

**State of Nebraska (Nebraska Department of Education)  
REQUEST FOR INFORMATION**

SOLICITATION NUMBER	RELEASE DATE
<b>NDERFI240102</b>	<b>February 7, 2024</b>
OPENING DATE AND TIME	PROCUREMENT CONTACT
<b>March 6, 2024, 2:00 p.m. Central Time</b>	<b>Dr. Trudy K Clark</b>

This form is part of the specification package and must be signed in ink and returned, along with information documents, by the opening date and time specified.

**PLEASE READ CAREFULLY!**

**SCOPE OF SERVICE**

**DISCLAIMER:** This notice is for informational purposes only. This is not a request for proposal or quote. It does not constitute a solicitation and shall not be construed as a commitment by the State of Nebraska. Responses in any form are not offers and the State of Nebraska is under no obligation to award a contract as a result of this announcement. No funds are available to pay for the preparation of responses to this announcement. Any information submitted by respondents is strictly voluntary.

**INTRODUCTION:** Responses to the RFI may be used to formulate final requirements and/or to identify qualified vendors capable of meeting those requirements. The description herein outlines preliminary requirements envisioned in developing electronic government services applications to be part of the State of Nebraska's online information portal created to provide electronic access to public records and electronic information for citizens, businesses, and state and local governments across Nebraska. The information gathered may be used to formulate acquisition strategies for competitive solicitations.

Vendors should electronically submit one (1) original copy of the entire proposal (in PDF format) to [nde.procurement@nebraska.gov](mailto:nde.procurement@nebraska.gov). Proposals must be submitted by the proposal due date and time.

**BACKGROUND:** The State of Nebraska (State), Statewide Assessment, is issuing this Request for Information NDERFI240102 for the purpose of gathering information to understand what technical capabilities exist for Nebraska's statewide assessment vision to be realized.

**ALL INFORMATION PERTINENT TO THIS REQUEST FOR INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND ON THE INTERNET AT: <http://das.nebraska.gov/materiel/purchasing.html>**

**RESPONDENT MUST COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING**

By signing this Request For Information form, the respondent guarantees compliance with the provisions stated in this Request for Information.

FIRM: \_\_\_\_\_

COMPLETE ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_ FAX NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

TYPED NAME & TITLE OF SIGNER: \_\_\_\_\_

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**I. SCOPE OF THE REQUEST FOR INFORMATION**

The State of Nebraska, Statewide Assessment, is issuing this Request for Information, NDERFI0102 for the purpose of gathering information to understand the technical capabilities exist for Nebraska’s statewide assessment vision to be realized.

**A. SCHEDULE OF EVENTS**

The State expects to adhere to the tentative procurement schedule shown below. It should be noted, however, that some dates are approximate and subject to change.

	<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>DATE/TIME</b>
1	Release Request for Information	February 7, 2024
2	Last day to submit written questions	February 21, 2024
3	State responds to written questions through Request for Information “Addendum” and/or “Amendment” to be posted to the internet at: <a href="https://das.nebraska.gov/materiel/bidopps.html">https://das.nebraska.gov/materiel/bidopps.html</a> and <a href="http://www.education.ne.gov/assessment">http://www.education.ne.gov/assessment</a>	February 28, 2024
4	Proposals due—late proposals will not be accepted and will be returned unopened to respondent	March 6, 2024 1:59 PM CST
4	RFI opening. Location: Proposed Zoom Meeting <a href="https://educationne.zoom.us/j/91996374093">https://educationne.zoom.us/j/91996374093</a>	March 6, 2024 2:00 PM Central Time
5	Scheduled Evaluation Meetings	March 6 - 12, 2024
6	Demo Sessions	March 18 – 21, 2024

**II. RFI RESPONSE PROCEDURES**

**A. OFFICE AND CONTACT PERSON**

Responsibilities related to this Request for Information reside with the State Purchasing Bureau. The point of contact for the RFI is as follows:

Name: Trudy K Clark, Ed.D.  
Agency: Nebraska Department of Education  
Address: 500 S. 84<sup>th</sup> St. 2<sup>nd</sup> FL  
Lincoln, NE 68510  
Telephone: 402-310-1085  
E-Mail: [NDE.procurement@Nebraska.gov](mailto:NDE.procurement@Nebraska.gov)

**B. GENERAL INFORMATION**

A subsequent Request for Proposal (RFP) may not be issued as a result of this RFI. There will not be a contract as a result of this RFI and the State is not liable for any cost incurred by vendors in replying to this RFI. If an RFP is issued, the information provided will assist the State of Nebraska in developing the Request for Proposal. This RFI does not obligate the State to reply to the RFI responses, to issue an RFP, or to include any RFI provisions or responses provided by vendors in any RFP.

