Pierce County Schools
Server Virtualization Project
Request for Proposals

Contact Information:

Pierce County Board of Education
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Dear Prospective Vendors,

Thank you for your interest in partnering with Pierce County Schools (PCS). The objective of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to solicit competitive bids to replace the school district's virtual server environment. Detailed project specifications and requirements are outlined below.

Submission Deadline

All proposals must be received by the Pierce County Board of Education no later than **3:00 PM EST on January 6, 2027**. Proposals must be submitted in a sealed envelope or package clearly marked: **"Server Virtualization Project."** Late or unsealed submissions will not be accepted.

Inquiries and Addenda

For questions or clarification regarding this RFP, please contact David Pittman at dpittman@pierce.k12.ga.us. All questions, official responses, and clarifications will be posted as addenda on the district website at https://www.pierce.k12.ga.us/alumnipublic/bid-opportunities. Addenda will be updated on a rolling basis as inquiries are received; vendors are solely responsible for monitoring the website and reviewing all posted addenda prior to submitting a proposal.

Sincerely,
David Pittman

Project Details

Vendor Responsibilities

The selected vendor shall provide a complete, turnkey solution and will be responsible for the following:

- **Procurement & Deployment:** Supplying and configuring all hardware and software required for the new virtual server environment in accordance with industry best practices
- **Migration & Cutover:** Executing the seamless migration and conversion of all existing district virtual machines (VMs) to the new environment, ensuring data integrity and minimal disruption to district operations
- **Warranty & Support:** Providing a minimum of five (5) years of comprehensive hardware warranty (including next-business-day onsite parts/labor) and 8x5 software technical support for the entire proposed environment
- **Knowledge Transfer & Training:** Delivering hands-on administrative training and full system documentation for four (4) PCS technology staff members covering daily operations, management, and troubleshooting

Proposed Architecture & Technical Requirements

Pierce County Schools invites vendors to propose the virtualization architecture best suited to meet the district's operational needs and budget constraints. While PCS welcomes innovative designs, the proposed solution must deliver the following core capabilities:

- **High Availability & Resiliency:** Automated failover capabilities with no single point of failure.
- **Live Migration:** Ability to move running virtual machines across hosts with zero downtime.
- **Dynamic Resource Management:** Automated resource allocation and workload balancing across compute and storage tiers.
- **Centralized Management:** A unified, single-pane-of-glass interface for managing compute, storage, and networking.
- **High-Performance Storage:** Low-latency, enterprise-grade storage architecture capable of supporting district IOPS demands.
- **Security & Compliance:** Built-in security controls aligned with K–12 data privacy and cybersecurity standards (e.g., encryption, role-based access control).
- **Backup & Recovery Compatibility:** The proposed hypervisor must expose standard, non-proprietary backup APIs (e.g., Changed Block Tracking or equivalent snapshot/image-level backup interfaces) compatible with major enterprise third-party backup platforms, or include native enterprise-grade backup capabilities without requiring proprietary agent-only workarounds.
- **Scalability:** Sufficient headroom and modular expansion capability to accommodate future district growth over the lifecycle of the system.

Preferred Platforms

Solutions built on **Microsoft Hyper-V, Nutanix AHV, Proxmox VE, HPE Morpheus VM Essentials, VergeOS, or Scale Computing** are preferred. Vendors proposing alternative hypervisors must clearly demonstrate how their platform meets all functional requirements above without introducing prohibitive recurring licensing costs.

Installation Location & Deployment Logistics

Equipment will be installed at Pierce County High School in Blackshear, GA, where a two-post rack and a 4-post square-hole rack are available. PCS staff will perform all physical racking, stacking, and cabling under the winning vendor's remote direction; vendors should not include onsite physical installation labor in their bid. The vendor is responsible for all OS and software configuration, which may be completed remotely via a provided VPN connection or over the phone with PCS staff. Ultimately, the winning bidder is responsible for ensuring the system is fully functional by the completion deadline.

Budget & Evaluation Criteria

The maximum allocated budget for this project is $100,000. While cost-effectiveness is a factor, proposals will be evaluated primarily on architectural design, system functionality, and the quality of ongoing vendor support. Our primary objective is to deploy a highly available, resilient virtual server environment that ensures optimal performance across all virtual machines.

Current Virtualization Environment

Pierce County Schools currently operates a 3-node VMware vSphere 7 and vSAN environment deployed in 2022. With existing hardware and software support agreements expiring in mid-2027, the environment is due for a lifecycle refresh. Additionally, due to escalating VMware subscription costs, the district is seeking a more predictable, cost-effective virtualization platform.

Current Infrastructure Inventory

Device Type	Model	Quantity	Support End Date
Server	Dell vSAN Ready Node R650	3	April 23, 2027
VMware	vCenter Server 7 Standard for vSphere 7	1 Instance	July 17, 2027
VMware	vSAN 7 Advanced	6 Processors	June 14, 2027
VMware	vSphere 7 Standard	6 Processors	June 14, 2027

The current equipment will be decommissioned after the migration is finalized.

Supplemental Sizing Data & Migration Scope

To assist vendors in accurately sizing the proposed solution, supplemental documentation—including VM inventory specifications (provisioned resources), performance and consumption metrics (actual compute, RAM, and IOPS utilization), and storage profiles—is provided as separate attachments to this RFP.

