

El Camino Real Academy

RFP #0001-2425 Questions + Responses

1. Are firms allowed to fulfill the 5% In-State preference through a subcontractor?
 - a. **No**
2. Are firms allowed to fulfill the 5% New Mexico resident preference through a subcontractor?
 - a. **No**
3. Could the School please confirm which certifying agencies are accepted for Veteran-Owned Business verification?
 - a. **Apply through the SBA's Veteran Small Business Certification (VetCert) program, which took over the certification function from the Department of Veterans Affairs as of January 1, 2023.**
4. Are firms allowed to subcontract?
 - a. **Only with prior approval from the school - if intending to subcontract this would need to be in the proposal, along with the proposed vendor to subcontract, in order to receive approval.**
5. What is the budget of this solicitation?
 - a. **The budget depends on the position being staffed/services provided, but we anticipate a full-time IT Technician as well as managed IT services to be included in the total vendor annual budget. On the final page of the RFP you will find the price proposal page.**
6. Is it mandatory to have previous experience providing services to public schools, private schools and institutions of higher learning?
 - a. **No, but highly desired, given the unique challenges and needs of a public charter school.**
7. To what extent will a lack of prior experience working in New Mexico impact the evaluation criteria?
 - a. **There is no specific evaluation criteria for 'working in New Mexico,' but weight is given to companies who have experience with schools/districts, both in NM and nationally, as well as with New Mexico Entities (governmental, public, private.)**
8. Are firms allowed to meet the 3 references requirement through a subcontractor?
 - a. **Yes, see subcontractor question #4 above. The subcontractor would need to be identified in the RFP submission.**
9. Can firms provide commercial references?

- a. **Yes**
- 10. Could the School kindly elaborate on what they mean by "relevant contractual relationship to the entity" in the references requirement?
 - a. **We want to confirm what relationship the references have with you (the entity), whether that is as a vendor, etc.**
- 11. In the evaluation criteria firms will be evaluated the following: "Experience with Schools or Districts, in New Mexico and Nationally" and "Experience with New Mexico Entities." Could the School please clarify if firms are allowed to meet this evaluation criteria using the experience of a subcontractor?
 - a. **Yes, see subcontractor question #4 above. The subcontractor would need to be identified in the RFP submission.**
- 12. In the event that firms are subcontracting, could the School please confirm if the subcontractor can bid as a prime vendor, too?
 - a. **Yes, see subcontractor question above. The subcontractor would need to be identified in the RFP submission.**
- 13. Is the School looking for firms to source, vet, screen, and recruit the requested positions from the market or for firms to provide their inhouse personnel to perform the services?
 - a. **We prefer inhouse personnel for the services requested.**
- 14. Is the School looking for consulting services?
 - a. **Yes, managed network services.**
- 15. Are firms required to provide health benefits? If so, will firms be reimbursed for this expense?
 - a. **Unclear - again, we anticipate the position would be from inhouse personnel and as such, benefits-eligible employees would already be enrolled. If the firm has to source, vet, screen, and recruit the positions, we would expect insurance/benefits cost to be included within the price proposal.**
- 16. Are firms required to pay Holidays, PTO, Sick Leaves, etc., to the consultants placed? If so, will firms be reimbursed for this expense?
 - a. **See question #15.**
- 17. Are there vendors currently performing the services required in this solicitation? If yes, could the School please provide the incumbent information?
 - a. **Yes, Yucca Group LLC**
- 18. Would the School kindly provide an example of possible positions that may be requested under this solicitation?
 - a. **Technology Consulting, Implementation, System support**
 - b. **Technology support staff (on-site help desk)**
- 19. Under APPENDIX A, the following is stated: "For Work authorized by a Purchase Order, Contractor shall be available on an "as needed/call out" basis to begin performance of

the Work no later one calendar day after notification by the School." Could the School kindly clarify if this statement applies to this solicitation? If so, could the School please confirm if providing the resources within one day will be mandatory?

- a. **We anticipate that this proposal will result in an on-site, full time IT tech. However, managed IT services are sporadic and require the vendor managing those services to be "on call" in the event we need technical support. Given the operations of a K-12 school, response within one day is absolutely necessary, and as such, mandatory.**

20. Could the School please clarify if firms are allowed to provide a position-based pricing?

- a. **Yes, this can be included (in addition to the per hour pricing) on the price proposal page found on the last page of the RFP.**

21. Under section IV. TECHNICAL PROPOSAL PACKAGE, point D, point 1, the following is stated: "Provide background information on the company, including history, leadership team, staffing highlights and current capability including the number of professionals available for each category to provide contract." Could the School please clarify if by "leading team" they refer to the key personnel in managing the School's Account?