**C. COMMUNICATION WITH STATE STAFF**

From the date the Request for Information is issued and until RFI opening (as shown in the Schedule of Events), contact regarding this RFI between potential vendors and individuals employed by the State should be restricted to written communication with the staff designated above as the point of contact for this Request for Information.

The following exceptions to these restrictions are permitted:

1. Written communication with the person(s) designated as the point(s) of contact for this Request for Information;
2. contacts made pursuant to any pre-existing contracts or obligations; and
3. State-requested presentations, key personnel interviews, clarification sessions, or discussions.

Violations of these conditions may be considered sufficient cause to reject a vendor’s response to the RFI. No individual member of the State, employee of the State, or member of the Interview Committee is empowered to make binding statements regarding this RFI. The State of Nebraska will issue any clarifications or opinions regarding this RFI in writing.

**D. WRITTEN QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

Any explanation desired by a vendor regarding the meaning or interpretation of any Request for Information provision should be submitted in writing to the Nebraska Department of Education—Statewide Assessment and clearly marked “NDERFI240102; Questions”. It is preferred that questions be sent via e-mail to [NDE.procurement@nebraska.gov](mailto:NDE.procurement@nebraska.gov)

It is recommended that respondent submit questions sequentially numbered, include the RFI reference and page number using the following format.

<u>Question Number</u>	<u>RFI Section Reference</u>	<u>RFI Page Number</u>	<u>Question</u>

Written answers will be provided through an addendum to be posted on the Internet at <https://das.nebraska.gov/materiel/bidopps.html> and <http://www.education.ne.gov/assessment> on or before the date shown in the Schedule of Events.

#### **E. ORAL INTERVIEWS/PRESENTATIONS AND/OR DEMONSTRATIONS**

The State reserves the right to conduct oral interviews/presentations and/or demonstrations if required at the sole invitation of the State.

Any cost incidental to the oral interviews/presentations and/or demonstrations shall be borne entirely by the vendor and will not be compensated by the State

#### **F. SUBMISSION OF RESPONSE**

The following describes the requirements related to the RFI submission, handling and review by the State.

The State is only accepting electronic responses submitted in accordance with this RFI. The State will not accept responses by mail, email, voice, or telephone, unless otherwise explicitly stated in writing by the State. It is the responsibility of the vendor to check the website for all information relevant to this RFI to include addenda and/or amendments issue prior to the opening date. The website can be found here: <https://das.nebraska.gov/materiel/bidopps.html>

RFI responses must be submitted by the RFI due date and time. Vendors should electronically submit one (1) original copy of the entire proposal (in PDF format) to [nde.procurement@nebraska.gov](mailto:nde.procurement@nebraska.gov).

WHAT SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN YOUR RESPONSE:

1. Do submit succinct, thoughtful responses to the requirements/questions listed in this RFI.
2. Do submit comments that address the State's requirements, assumptions, conditions, or contemplated approaches to this requirement.
3. Do submit information and suggestions that may encourage new, different, or innovative approaches that would result in products, solutions, and direct savings to the State of Nebraska.

**A separate sheet must be provided that clearly states which sections have been submitted as proprietary or have copyrighted materials.** RFI responses should reference the request for information number and be sent to the specified email address. The Request for Information number must be included in all correspondence.

