

## **REQUEST FOR INFORMATION**

The Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) is seeking information regarding tools that can be used to support the social and emotional needs of students across the state. Information from this RFI will be used in the possible development of a Request for Proposal.

**RESPONSES DUE: 01/13/2023 NOON CST**

## SECTION 1: OVERVIEW

### 1.1 INSTRUCTIONS TO RESPONDENTS

- A. The State of Arkansas is issuing this Request for Information (RFI) as specified below. Responses are to be submitted by **12 Noon Central Time on January 13, 2023** as an e-mail attachment in Microsoft or Adobe format. Responses should be submitted to: [hope.worsham@ade.arkansas.gov](mailto:hope.worsham@ade.arkansas.gov).
- B. Questions regarding the contents of this RFI may be directed to the above email address.
- C. NOTE: The contractor's RFI response must **not exceed 10 pages**. Due to email system restrictions, the file size per email must not exceed 10 MB; however, the contractor may submit multiple emails if needed in order to submit a complete response.

### 1.2 DISPOSITION OF RESPONSES

- A. All responses become the public property of the State and will be a matter of public record subject to the provisions of the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act, Ark. Code Ann. §25-19-101 *et seq.*
- B. Responses should not contain material considered by the respondent to be confidential under state or federal law for any reason including being proprietary, copyrighted, or capable of giving an unfair advantage to competitors.
- C. The State shall have the right to use all ideas, or adaptations of those ideas, contained in any response received to this RFI. While responses to this RFI are optional, all knowledgeable parties are strongly encouraged to provide complete responses.
- D. The Information Network of Arkansas may exercise the option to further discuss the details of the response with one or more respondents if it is determined to be in the best interest of the State.
- E. Responding or not responding to this RFI shall not determine any future partnerships.

### **1.3 INTENT OF THE RFI**

- A. The Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) is issuing this RFI on behalf of the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) for planning purposes with the intent to gather information on potential future strategic opportunities related to the program area(s) covered. This RFI shall not be construed as a commitment by the ADE to solicit contractual offers or award contracts.
- B. Review of the responses to this RFI by the ADE will be undertaken primarily to gauge the aggregate level of qualified interest from potential contractors, assess the overall magnitude of the opportunity identified by potential contractors, and inform the design of any solicitation(s) and/or eventual program(s). Responses will not be reviewed on a competitive basis and the ADE does not intend to establish or publish any formal results.
- C. The ADE does not currently have a partnership with any vendor to provide the services outlined in this RFI.

### **1.4 PURPOSE**

- A. As part of its commitment to serve the needs of the whole child, the ADE is exploring opportunities to better serve the students, teachers, and school leaders of Arkansas who attend a building where leadership has participated in the THRIVE Arkansas Leadership Academy.
- B. The ADE seeks to provide the following services to THRIVE leaders by engaging an outside partner (the “vendor”):
  - 1. To provide a web-based opportunity for daily student and staff check-ins that gauge behavioral or mental health priorities and/or indications of overall wellness needs.
  - 2. To provide web-based lessons or intervention ideas that can be quickly and easily administered to meet student needs as identified by the daily check-in.
  - 3. Provide student and aggregate level reporting that provides information the wellness needs of staff and students.
- C. The duties of the vendor:
  - 1. Direct and supervise the implementation process, including the initial phase of rostering students and teachers to accessing the system, and how to operationalize the data in a meaningful way to support student and staff wellness;

2. Attend meetings with ADE monthly to monitor progress of implementation and provide general oversight progress. These meetings will be held virtually;
3. Keep a record of all contract related operations, which records shall be the property of the ADE;
4. Other such activities or services as requested or authorized by the ADE consistent with the provisions of this chapter.

### **1.5 CURRENT ENVIRONMENT**

A behavioral management system in schools focused on punishment is often not effective or appropriate. However, it's imperative to have an orderly and safe environment that promotes learning for all. So how do we bridge the gap? THRIVE Arkansas – a positive, proactive approach backed by evidenced-based practices, existing programs, and peer collaboration – provides the foundation for expanding systems of support to improve behavior and mental health in schools.