- a. **This is correct.**

22. Under section IV. TECHNICAL PROPOSAL PACKAGE, point D, point 1, the following is stated: "Provide background information on the company, including history, leadership team, staffing highlights and current capability including the number of professionals available for each category to provide contract." Could the School kindly elaborate on what they mean by "capability"?

- a. **Capability refers to the company's scope of services offered.**

23. Are firms required to present resumes of the staff who will perform the services directly to the school along with the proposal submission? If so, are firms allowed to provide sample resumes?

- a. **No, but if a firm wishes to subcontract the subcontracting company must be identified in the RFP.**

24. If actual resumes are required with the proposal submission, could the School confirm whether firms may substitute proposed personnel with equally or more qualified candidates in the event that original team members become unavailable at the time of contract execution?

- a. **N/A**

25. Are off shore resources allowed?

- a. **No**

26. Are on shore resources allowed?

- a. **Yes**

27. Are remote resources allowed?

- a. **Partially, but we do request that in the event a company is awarded the RFP and staffs an IT on-site help desk personnel, that the position be in-person. Additionally, any managed system services that require on-site work would necessitate that as well.**
- 28. Are firms allowed to provide hourly rate ranges?
 - a. **We have requested the “NOT TO EXCEED COST PER HOUR” on the final page of the RFP in order to score the RFPs, if the company has a range, they are welcome to include it, but are asked to still provide a “not to exceed” dollar amount.**
- 29. Could the School please grant an extension on the due date?
 - a. **Unfortunately, we are unable to extend the due date.**
- 30. In Proposal Declaration, in the blank space PROPOSAL WILL REMAIN FIRM UNTIL 90 (ninety) DAYS AFTER THE PROPOSAL OPENING DATE OR LONGER IF SPECIFIED BY VENDOR, could the School please clarify if vendors should initial this blank space or sign it?
 - a. **Vendors may initial this blank.**
- 31. In the Proposal Declaration, under the blank space labeled "DELIVERY DATE," could the School please confirm whether this refers to the proposal submission delivered date, the submission deadline, or the expected delivery date of the services to be performed? If neither of these applies, could the School kindly provide guidance on what should be entered in this section?
 - a. **The Delivery Date refers to the date the company submits the proposal.**
- 32. In the Proposal Declaration, under the blank space labeled "TERMS," could the School please confirm whether vendors are expected to indicate the duration for which the proposal will remain firm, or the term of the anticipated contract? If neither of these applies, could the School kindly provide guidance on what should be entered in this section?
 - a. **Terms refers to the duration the proposal will remain firm, in the event that the company specifies it shall remain longer than 90 days.**
- 33. In the Proposal Declaration, under the blank space labeled "DELIVERY DATE," if vendors are expected to provide the delivery date of the services to be performed, could the School please clarify which date should be entered?
 - a. **See #31; date of proposal submission.**
- 34. Are electronic signatures allowed?
 - a. **We require wet signatures in the RFP.**
- 35. Could the School please clarify how many vendors will be awarded?
 - a. **This depends on the offers submitted and the scopes of work covered; at least one.**

36. Could the School please confirm if the proposal should be submitted in a specific format (e.g., binders, folders, or loose sheets)?
- a. **Proposals are requested bound, please, but the manner in which they are bound can be at the vendor's discretion.**
37. Are there any specific requirements for sealing and labelling the submission package (e.g., company name, RFP number, etc.)?
- a. **Yes, see pages 2-7 of the RFP.**
38. Is an electronic copy of the submission required along with the physical copies?
- a. **It is not required at the time of submission, but we will request an electronic copy from vendor(s) receiving the award.**
39. Are there any specific packaging instructions, such as separate envelopes for different sections of the proposal?
- a. **Yes, see pages 2-7 of the RFP.**
40. Should vendors submit any USB copies?
- a. **It is not required at the time of submission, but we will request an electronic copy from vendor(s) receiving the award.**
41. How many copies of the proposal are required for submission (e.g., original and duplicate copies)?
- a. **Only one copy is required at the time of submission.**
42. Should all forms and documents be signed in wet ink, or are electronic signatures acceptable?
- a. **All forms and documents that require signing should be signed with wet signatures.**
43. Could vendors apply only to technology staff category, or is it mandatory to apply for all categories?
- a. **Please see pg. 3 of RFP "It is not necessary to provide every service listed for a successful, responsive proposal. Only list service providers that can be readily provided should the need arise."**
44. Is the certificate of Insurance required with the response?
- a. **Certificates of insurance with the coverage as cited above, must be submitted not less than ten (10) working days prior to the execution of this Contract.**
45. In case firms are submitting confidential information in the response, is it required to provide a redacted version?
- a. **We do not anticipate confidential information being disclosed, but in the event that is, we ask that it be redacted.**
46. Could the School please clarify what licenses and permits are required for this solicitation? If so, in the event that vendors do not currently possess them, would it be acceptable to provide proof that they are in the process of obtaining them?

