

March 13, 2018

# Independent Evaluation of the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) Request for Proposals (RFP) Question and Answer Document

All references to Request for Proposals (RFP) in this document are to the Independent Evaluation of the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) Request for Proposals that was released on February 6, 2018. The answers have been organized by sections of the RFP, as submitted by the potential bidders, without reference to the individual or company asking the question.

## Section 2 – Background

1. Who completed the first three-year evaluation of CAASPP, and are results public and/or accessible to bidders?

Answer: The Human Resources Research Organization (HumRRO) is completing the first three-year evaluation. CAASPP evaluation reports are publically available on the California Department of Education’s website at the following website: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/ca/caaspprptstudies.asp>.

1. What specific studies have already been conducted for Peer Review purposes (i.e., that would not be duplicated)? Does CDE have any expectation that the contractor would conduct an audit of these studies?

Answer: See RFP Section 3, Scope of Project, for a description of the required work to be addressed in the bidder’s technical proposal.

1. Please confirm that the scope of work encompasses all components of the CAASPP, including those under development. Would the contractor be expected to audit development processes for assessments under development as part of the scope?

Answer: See Section 2, Background for components of the CAASPP System. See Section 3, Scope of Project, for a description of the required work to be addressed in the bidder’s technical proposal.

1. Where can bidders access a list of a current CAASPP contractors and subcontractors?

Answer: Educational Testing Service (ETS) is the prime contractor for the current CAASPP test administration contract. Below is a list of subcontractors for the current CAASPP test administration contract:

1. American Institutes for Research (AIR)
2. Measurement Incorporated (MI)
3. WestEd
4. Red Dog Records (RDR)
5. In-Touch Insight Systems (In-Touch)
6. The RFP states, “Aspects of SBAC assessments that are evaluated by SBAC or UC Regents, or a future SBAC fiscal agent, will also be excluded from the evaluation.” Can CDE provide a set of examples of such studies (not necessarily all-inclusive, but illustrative? Is there a contingency if a bidder proposes studies that are subsequently determined to be the responsibility of SBAC or a future fiscal agent?

Answer: See Section 3, Scope of Project, for a description of the required work to be addressed in the bidder’s technical proposal. Information on the studies that have been conducted by the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium may be found at: [https://www.smarterbalanced.org](https://www.smarterbalanced.org/).

1. The independent evaluation 2017–18, 2018–19, and 2019–20 annual reports are required to be completed, approved, and submitted to the Governor, the Superintendent, the State Board of Education (SBE), and the chairs of the education policy committees in both houses of the Legislature by October 31of each year. Who bears ultimate responsibility to submit the annual reports?

Answer: Annual Evaluation Reports are submitted to the CDE. See RFP, Section 3, Scope of Project, Task 2.4 Annual Evaluation Reports for requirements regarding the Annual Evaluation Reports.

## Section 3 – Scope of Project

### Section 3, Task 1

1. What cost responsibilities should the vendor assume for the meetings outlined in Task 1?

Answer: See RFP Section 5, Proposal Specifications, Subsection 5.3 Cost Proposal Requirements, Item C.

1. How many SBE meetings does the CDE anticipate will require contractor attendance in each contract year?

Answer: See Addendum #2, Section 3, Scope of Project, Task 1.3 State Board of Education Meetings.

1. Can CDE acknowledge that the contractor does not assume responsibility for delays caused by CDE approval not being provided within the agreed upon timeframe?

Answer: See RFP Section 3, Scope of Project, Task 1.6 CDE Approval Schedule Requirements.

1. Can CDE define more specifically “accept financial responsibility for failure to meet agreed-upon timelines and produce deliverables that are of high quality and satisfactory to CDE”?

Answer: See RFP Section 3, Scope of Project, Task 1.6 CDE Approval Schedule Requirements, “The successful bidder is responsible for any costs associated with making modifications to deliverables necessary to obtain the CDE approval.”