#### **How will we accomplish expanding systems of support?**

THRIVE Arkansas Leadership Academy is a 9-day intensive training for teams of building level leaders (principals, assistant principals, counselors, interventionists, etc.) in the system and relational components of a strong Tier 1 Positive Behavior System.

The training is built around two key components – Systems and Relationships. We monitor and discuss the systems (RTI teams for behavior, school and classroom rules and expectations, rewards and recognitions, etc.) that must be in place using the PBIS Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI) and the School Health Assessment Performance Evaluation (SHAPE). While Fostering Resilient Learners by Kristen Soures serves as the thread for discussing relationship aspects (wellness, mental health, climate and culture, etc.) of the school building. In order to be successful in expanding an overall system of support all these components must be understood, implemented and monitored.

### **1.6 TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS**

- A. Vendor must be able to provide a web-based tool that can be used regularly in the classroom environment to gauge the social, emotional and behavioral needs of students in grades K-12. Ideally the tool can also be used by adults as well.
- B. The following services and capabilities are required to fulfill Vendor duties, but are not limited to:

1. Management of the implementation of using the tool including:
  - a. Rostering students, teachers and administrators
  - b. Providing professional development and support directly to school buildings.
  - c. Ongoing maintenance and support including security monitoring, upgrading, patching and fixing issues, performance monitoring and problem resolution
    - Applications and websites must be available from 6:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m daily from August 1 to June 1, maintaining a minimum ninety-nine percent (99%) uptime
  - d. Providing customer service and support for educators in Arkansas through the following channels: phone, email, help portal, live chat, and social media.
  - e. Compliance with all applicable State, Federal, and industry IT confidentiality, security, privacy laws, rules, regulations, methods, policies, standards, and guidelines.
  - f. Hosting on a secure platform that is password protected and provides a hierarchy of user configurations.
2. Reporting, including but not limited to:
  - a. Monthly Usage Reports
  - b. Monthly Access Reports
  - c. Major Incident Reports
  - d. Monthly Support Incident Reports
  - e. Portal Operations Reports
  - f. Ad Hoc Reports

## **SECTION 2: CONTRACTOR RESPONSE TO RFI**

Responses are encouraged from any and all knowledgeable parties. It is recommended to format responses to coincide with the structure of this section.

## **2.1 APPROACH AND EXPERIENCE**

- A. Describe your organization's overall approach to satisfy the requirements identified herein.
- B. Detail anticipated challenges in your approach to provide these services.
- C. Describe your organization's experience in supporting a state-wide or large district implementation of your product.

## **2.2 OPERATIONS**

- A. Describe the funding model(s) your organization would require to provide these services.
- B. Describe your organization's performance monitoring and problem resolution standards.
- C. Describe your organization's approach to providing customer service and support through the following channels: phone, email, help portal, live chat, and social media.
- D. Describe your organization's security measures and how your organization would ensure compliance with all applicable State and Federal laws, rules, regulations, methods, policies, standards and guidelines.

## **2.3 IMPLEMENTATION**

- A. Describe your organization's approach to implementation and professional development.
- B. Describe your organization's experience implementing projects of a similar scope and size.
- C. Provide a sample implementation plan from a previous project similar in scope and size.
- D. Describe the technology requirements for your tool.

**2.4 GENERAL**

- A. What are the challenges and opportunities associated with the following agreement lengths?
  - 1. Three year initial term with up to four additional renewal periods
  - 2. Alternative periods to consider (not to exceed seven years)
- B. Identify any additional pertinent information that was not considered in the RFI.

**2.5 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (OPTIONAL)**

- A. We also request you attach any applicable solicitations from other projects of similar size for reference or provide information regarding how other projects utilize your tool that may be more efficient or beneficial than the approach described in this RFI.