance, and behavior) that includes the research-based methods to which their program is built. Additionally, the Prospective Vendor should discuss how they will collect data to identify success and their plan to

communicate with families, the school, and the District regularly. Moreover, clearly detail their projected staff by type, number, estimated hours, and description of work. Finally, Prospective Vendors should outline & itemize the hourly rates of each staff, and the projected costs for supplies and materials as well as describing the indirect/administrative costs with that results in a per student / per hour rate.

Q: What are the dates Prospective Vendors should consider for the 2026-2027 school year?

R: Vendors should know two (2) key windows for service opportunities are available - Summer 2026 and the Traditional 2026-2027 school year:

Summer Programming: Monday, June 8, 2026 to Friday, August 7, 2026

Afterschool Programming (Traditional School Year): Wednesday, August 12, 2026 to June 3, 2027

[CLICK HERE to find MCSD's 2026-2027 Calendar](#)

If Prospective Vendors would like to provide service for Summer and Afterschool Programming, they will be asked to divide the contract as such - if invited.

Q: Can you clarify if you already have a full-service provider on site and if you're now seeking enrichment services for this full-service after school program?

R: MCSD has a variety of programming in the after school hours. Currently, MCSD's MARS After School Program works with MCOE's ASSETS After School Program to provide enrichment until 6:00 pm, daily. MCSD is seeking vendors to provide other types of services that are not already available to its students, families, and/or staff.

Q: Are you seeking services for after school only or for before school and/or intersessions?

R: MCSD is looking to leverage Expanded Learning Opportunities Program (ELOP) funding to provide service that can include before and/or afterschool, Saturdays, Intersessions, and/or Summer.

Q: Can you please provide the weblink to the PowerPoint?

R: Yes. The slide deck that was presented at the January 29 and January 30, 2026 Webinar will be posted at the MCSD Contracted Services website.

Q: Is there a time this is due on 2/19/26?

R: Request for Applications for the 2026-2027 School Year are due at 4:00 pm PST on Thursday, February 19, 2026 via email.

Q: Applications are due on Feb 19th; if changes are required after submission, can they still be made?

R: Updates may be made only when the District requests after the February 19, 2026 due date.

Q: Are vendors responsible to pay for the prices on the facilities agreement?

R: If awarded a contract, the fees for MCSD Facilities Use are waived.

Q: My organization's ratio is typically 1:6. Are the ratios stated on page 51 negotiable?

R: Educational research suggests that the smaller the staff to student ratio is, the more impactful instruction will be. With that, the California Department of Education (CDE) defines that "High-Impact" or "High-Dosage" ratios are best at 1:3 or 1:4. Vendors may request to be compensated with a higher ratio, but in doing so, reduces the impact and intent of "High-Impact" or "High-Dosage" supports.

Q: Is there a completed example MCSD Request for Application (RFA) available for vendors to reference.

R: There is not an example RFA that vendors can reference at this time.

Q: Site administrators are not familiar with my organization. If my Request for Application is approved can I (vendor) select the schools to provide service to?

R: MCSD Board Policy 3312 states that MCSD may contract with a vendor when a District service, or District employee does not exist or is not available. When this is the case, an approved vendor may seek an MCSD school to provide service to. However, the vendor should know that this would be dependent on if their specific program type is not already offered on the school campus, and availability of space.

Q: MCSD requires that Vendors and their employees clear a background check and complete annual Mandated Reporter training. Would that cost come out of "Administrative Costs"?

R: MCSD Request for Application item number "23. COST OF PROPOSAL PREPARATION" states that, "the cost of preparation of the response to this Invitation for Proposal is solely the responsibility of the Proposing party submitting a proposal. The District accepts or implies no liability for the cost of preparation." However, MCSD realizes that "Training" of vendors' staff may be necessary. Vendors may elect to factor reasonable training time into their proposal. The vendor would account for the cost per the type of employee - Direct or Administrative/Indirect.

Q: If a vendor's employees have their own auto insurance and they could provide proof of insurance, does that suffice? Or does she have to provide insurance for everyone?