#### **G. PROPRIETARY INFORMATION**

Data contained in the response and all documentation provided therein, become the property of the State of Nebraska and the data become public information upon opening the response. If the vendor wishes to have any information withheld from the public, such information must fall within the definition of proprietary information contained within Nebraska's public record statutes. All proprietary information the vendor wishes the state to withhold must be submitted in a sealed package, which is separate from the remainder of the response. The separate package must be clearly marked PROPRIETARY on the outside of the package. Vendor may not mark their entire Request for Information as proprietary. Failure of the vendor to follow the instructions for submitting proprietary and copyrighted information may result in the information being viewed by other vendors and the public. Proprietary information is defined as trade secrets, academic and scientific research work which is in progress and unpublished, and other

information which if released would give advantage to business competitors and serve no public purpose (see Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-712.05(3)). In accordance with Attorney General Opinions 92068 and 97033, vendors submitting information as proprietary may be required to prove specific, named competitor(s) who would be advantaged by release of the information and the specific advantage the competitor(s) would receive. Although every effort will be made to withhold information that is properly submitted as proprietary and meets the State's definition of proprietary information, the State is under no obligation to maintain the confidentiality of proprietary information and accepts no liability for the release of such information.

#### **H. REQUEST FOR INFORMATION OPENING**

The sealed responses will be publicly opened and the responding entities announced on the date, time, and location shown in the Schedule of Events.

### **III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND SCOPE OF WORK**

The State of Nebraska is issuing this RFI for the purpose of gathering information that will be used to develop and implement an innovative balanced assessment system whose primary objective is to benefit the students of Nebraska. The NDE envisions an assessment that will meet all federal requirements regarding assessment and accountability. The primary emphasis of the assessment system will be to directly support improved teaching and learning.

The NDE is issuing this Request for Information (RFI) to design, develop, and implement key components of Nebraska's assessment system that could include but are not limited to, interim and summative assessments and supporting infrastructure and services.

These components constitute key parts of a balanced instructional and assessment system as the key driver for increased equity and student achievement, supplemented by external accountability.

The NDE is open to respondents addressing the components separately or in any combination together. The NDE is interested in a well-coordinated solution across all components that will provide ease of use to educators and ease of contract supervision by the NDE.

The RFI is intended to allow the NDE to get the best input possible on this innovative assessment system. The responses to the RFI will be used to write a more effective Response for Proposal.

The annual and total cost for developing and fully implementing the final assessment system should be reasonable and affordable within Nebraska's resources. Vendors are encouraged to submit an estimated cost plan with their response. The final cost will be negotiated if a contract award is made.

Note: Estimated cost plans submitted in response to this RFI will remain confidential and will not become public record.

The respondent should provide the following information in response to this Request for Information.

#### **A. PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND**

##### **Background/Context**

The educational system in Nebraska is comprised of 244 schools, 18 External Program schools, and 8 Special Purpose schools. Nebraska's districts include several configurations. These configurations include:

- Metropolitan areas that have multiple schools in the same community; for example, Omaha contains 65 elementary schools and 12 middle schools.

- Single-site districts with one school; for example, Arthur, Nebraska, a village of 130 that operates as a county school with 120 students in a K-8 school setting.
- External Programs are special program “schools” housed in county detention homes, institutions, and juvenile emergency shelters. They are often associated with a public school system that is responsible for testing students under the statewide assessment system.

### Student Population and Demographics

State and District Statistics (as of 2022-2023) are found here: <https://nep.education.ne.gov/statedata.html>

- Schools in 244 districts
- 165,296 in grades 3-8, and 11
- School demographics (e.g., distribution of school size by grade span)
- District demographics (e.g., distribution of district size by grade span)

The Statewide Assessment system must comply with the following federal and state statutes, regulations, rules, and/or policies that govern Nebraska’s state assessment system. All decisions regarding statewide assessment systems must be approved by the Nebraska State Board of Education.

- Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) (<https://www.ed.gov/essa?src=rn>)
  - Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) (<https://sites.ed.gov/idea/> )
  - Americans with Disabilities (ADA) (<https://www.ada.gov/>)
  - Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>)
  - Nebraska Revised Statute 79-760.03 ([https://nebraskalegislature.gov/laws/search\\_keyword.php](https://nebraskalegislature.gov/laws/search_keyword.php))
- Rule 10** (<https://www.education.ne.gov/apac/accreditation-rule-10/>)

## B. ASSESSMENT SYSTEM OVERVIEW AND SCOPE OF WORK

The Nebraska Department of Education envisions a balanced assessment system primarily focused on supporting excellent instruction while providing essential summative information that fulfills federal requirements. The basic components addressed by this RFI are:

- Assessment design
- Assessment delivery platform

### *Overview Current Assessment System*

NSCAS is a statewide assessment system that embodies Nebraska’s holistic view of students and helps them prepare for success in postsecondary education, career, and civic life. It uses multiple measures throughout the year to provide educators and decision-makers at all levels with the insights they need to support student learning. The NSCAS assessment, developed specifically for Nebraska and aligned to the state content area standards, is the assessment system’s criterion-referenced measure designed for the Nebraska student population in grades 3–8. It also includes interim assessments three times a year that provide normed data to Nebraska educators.