- a. **Any personnel working directly with students would need a background check (done through the school) before beginning their assignment.**
- 47. Could the School please clarify if vendors should attach APPENDIX A to the response? If yes, in what section should vendors attach it?
 - a. **Vendors should only attach the Appendix' specified - Appendix A is the sample contract that would be utilized when a vendor received an award.**
- 48. Is FERPA compliance a prerequisite for bidding on this solicitation, and if so, what documentation is required to demonstrate compliance?
 - a. **Yes. All work done in schools/relating to students educational records must be FERPA compliant. No further documentation is required.**
- 49. Could the School please clarify if vendors should attach APPENDIX C to the response? If yes, in what section should vendors attach it?
 - a. **No, Vendors should only attach the Appendix' specified**
- 50. Could the School please clarify whether vendors who have not made any campaign contributions are still required to complete Appendix E – Campaign Contribution Disclosure? If so, how should vendors with no contributions appropriately complete the form?
 - a. **You would sign the section with the description: "NO CONTRIBUTIONS IN THE AGGREGATE TOTAL OVER TWO HUNDRED FIFTY DOLLARS (\$250) WERE MADE TO AN APPLICABLE PUBLIC OFFICIAL BY ME, A FAMILY MEMBER OR REPRESENTATIVE."**
- 51. In APPENDIX C is stated "8. Delivery Time may be a consideration in the award of the Proposal." could the School please confirm if vendors should address this point in the proposal besides the blank space in the Proposal Declaration? If yes, in what section of the response should vendors include it
 - a. **This is indicated in the declaration, based on the time and date the vendor submits their proposal.**
- 52. Could the School please clarify if firms can utilize subcontractors to meet the requirements of this opportunity?
 - a. **With the exception of the in-state preference, firms are able to utilize subcontractors, but must submit those subcontractors with the RFP.**
- 53. If a vendor exhausts their assigned budget, can the purchase order (PO) be extended with additional funds?
 - a. **Yes, but only with authorization by the Executive Director.**
- 54. Are the vendors allowed to subcontract at the Task Order Level?
 - a. **With the exception of the in-state preference, firms are able to utilize subcontractors, but must submit those subcontractors with the RFP.**

55. Are there any sales reporting requirements we should be aware of? If so, what is the expected submission frequency, and are zero sales reports required?
- a. **No.**
56. Will vendors have the flexibility to change or use additional subcontractors at the task order level, if necessary?
- a. **Only subcontractors identified in the RFP will be allowed.**
57. How many departments will benefit from the MSA? Could the School please share the list of those departments?
- a. **One (directly), our IT department. However, on-site IT support is available and benefits our entire student and staff population.**
58. What is the expected response time for on-site support?
- a. **Immediate, unless there is a backlog of support requests.**
59. Would you be open to tiered remote and on-site support (e.g., Level 1-3 handled remotely, Level 4+ handled on-site)?
- a. **Potentially - however, on-site IT desk support generally handles lower tiered tickets (students with laptop issues, etc.) and would be required on-site.**
60. Are there specific locations that require faster on-site response times?
- a. **N/A, one location.**
61. Can some maintenance tasks be scheduled in off-hours or school breaks to minimize disruptions?
- a. **Yes, preferred.**
62. What are the service hours for IT support (business hours only, 24/7, after-hours emergency support)?
- a. **Instructional hours (with a little time before, and after classes end). 7:00 - 3:30 PM MST.**
63. Can you provide an updated inventory of all networking hardware (routers, switches, firewalls)?
- a. **We anticipate that as part of managed IT services, we will analyze our current infrastructure and identify the areas that are aging and will need to be replaced. We also anticipate working with our IT partners to support us in sourcing, purchasing, and installing those upgrades/replacements.**
64. Do you have any aging infrastructure that needs upgrading during the contract term?
- a. **We anticipate that as part of managed IT services, we will analyze our current infrastructure and identify the areas that are aging and will need to be replaced. We also anticipate working with our IT partners to support us in sourcing, purchasing, and installing those upgrades/replacements.**
65. Are there existing network diagrams available to understand your topology and dependencies?