R: A vendor shall carry auto insurance if they elect to offer transportation through their organization. The decision to subscribe to auto insurance when vendors do not transport students is up to the organization.

Q: What is an example of a "financial statement"?

R: Vendors may elect to submit their "Balance Sheet" (Statement of Financial Position) that will highlight your organization's assets (cash in bank, equipment) versus your liabilities (debts, loans). This informs the district that the organization has a healthy "current ratio." This provides the District the information that the organization is "healthy" and will not run out of funds in the middle of the contract period.

Q: At the time of the submission of the Request for Application I (vendor) do not yet have staff hired. Can I place "Employee 1"... "Employee 2"... on the lines provided on page 41 - "NOTICE TO CONTRACTORS REGARDING VALID CRIMINAL RECORDS SUMMARY".

R: Yes, however, the vendor must re-submit this document with the names of their employees prior to starting services - and each time when adding another staff member.

Q: Are staff wages considered "loaded wages"?

R: It is the Vendor's burden to cover all costs related to their organization and compensation of their employees. The District will not directly pay for items that include, but not limited to: insurance, unemployment, and/or disability.

Q: If MCSD is interested in an application but would like to make a few changes, will a meeting be held to discuss those changes or will the application be automatically denied?

R: Once a Vendor submits their Request for Application (RFA), unrequested changes may not be accepted. However, the District may ask a Vendor to clarify any item in their Request for Application. The District is requesting that Vendors clearly represent their services at one time during the Request for Application process to ensure efficiency. Changing an RFA once submitted without a District prompt may cause confusion.

Q: Do I (Vendor) need to carry Cyber Insurance?

R: The District requires all Vendors who store District data on their platform to carry at least \$2,000,000 in Cybersecurity insurance. For Vendors who do not host or store District data, the decision to carry Cybersecurity insurance is at the Vendor's discretion; however, all Vendors remain liable for security breaches resulting from their services and are encouraged to maintain coverage appropriate to their risk level.

Q: If our organization asks for use of MCSD facilities, will we be charged the rental fees at the bottom? If so, may those fees be included in our budget proposal?

R: Most times, the District will waive the fees for the Facilities Use Agreement with the Vendor if approved.

Q: If we are using MCSD facilities, may we include students who do not attend that school if space is available?

R: If an agreement is met with a Vendor, the services would be limited to MCSD students. Regardless of the funding source, the funding received is meant to provide service to MCSD students directly.

Q: If we are using our own facilities, may we include students who do not attend the district?

R: If the service is being provided at the Vendor's place of business, they may include non-MCSD students, but not charge the direct or administrative/indirect costs of the non-MCSD student to MCSD.

Q: Reference Forms - do we ask our references to fill out the forms and send them back to us to submit with our Proposal package?

R: The Reference Forms should be turned in with the RFA documentation all at once. "Loose" Reference Forms sent by a reference directly will not be accepted. The distribution, collection, and submission of the Reference Forms is the responsibility of the Vendor.

Q: For our proposed programming for the MARS program, I am wondering if we need to fill out the facilities use form. Since we are servicing an existing program and are using the space/area allotted to the MARS program, I'm wondering if that form is necessary?

R: Since your program is providing support under the direct supervision of MARS Staff, a Facilities Use Form would not be necessary.

Q: If there are forms that don't apply, am I correct to assume that we do not need to include them (fill them out) if they are not relevant to our proposed program? For example, when we take programming to the MARS sites, we don't use, keep, or look at students' information, so would we still need to fill out Appendix C?

R: All Prospective Vendors will need to complete Appendix C. This ensures the Prospective Vendor know the specific details for protecting students' identities.

Q: I noticed that there are tables made to fill in for the budgets. Are we only allowed to use those forms, or can we submit a budget table that contains the required information instead of the pre-made application tables?

R: Prospective Vendors may elect to add a table (and a narrative, if needed) to provide more details so long as it meets the minimum requirements of the original table.

Q: Lastly, we are preparing two RFAs. Would you like for those to be separate submissions, or can we submit them in the same email?

R: Vendors may submit both RFAs for their organization (if providing service during the school year and during summer) in the same email.