The NSCAS assessments were administered online. They included a variety of item types, including multiple-choice and technology-enhanced items. Student scores were reported as composite scale scores and achievement levels. The ELA and mathematics assessments were administered online using a multi-item adaptive design, whereas science was administered as fixed forms. Students taking the NSCAS assessments were placed into one of the following achievement levels based on their final test scores:

- *Developing*

- *On Track*
- *Advanced*

Items for the ELA and mathematics tests were aligned to the 2014 and 2015 College and Career Ready Standards, respectively, and came from the item bank that the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) and Nebraska educators have built over the years, including items field tested in Spring 2018 through Spring 2022. The spring tests also included previously and newly developed field-test items that will be added to the operational pool for the future, depending on the field-test data and data review. Content development for the new three-dimensional science assessment began in Summer 2018, with the pilot occurring in March 2019. The new science assessments aligned to the Nebraska College and Career Ready Standards for Science (NCCRS-S; NDE, 2017) were administered in Spring 2022.

## 1. Summative Assessment

### a. Purpose, Use, and Claims

Summative Assessment is intended to provide information about performance in relation to the state content and performance standards. The Summative assessment must meet federal and state guidelines. Student performance will be aggregated into student group, school, district, and state levels. Reports will be used by students, parents, educators, and policymakers to understand performance and make comparisons across the state. A key use will be to fulfill the state's school accountability plans that satisfy federal accountability requirements.

1. Claims based on the end of the year summative assessment should include student proficiency. At least three (3) performance levels will be distinguished, with accompanying Achievement Level Descriptors (ALDs). The NDE currently has established ALDs, which may be preserved, or the respondent shall propose a general process for establishing or revising ALDs in cooperation with NDE. For context, the current ALDs are found [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).
2. For the end of year summative assessment, subscores are required.

### b. Content

1. The respondent shall propose how the state content standards for ELA, mathematics, and science shall be addressed. The state content standards for ELA, math, and science are found [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#). The science standards are undergoing the revision process this year, with the expectation they will be adopted in fall 2024. Nebraska currently owns an extensive item bank created by Nebraska educators. We do anticipate the development of new content during the course of the contract. Respondents should propose how they will work with Nebraska educators to continue building the test bank. Nebraska statute 79-760.03 requires the participation of Nebraska educators in developing our statewide assessment.
2. The respondent shall include a discussion of assessing all the ELA standards.

### c. Test Design

1. The NDE requires the end of the year summative assessment to be valid, reliable, and useful. The summative assessment must meet federal Peer Review. The NDE encourages innovative proposals that describe in detail how goals may be met.
2. Using principles of evidence-centered design (ECD) or similar validation-oriented processes, the respondent shall describe a test design (blueprint) that fulfills the goals and constraints.



3. The NDE is interested in offering choice to Nebraska districts regarding the test design they choose to demonstrate student proficiency on the Nebraska Career and College Ready Standards in ELA and math. The respondent shall propose how they would offer choice to the districts.

d. Reporting

1. The results of the summative assessment shall be reported in:
  - o Individual student report
  - o Class/Group roster
  - o School report
  - o District report
  - o State summary report

The respondent should propose to partner with the NDE to produce innovative reports and reporting resources to communicate individual and aggregate results in a clear, useful, and technically defensible manner.