- a. **We anticipate that as part of managed IT services, we will analyze our current infrastructure and identify the areas that are aging and will need to be replaced. We also anticipate working with our IT partners to support us in sourcing, purchasing, and installing those upgrades/replacements.**
66. How often do you perform network assessments to ensure security and optimal performance?
- a. **We anticipate that as part of managed IT services, we will analyze our current infrastructure and identify the areas that are aging and will need to be replaced. We also anticipate working with our IT partners to support us in sourcing, purchasing, and installing those upgrades/replacements.**
67. Do you have redundancy measures in place to maintain uptime in case of equipment failures?
- a. **We anticipate that as part of managed IT services, we will analyze our current infrastructure and identify the areas that are aging and will need to be replaced. We also anticipate working with our IT partners to support us in sourcing, purchasing, and installing those upgrades/replacements.**
68. Are all staff and students on a Microsoft email environment? If not, what are they currently using?
- a. **All staff and students use Google workspace.**
69. Do you utilize any centralized network management software?
- a. **We anticipate that as part of managed IT services, we will analyze our current infrastructure and identify the areas that are aging and will need to be replaced. We also anticipate working with our IT partners to support us in sourcing, purchasing, and installing those upgrades/replacements.**
70. VoIP System Support (if applicable) - Can you provide details on your VoIP system, including models, software versions, and existing maintenance contracts?
- a. **We do use a VoIP system, details will be provided to awarded vendors when/if applicable.**
71. What are the biggest VoIP-related challenges you face today (e.g., call quality, outages, integrations)?
- a. **None**
72. Do you require on-prem VoIP support, remote support, or a hybrid approach?
- a. **No**
73. Do you plan to expand, upgrade, or replace your VoIP system during this contract term?
- a. **No**
74. How is emergency 911 calling configured across different locations?
- a. **Details will be provided to awarded vendors when/if applicable.**
75. What cybersecurity policies, compliance mandates, and frameworks must we follow?

- a. **All relevant New Mexico and Federal policies, mandates, and frameworks pertaining to Governmental entities, record keeping, FERPA, HIPAA, etc.**
- 76. Can you provide details on your firewall and endpoint security solutions (e.g., vendors, configurations)?
 - a. **Details will be provided to awarded vendors when/if applicable.**
- 77. Do you use SIEM or SOC services for advanced threat detection and response?
 - a. **Details will be provided to awarded vendors when/if applicable.**
- 78. Are there specific email security concerns (e.g., phishing, impersonation, data leakage)?
 - a. **Details will be provided to awarded vendors when/if applicable.**
- 79. What is your policy on web filtering? Are there different levels of access for students vs. staff?
 - a. **Universal web filtering across all groups.**
- 80. What are your business continuity objectives (e.g., Recovery Time Objective (RTO) and Recovery Point Objective (RPO))?
 - a. **Details will be provided to awarded vendors when/if applicable.**
- 81. Do you require daily, weekly, or real-time backups for critical systems?
 - a. **Partial backups daily, full backups weekly.**
- 82. Can you share details on your current SAN storage and backup infrastructure?
 - a. **Details will be provided to awarded vendors when/if applicable.**
- 83. Have you tested your disaster recovery plan recently? If so, what were the results?
 - a. **Details will be provided to awarded vendors when/if applicable.**
- 84. Are cloud-based disaster recovery solutions (e.g., Azure, AWS) an option you're considering?
 - a. **Details will be provided to awarded vendors when/if applicable.**
- 85. How many end users require support? (Please list number of staff and students separately.)
 - a. **Maximum 50 staff members, maximum 350 students (current year).**
- 86. How many devices are currently active within your network?
- 87. What is the current structure of your IT help desk?
 - a. **On site IT help desk, managed IT services**
- 88. Do you have internal IT staff handling Level 1 support?
 - a. **Not employees of the school. We are seeking to staff this position through this RFP.**
- 89. What is the average ticket volume per month, and what are the most common issues reported?
 - a. **Approximately 100 tickets, the most common issue is students computers "not charging".**
- 90. What ticketing system do you use, or would you prefer the vendor to provide one?