1. Subtask 1.5 requires attendance at CAASPP Contract Annual Planning Meetings “during the life of the contract” (RFP, p13). Should the Technical Proposal include such a meeting in the 2017–18 Cost Proposal? For planning purposes, during what month is that meeting typically held?

Answer: See Addendum #2, Section 3, Scope of Project, Task 1.5 CAASPP Contract Annual Planning Meetings.

### Section 3, Task 2.3

1. What is the role of the TAG in the evaluation plan development, instrumentation and approval of evaluation tasks or deliverables, if any?

Answer: See RFP Section 3, Scope of Project, Task 1.4 Technical Advisory Group Meetings.

1. Section 2.3 of the RFP specifies an Evaluation Plan “outlining the details of the major studies to be undertaken during the contract period.”  The major studies will also be discussed in Tasks 3 and 4.  Can CDE provide guidance on the level of detail expected in Section 2.3 so we can avoid redundancy with our responses in Tasks 3 and 4?

Answer: See RFP Section 3, Scope of Project, Task 2.3, Evaluation Plan, for a description of the required work to be addressed in the bidder’s technical proposal for Task 2.3. See RFP Section 3, Scope of Project, Tasks 3 and 4, for a description of the required work to be addressed in the bidder’s technical proposal for Tasks 3 and 4.

1. Subtask 2.3 states that the Technical Proposal must include a draft Evaluation Plan. Components required in the draft Evaluation Plan (RFP, p19) would logically be addressed in several different places in the Technical Proposal, including Subtask 1.7 (Comprehensive Plan and Schedule for Project Activities) and the entirety of Tasks 3 and 4. To be responsive to Subtask 2.3, must the bidder submit a self-contained document that represents a draft Evaluation Plan?

Answer: See RFP Section 3, Scope of Project, Task 2.3, Evaluation Plan, for a description of the required work to be addressed in the bidder’s technical proposal for Task 2.3.

### Section 3, Task 2.5

1. Alignment Study Report: Is there a due date for this report?

Answer: See Addendum #2, Section 3, Scope of Project, Task 2.5, Alignment Study Reports.

1. Subtask 2.5 (RFP, p20) specifies preparation of a stand-alone report for the CAST and CAA for Science alignment studies, but does not specify a quantity of reports to be printed. Are hard copies of each stand-alone study report required? If so, how many?

Answer: See Addendum #2, Section 3, Scope of Project, Task 2.5, Alignment Study Reports.

### Section 3, Task 2.6

1. Case Study Report: Is there a due date for this report?

Answer: See Addendum #2, Section 3, Scope of Project, Task 2.6 Case Study Report.

1. Can you describe the content, length of report and time spent in doing a case study as outlined in the RFP. Is the case study referenced in 2.6 page 20, the same as the work stated in Task 4 page 25 paragraph 3? How many case studies does CA expect will take place through this work? Is there a sample case study that can be shared?

Answer: See Addendum #2, Section 3, Scope of Project, Task 2.6 Case Study Report. For the number of case studies required, see RFP Section 3, Scope of Project, Task 4 for a description of the required work to be addressed in the bidder’s technical proposal. There are no sample case studies available.

1. Subtask 2.6 refers to preparing a single Case Study Report. The study itself will “take place over the life of the contract” (RFP, p25). To allow for analysis of 2020 student data to be included in the Case Study, is it expected that the single stand-alone Case Study Report will be delivered at the same time as the 2020 Annual Evaluation Report and the Comprehensive Final Report, which are both required by September 30, 2020? Are hard copies of the stand-alone study report required? If so, how many? (p. 20)

Answer: See Addendum #2, Section 3, Scope of Project, Task 2.6 Case Study Report.

1. Are there any restrictions on providing incentives for case study participants (e.g., teachers, principals, LEA staff, LEAs), including survey respondents?

Answer: Incentives are not a reimbursable cost. See Addendum #2, Section 3, Scope of Project, Task 2.6 Case Study Report.