2. The relevant reports shall be provided to the NDE, districts, schools, and students/parents/guardians, at least as electronic files.
3. The respondent shall provide reports that provide maximal information while preserving student confidentiality. Assessment results are never reported when fewer than ten (10) students at a school complete an assessment. The department's public reporting protocol is available at [https://www.education.ne.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Nebraska\\_Data\\_Access\\_and\\_Use\\_Policy\\_and\\_Procedures.pdf](https://www.education.ne.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Nebraska_Data_Access_and_Use_Policy_and_Procedures.pdf)
4. A secure portal shall be established for districts and school personnel to access the reporting information that they have been authorized to receive. The respondent may also propose a role-based, permissioned, online dynamic reporting system that includes individual and aggregate data (with appropriate suppression rules).
5. The respondent is expected to include online resources to guide appropriate interpretation and use of printed and online score reporting.

e. Test Administration

1. Administration Mode
  - o The NDE is committed to continuing with a computer-adaptive assessment for the long term. In some areas of the state, districts face challenges with different levels of technological expertise in establishing and maintaining school technology systems. The respondent is expected to demonstrate an understanding of specific issues regarding these conditions.
  - o Respondents should describe in detail the proposed test administration solutions, including, at a minimum, the following:
    - o Components of the test administration platform, including such components as database servers, web servers, application servers, local caching servers, software update managers, secure browsers, web or local client applications for test administration management, test administration monitoring, test administration to students, rendering engines, and any additional considerations.
    - o Technical specifications for each component of the proposed solution(s) that provide sufficient detail to conduct a thorough and detailed technical evaluation.

- Key features, including those addressing single sign-on, auditing, notifications, progress monitoring, test security monitoring, data security and integrity monitoring, test security protection, data security and integrity protection, disaster prevention, disaster recovery, redundancy, load testing, and the use of EdFi for data sharing.
- Rendering similarity across device types, manufacturers, operating systems, operating system versions, form factors, screen sizes, and input modality.
- Number of simultaneous users for which the system is guaranteed to perform as intended.
- System requirements for all components of the platform used on any district or school employee or student device.
- Connectivity and per-user bandwidth requirements for all components of the platform used on any local educator or student device.
- Conditions and procedures for supporting paper-based administration as needed.
  
- Preventing and Responding to Irregularities
  - Describe systems to anticipate, thwart, and prevent potential system disruptions or irregularities, such as load testing and monitoring.
  - Describe procedures and protocols regarding the security of test content and student, school, or district data, including internal security policies, audit procedures, and procedures to protect data in transit.
  - Describe in detail the proposed approach to responding to potential system disruptions or irregularities based on each of the monitoring approaches described in the previous section, including communication with the NDE and affected stakeholders and efforts to address, contain, and remedy the problem.
  
- Data Management
  - Nebraska does not have a statewide student information system. Each district uses one of several commercially available student information systems. PowerSchool is used in most districts; however, the two largest districts in the state use Infinite Campus or Synergy. Nebraska issues unique State Student ID numbers (Person ID) to each public education student to ensure accurate identification and matching test results. The respondent would be expected to have processes to validate the correct Person ID for each student's assessment record.
  
  - The lack of a statewide student information system has two (2) important consequences for Nebraska's required statewide assessments. First, the NDE must collect student demographic information in a separate data collection that is administered in the fall and uploaded prior to the spring assessment administration. Second, there must be flexibility in the assessment contractor's system to administer a computer-adaptive assessment to account for the manual uploading and maintenance of student data from 244 districts.

- It is expected that the respondent proposes a process to provide districts access to secure student-level assessment results compatible with common student information system protocols.
  - Training and Support
    - It is essential to Nebraska that ancillary support materials such as test administration documents, interpretive guides, training materials, practice tests, and other supporting materials are of high quality and that a vendor have an editorial review and revision process that includes opportunities for input from the NDE staff. It is also important to Nebraska that support be provided directly by a vendor through a help desk with extended hours during the assessment administration window.
    - The NDE staff will partner with the vendor to provide assessment administration training to districts, including resources and support from the vendor. Training and administration support materials could include but not be limited to:
      - Assessment administration manuals for school and district staff that address:
        - Roles and responsibilities of personnel responsible for assessment administration
        - Early preparation procedures
        - Detailed assessment administration procedures
        - Procedures for maintaining assessment security
        - Procedures for responding to disruptions and irregularities
      - User guides and support resources for interacting with the assessment administration platform (e.g., procedures for rostering students, scheduling tests, accessing reports)
      - A fully functional site for access to practice items so that students can experience an authentic assessment experience and teachers can see how their students interact with the assessment administration platform.
    - Professional Learning/Professional Development
      - The respondent will propose their professional learning/development plan to enhance the assessment literacy of Nebraska educators.
    - Provider must organize, staff, and maintain a help desk and district employees to consult. The help desk must be maintained during the assessment administration windows during local hours that cover the typical school day, extended hours during the assessment window, and sufficient staffing to avoid long wait times.
  - 2. Accommodations
    - Nebraska's assessment must be built on an accessibility framework for all students. It is vital to Nebraska to provide the tools and accommodations to enable all students to demonstrate what they know and can do. See: [Assessment and Accountability Manual](#) and the [NSCAS Accessibility Manual](#)
- f. Scoring and Scaling
1. The respondent shall propose how the assessment will be scored and a scale established and maintained.
  2. The respondent shall propose how the results may be comparable to existing trends.