- a. **We prefer the vendor to provide the system they are familiar with.**
- 91. What are your expectations regarding response time for critical vs. non-critical issues?
 - a. **Response time for critical issues must be within 24 hours, given the nature of school operations. Non-critical issues have variable response times, but an on-site IT help desk will generally handle the non-critical issues.**
- 92. Would you prefer a dedicated help desk team or a shared service model?
 - a. **Dedicated help desk team.**
- 93. What is the size of your Active Directory environment (number of users, groups, policies)?
 - a. **Approximately 600 (users + groups + policies)**
- 94. How are new users provisioned, and what role does IT play in onboarding/offboarding?
 - a. **New staff and new students must be provisioned with multiple accounts/access levels, IT plays an integral role in this. The only role in offboarding is deactivating accounts.**
- 95. Do you require single sign-on (SSO) integrations for Microsoft 365, Google Workspace, or other platforms?
 - a. **No.**
- 96. Are there specific applications or platforms that require integration with Active Directory?
 - a. **Details will be provided to awarded vendors when/if applicable.**
- 97. How do you currently track inactive accounts to ensure security compliance?
 - a. **All accounts are tracked, enabled and disabled within Google workspace admin.**
- 98. Are we expected to fully manage all hardware/software license renewals or only provide recommendations?
 - a. **A mix of both, where applicable.**
- 99. What license types and renewal cycles are currently in place?
 - a. **Assorted, across hardware and software (support, licensing, etc.) Details will be provided to awarded vendors when/if applicable.**
- 100. Would you be open to leveraging bulk procurement discounts for equipment purchases?
 - a. **Yes.**
- 101. Are there specific vendors or technology stacks you are required to use, or do we have flexibility?
 - a. **Assorted, Details will be provided to awarded vendors when/if applicable.**
- 102. How do you track hardware lifecycle management, and do you need vendor support in this area?

- a. **Lifecycles are tracked by IT in collaboration with the schools finance department, and yes we do request vendor support in this area.**
- 103. What is your current internet bandwidth usage, and do you anticipate needing upgrades?
 - a. **Total bandwidth is 1 Gb, we do not anticipate needing upgrades.**
- 104. Can you provide details on your ISP agreements, including SLAs and escalation processes?
 - a. **Internet through UPN, Details will be provided to awarded vendors when/if applicable.**
- 105. Who is responsible for troubleshooting WAN issues—internal IT, ISP, or a mix?
 - a. **Mix.**
- 106. Do you require redundant internet connections at any sites for failover protection?
 - a. **No.**
- 107. Are there any planned expansions or changes to your WAN connectivity in the next 3-5 years?
 - a. **No.**
- 108. What are the biggest IT challenges you currently face with your existing provider or IT setup?
 - a. **Aging equipment.**
- 109. Are you looking for a full-service IT partner, or do you expect to retain some IT functions in-house?
 - a. **We are looking for a full-service IT partner who can provide services, These services include, but are not limited to: Technology Consulting, Implementation and ongoing System Support, Technology support staff (help desk), Technology Project Management, Technology Install**
- 110. How do you currently track IT service performance? Are there specific KPIs or SLAs you expect from vendors?
 - a. **Through interactions and outcomes with students/staff, given the majority of the work and interactions take place there.**
- 111. What level of visibility and reporting would you like on network performance, security, and IT support?
 - a. **Bi-weekly meetings with administration to discuss general strategy and implementation.**
- 112. Are there any specific compliance requirements (FERPA, CIPA, HIPAA) we need to meet?
 - a. **All work done relating to students educational records must be FERPA compliant. We do not take credit card payments or information. Occasionally**

we deal with student medical records, which also would require HIPAA compliance.

113. Does the on-site person work the school staff schedule only, or are some days required during breaks and summer?

a. Generally, yes, but a few off-schedule days may be requested to implement changes or get computers ready for testing.

114. General Appendix A in the scope mentions Accounting and clerical duties along with IT. What % of each are required?

a. This is at the discretion of the vendor/company submitting a proposal. These are the areas of need the school has identified, but please refer to page 3 of the RFP: "It is not necessary to provide every service listed for a successful, responsive proposal. Only list service providers that can be readily provided should the need arise."

115. Is this a solicitation to establish a new contract or is there a previous contract to it?

a. This is a solicitation to establish a new contract.