### Section 3, Task 2.7

1. Subtask 2.7 specifies preparation of a Comprehensive Final Report, but it does not specify a quantity of reports to be printed. Are hard copies of the Comprehensive Final Report required? If so, how many? (p. 20)

Answer: See Addendum #2, Section 3, Scope of Project, Task 2.7, Comprehensive Final Report.

### *Section 3, Task 3*

1. Does CDE have participant requirements for the alignment studies as defined in the scope of work?

Answer: See Addendum #2, Section 3, Scope of Project, Task 3, Alignment Studies.

1. What responsibility does the contractor have for costs incurred by participants and other costs associated with the alignment studies?

Answer: See Addendum #2, Section 3, Scope of Project, Task 3, Alignment Studies.

1. When must the Alignment Studies prepared for the CAST and for the CAA for Science be completed? Are they submitted to the USDE by the contractor or by CDE?

Answer: See Addendum #2, Section 3, Scope of Project, Task 2.5, Alignment Study Reports. For submission of deliverables to the CDE and CDE’s approval schedule requirements, See RFP Section 3, Task 1.6 CDE Approval Schedule Requirements.

1. What is the role of the CDE in convening or recruiting the panel of educators for review of test specifications blueprints and test forms if any? Will the CDE have any additional specifications regarding the makeup of the panel of educators or expert reviewers?

Answer: See Addendum #2, Section 3, Scope of Project, Task 3, Alignment Studies.

1. Are the alignment studies to be conducted based on items/forms developed for the field test of the CAST in 2017-18 or the items/form for when the test is operational? Are the alignment studies to be conducted based on items/forms developed for the CAA for Science based on the pilot, field or operational test?

Answer: See RFP Section 3, Scope of Project, Task 3.1, CAST Alignment Study, for a description of the required work to be addressed in the bidder’s technical proposal for Task 3.1. See RFP Section 3, Task 3.2, California Alternate Assessment for Science Alignment Study, for a description of the required work to be addressed in the bidder’s technical proposal for Task 3.2.

1. What is the timeline for the availability of the CAST and CAA for Science for the evaluation contractor if this is known at this time?

Answer: See RFP Section 2, Background, Table 1.1: CAASPP System – Test Administration Schedule.

### *Section 3, Task 4*

1. How will the contractor access Smarter Balanced Interim Assessment results?

Answer: See Addendum #2, Section 3, Scope of Project, Task 4.2, Data Collection.

1. How will CDE provide access to the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System, databases for LEA personnel, etc.?

Answer: There is no classroom or personnel data available from CALPADS. See Addendum #2, Section 3, Scope of Project, Task 4.2, Data Collection for how the CALPADS data will be provided.

1. Can you please clarify the expectations for when and how often the steps of the study described as Task 4 are to be completed? Is the expectation that these steps will be repeated for each of the three years' reports, or is this a separate study to be completed only once over the life of the contract? If it is to be completed only once, when is the deadline for its completion? (p. 25 - 27)

Answer: See RFP Section 3, Scope of Project, Task 4, Evaluation of Impact on Instruction and Student Learning for a description of the required work to be addressed in the bidder’s technical proposal for Task 4. See Addendum #2, Section 3, Scope of Project, Task 2.6, Case Study Report for the due date for the report.

1. What student demographic variables will be associated with individual students' test scores on the Smarter Balanced Assessments result data sets (either by merging via student ID numbers or those present in the existing data sets)? (p. 25 - 27)

Answer: See Addendum #2, Section 3, Scope of Project, Task 4.2 Data Collection.

1. Will the Smarter Balanced Assessment result data sets indicate the hierarchical structure of students-teachers-schools/LEAs-districts or provide a way to divide results by various units (e.g. classroom-level)?

Answer: See Addendum #2, Section 3, Scope of Project, Task 4.2 Data Collection.