- g. Standard Setting
  1. It will be necessary to set new performance standards for all assessments covered in this RFI. The vendor must deploy an approach that meets professional standards and federal peer review requirements.
  2. The respondent must address the following:
    - Proposed method and associated justification
    - Approach to the integration of Nebraska’s stakeholders and experts throughout the process
    - Approach to panelist training
    - Approach to documentation
    - Approach to vertical articulation
  3. The respondent must produce a comprehensive standard-setting plan and documentation and review this plan with the NDE and the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC).
- h. Technical Documentation
  1. The respondent is responsible for developing a comprehensive technical report following the first cycle of an assessment. Thereafter, an annual addendum will be provided. The technical report must be clear and well organized, addressing all requirements of the United States Department of Education Peer Review elements.
  2. Responses to this RFI should include a technical report outline and sample table of contents consistent with typical sections of a high-quality technical report and the additional requirements of peer review.
- i. Support for Existing Structures
  1. The respondent shall propose how they may support existing structures that support Nebraska educators in assessment literacy (i.e., [Formative Assessment Supports Network](#), professional learning facilitators).
- j. Time Schedule
  1. The NDE desires that the NSCAS through-year design with spring summative assessment be operational by fall 2025. The respondent should describe any constraints or advantages to altering this schedule. The respondent shall also describe the major activities and the time schedule.

## 2. Interim Assessment

### a. Purposes, Uses, and Claims

The interim assessment is intended to provide information about student performance using both normative and criterion-referenced assessments. The normative data can be used to support instructional decisions, while the criterion-referenced assessment data provides students and educators with an understanding of what the student knows and can do based on the content standards.

The interim assessments provide information to support instruction at multiple time points during the year. The results may also be useful in informing program evaluation and other uses from year to year. The results of the interim assessments will not be combined with the end of the year test administration to produce a combined summative score or determination. The NDE appreciates flexibility in the design regarding the development of a within-year growth metric.

Respondents should describe how interim assessments could be designed to support enhanced student learning toward proficiency on the state content standards.

Claims based on individual and/or collective interim assessments should be clearly articulated. The claims and evidence will reflect what the respondent proposes. If the respondent proposes using an existing interim assessment instrument and/or program, the validity argument should be provided, including evidence of effective use.

b. Content

The respondent shall propose the content and skills to be addressed in the interim assessments and how they are organized. The relationship of the proposed content and skills to the state content standards in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics shall be addressed.

Respondents shall explain how their proposed assessment is appropriate for Nebraska students, reflecting the state's geographic, racial/ethnic, cultural, and linguistic diversity. Respondents shall include not only current evidence but also the process by which future assessment items will be developed and reviewed to ensure continued appropriateness for Nebraska.

Respondents shall include a discussion of supporting student learning of ELA, math, and science standards.

c. Test Design

The NDE requires that the interim assessment be valid, reliable, and useful. The respondent shall describe how learning/instruction may be informed by the interim assessments, especially if there are multiple types of interim assessments (e.g., benchmark and progress monitoring). The NDE encourages innovative proposals.

The interim assessments should provide appropriate accommodations suitable to supporting the validity of the intended interpretations and the inclusion of all students. The NDE prefers a computer-adaptive design for the test that will provide reliable estimates of student ability across the ability continuum. However, a paper-and-pencil version should be available for those students who cannot participate online.