Migration Exclusions: All virtual machines currently marked as **Powered Off**, as well as system VMs dedicated strictly to VMware infrastructure management (e.g., vCenter Server Appliance, vSAN witness/management components), are excluded from the migration scope.

Network Specifications

Vendors must clearly outline all network connectivity requirements needed to support their proposed virtualization architecture, including:

- Required number of switch ports per host and for the overall cluster
- Required port speeds and interface types (e.g., 10GbE SFP+, 25GbE SFP28, 100GbE QSFP28, or 1/10GbE RJ45)
- Recommended network segmentation or VLAN requirements (e.g., management, VM traffic, live migration, storage/replication)

Network switches are excluded from this RFP and will be provided separately by Pierce County Schools based on the selected vendor's specifications. However, the awarded vendor must supply all server-side network interface cards (NICs), server-side transceivers, and patch or DAC cables required to connect the proposed servers to PCS-provided switches.

Power Specifications

Power connectivity will be provided via existing **Eaton SM3000RMXL2UTAA** UPS systems (3kVA / 2,880W capacity). Each UPS delivers **120V AC** power through **eight (8) NEMA 5-15/20R** outlets and **one (1) NEMA L5-30R** outlet.

All proposed hardware must support **120V input power**, and the awarded vendor must provide all necessary power cords (e.g., NEMA 5-15P/5-20P) to connect the equipment directly to the PCS UPS units. Vendors must also include estimated power consumption metrics in their proposal to verify UPS capacity.

Project Schedule & Operating Hours

Hardware delivery/staging can begin in May 2027. Work may begin on **June 1, 2027**, and all activities must be scheduled in advance with the Technology Director. Non-disruptive installation may occur at any approved time, including district closure days; however, any tasks causing system downtime must be performed outside business hours or when schools are closed.

District offices and schools will be closed on the following dates:

- May 31, 2027
- June 17, 2027
- Every Friday in June

Normal Business Hours (July 27, 2026 - May 28, 2027)	**Summer Business Hours (June 1, 2027 - July 23, 2027)**
Monday - Thursday: 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM	Monday – Wednesday: 7:00 AM – 4:30 PM
Friday: 8:00 AM - 3:30 PM	Thursday: 7:00 AM – 3:30 PM
Saturday - Sunday: Closed	Friday – Sunday: Closed

RFP Schedule of Events

The following timeline is subject to change by PCS.

Event	**Date**
Bid questions deadline	December 30, 2026
Bid submission deadline	3:00 PM EST on January 6, 2027
Bid awarded	January 11, 2027
Project completion deadline	June 30, 2027

Proposal Information

Proposals must be delivered to the Pierce County Board of Education in a sealed envelope or package clearly marked 'Server Virtualization Project' no later than 3:00 PM EST on January 6, 2027, to be considered for formal evaluation and award. Vendors may also email a digital copy in advance to David Pittman (dpittman@pierce.k12.ga.us) to allow more time for preliminary evaluation; however, emailed submissions without a corresponding physical sealed bid will be disqualified.

The last page of this RFP provides a Proposal Form for providing the total proposal cost. The completed form should be the first page of the proposal.

Vendors can provide more than one proposal. Each proposal must be on a separate proposal form.

Bid Award Process

The weighted factors contributing to the award are as follows:

Weighted Factor Breakdown:

FACTOR	WEIGHT
Cost of Services	30
Technical Components & Design	35
Support Offering & References	35
TOTAL	**100**

Point Award Process

Points awarded for Cost of Services will not be subjective but will be based on a fixed formula. The formula for awarding points for the factor of cost will be:

Dollar amount of lowest priced vendor = LPV
Dollar amount of other responding vendor = RV
Each vendor's Cost of Services points awarded = 30 * LPV / RV

Therefore, the lowest priced vendor that meets specifications will be awarded 30 points for the Cost of Services factor. All other vendors will be awarded points based on their proximity in price to the lowest priced vendor. Example: A vendor with a bid twice as expensive as the lowest priced vendor will mathematically receive 15 points.

The judge(s) will weigh all factors other than Cost of Services on a five-point scale, up to the maximum points available in each weighted factor. Example: for "Technical Components & Design", judge(s) will award either: 0, 5, 10, 15, ... or the maximum 35 points. Individual scorecards from multiple committee members will be averaged to determine total points.

Experience and References

Vendors should provide three references, preferably from Georgia school districts. The organization name, project description, contact person, phone, and email should be stated for each reference. Proposals can be disqualified based on reference checks.

Award or Rejection of Vendor Proposals

The final award will be made to the vendor offering the solution deemed to be in the best interest of PCS. PCS will be the sole judge in making such determination. PCS reserves the right to reject any or all proposals. The decision as to the acceptance of any proposal is final.

Pierce County Schools

Proposal Form
Server Virtualization Project

Vendors must include this “Proposal Form” in the proposal. **The completed form should be the first page of the proposal.** Detach or copy the form as Cover Page 1 of the submission. This form should include the total cost of all required components of the solution. Vendors should also provide their own cost allocation sheet that itemizes the cost of each individual component of the proposal.

Vendor Name:	
Vendor Location (City, State):	
Total Bid Amount:	**$**