1. Will CDE provide (upon request) school and LEA personnel contact information to conduct the surveys and plan focus groups? (p. 25 - 27)

Answer: See Addendum #2, Section 3, Scope of Project, Task 4.2 Data Collection.

1. Regarding 4.3, Data Analyses, "5. Analyzing the reliability, validity, bias, and fairness of academic assessments," will item-level response data of the student achievement assessments be provided? (p. 25 - 27)

Answer: See Addendum #2, Section 3, Scope of Project, Task 4.2 Data Collection.

1. Is the expectation that analyses will be completed using item-level response data or pre-calculated scores?

Answer: See RFP Section 3, Scope of Project, Task 4 Evaluation of Impact on Instruction and Student Learning for required work to be addressed in the bidder’s technical proposal for Task 4.

1. How is the work done under this RFP in Task 4, 4.3, pp. 27 #5 “Analyzing the reliability, validity, bias and fairness of academic assessments” differ from work the state assessment vendor is expected to have carried out?

Answer: See RFP Section 1 Purpose, and Section 2 Background for a description of the work performed to be performed by the CAASPP independent evaluation vendor.

1. What descriptive statistics and properties of distributions is the winning bidder expected to calculate that the state assessment contractor has not calculated? (Task 4.3, #7, p. 27)

Answer: The bidder is expected to provide those analyses which support the study proposed by the bidder in their technical proposal submission. See RFP Section 3, Scope of Project, Task 4 for proposal requirements as it relates to Task 4.

1. What multivariate analyses including ANOVA, linear regression, logistic regression and hierarchical linear models does the state expect the winning bidder to calculate that the current state assessment vendor has not? (Task 4.3, #8, p. 27)

Answer: The bidder is expected to provide those analyses which support the study proposed by the bidder in their technical proposal submission. See RFP Section 3, Scope of Project, Task 4 for proposal requirements as it relates to Task 4.

1. Task 4 Evaluation of Impact on Instruction and Student Learning calls for a case study of “schools and districts that are implementing the CAASPP System in its entirety”. This does not specify that the evaluation should investigate the generalizability of findings across LEAs in the state. Is this an accurate understanding? (p. 25)

Answer: Yes. See RFP Section 3, Scope of Project, Task 4 Evaluation of Impact on Instruction and Student Learning for proposal requirements as it relates to Task 4.

1. Item 7 reads, “Evaluate the impact of specific components of the CAASPP assessment system on student learning of the California Common Core Standards in ELA, mathematics, and/or science” and also refers to studying the CAASPP System at “elementary and/or secondary levels.” Will a proposal that does not address science assessments or implementation of the CAASPP System at the secondary level be evaluated as favorably as one that includes these areas in the impact study? (p. 25)

Answer: See RFP Section 6, Evaluation Process.

1. What data from the California data collection/assessment information system will be provided to the contractor and what data will the contractor need to calculate on its own. Specifically, will data on school test scores, socio-economic group, school improvement, or lack thereof, in test results, other longitudinal data etc. be provided to the successful bidder or will the bidder need to take the California data and run these analyses for itself?

Answer: See Addendum #2, Section 3, Scope of Project, Task 4.2, Data Collection.

1. It is not clear from the RFP if the successful bidder will need to calculate school and district results from existing data or if that information will be made available to the winning bidder.

Answer: See Addendum #2, Section 3, Scope of Project, Task 4.2, Data Collection.

1. Is there an expectation that the bulk of the work in this study will concern the association between practice/use of the SBAC theory of action and student achievement.

Answer: See RFP Section 3, Scope of Project, Task 4 Evaluation of Impact on Instruction and Student Learning for proposal requirements as it relates to Task 4.

## Section 5.3 and Attachment 14:

1. To enable the successful bidder to meet allowable lodging reimbursement rates, will the CDE provide an authorization document that can be used to secure hotel sleeping rooms at the reduced government rate for staff traveling to required meetings in Sacramento and/or workshop panelists?

Answer: There is no authorization document that the CDE can provide.