The respondent should discuss the rationale for the design and assumptions that underlie significant options that the respondent thinks the NDE should consider.

d. Reporting

The respondent shall propose what reports will be provided and how they are intended to be used. If proposing to use an existing assessment instrument's report, the respondent shall provide sample reports. If the respondent proposes customizing reports to Nebraska users, the respondent shall propose a process for finalizing report design in partnership with the NDE and its constituents. The respondent shall propose supporting materials to help guide appropriate and effective use of the report information and to help avoid misinterpretation or misuse.

If electronic and/or online reporting functions are proposed, the respondent shall provide information on the functionality - including security - as well as the requirements.

If the respondent proposes using an existing assessment that a school or district in Nebraska has purchased in the past two years, the respondent shall identify the reports and services that have been purchased or provided for a fee by the respondent.

- e. Item Types  
The respondent shall describe recommended item types in the context of the proposed assessment blueprint and ECD validation argument.
- f. Scoring and Scaling  
The respondent shall propose how the assessment will be scored. If the respondent proposes a scale, the scale shall be described in terms of scale properties and how the scale is established and maintained.
- g. Time Schedule  
The respondent shall also describe the set of major activities and the time schedule.

### 3. Platform

NDE highly prioritizes the pursuit of an advanced assessment platform that seamlessly integrates both summative and interim assessments within the same interface. The same interface will not only streamline the user experience but also enhance the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the assessment process. Simplifying the assessment administrations to one platform will minimize the learning curve associated with transitioning between assessment formats but also facilitates a more intuitive and user-friendly experience for all stakeholders. Any information for assessment services should include both administration and reporting platforms for summative and interim assessments.

### 4. Project Management

- a. Experience
  1. Provide compelling evidence showing proficiency in successfully leading and executing complex statewide assessment systems.
  2. Present a comprehensive discussion on the implemented approaches to project management used in developing and fully implementing a state-wide assessment system that incorporates both interim and summative assessments.
  3. Show detailed documentation of strategic planning, meticulous scheduling, effective resource allocation, stakeholder engagement, risk mitigation, and successful coordination of diverse teams.
- b. Staffing and Key Contacts
  1. The project management team should possess expertise in project management, educational assessments, data analysis, technology integration, and effective stakeholder communication. Clear roles and responsibilities are crucial, avoiding confusion and enhancing accountability through designated individuals for tasks involved within the project. Describe the specific responsibilities of the key staff and roles within the project management team.
- c. Communication
  1. NDE seeks transparent and effective communication systems that ensure information is disseminated promptly. Explain the strategies employed to ensure effective communication within the contractor team, NDE, districts, schools, parents, and students.

2. Provide examples of what structures, processes, and mechanisms are in place for regular updates and feedback through reports, annual project plans, timelines, meetings, and video calls.
  3. Considering the project's extensive scale and complexity, ample resources are required to guarantee that stakeholder collaboration and communication reach the highest standards. Explain the commitment to ensuring effective collaboration, communication, and problem-solving systems with the NDE involving the respondent and its subcontractors.
- d. Project Planning, Implementation, and Evaluation
1. Outline a list of proposed meetings, their format, attendees, frequency, purpose, and anticipated goals.
  2. Provide examples of timelines for planning, implementation, and evaluation of a statewide assessment system for this scale. The NDE anticipates consistent interaction between the contractor and Nebraska stakeholders throughout the project, involving in-person annual planning meetings, biannual presentations and engagement with the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), quarterly submission of project reports, and as-needed communication through email, phone, web-conferencing, and other relevant means.

# Form A

## Vendor Contact Sheet

### Request for Information Number NDERFI240102

Form A should be completed and submitted with each response to this solicitation document. This is intended to provide the State with information on the vendor's name and address, and the specific persons who are responsible for preparation of the vendor's response.

Preparation of Response Contact Information	
Vendor Name:	
Vendor Address:	
Contact Person & Title:	
E-mail Address:	
Telephone Number (Office):	
Telephone Number (Cellular):	
Fax Number:	

Each vendor shall also designate a specific contact person who will be responsible for responding to the State if any clarifications of the vendor's response should become necessary. This will also be the person who the State contacts to set up a presentation/demonstration, if required.

Communication with the State Contact Information	
Vendor Name:	
Vendor Address:	
Contact Person & Title:	
E-mail Address:	
Telephone Number (Office):	
Telephone Number (Cellular):	
Fax Number:	