



## **Ohio Appalachian Collaborative Professional and Project-Based Learning Platform Request for Proposal**

### **Introduction**

The Ohio Appalachian Collaborative (OAC) is seeking proposals for the development or adoption of a professional and project-based learning platform that will meet the professional learning and collaboration needs of twenty-seven rural districts serving 48,000 students, 3,200 teachers, and 200 school administrators. We are looking for a custom designed platform or an adoption of existing technology that will facilitate teacher learning and collaboration amongst 27 rural districts in Ohio and serve as a professional learning platform that will house teacher created lesson plans, ideas, and collaborative opportunities. The platform should be able to support the design and implementation of teacher created materials, multi-district collaboration and discussion, and serve as a resource for professional development. This system will also act as a repository for a series of interactive professional learning modules that will be created by members of the OAC. The OAC project goal is to accelerate student achievement by increasing access to advanced learning and effective instruction through a networked 6-12 grade blended learning and dual enrollment system.

### **Project Goal: Growth and Sustainability**

The goal of this RFP is to provide the relevant tools and technology to establish a sustainable collaborative that can steadily grow to include other rural districts in the advancement of more personalized and cost effective emergent learning innovations such as blended and online learning. This work meets our milestones of the professional goals for the Straight A award. The Straight A Fund provides funds to educational entities in Ohio with the drive and courage to try new approaches that:

- Meet the learning needs of its students
- Reduce the cost of running a school or school district, or
- Drive more dollars to the classroom

This project-based and professional learning platform is a deliverable requirement under the grant.

## RFP Process and Timeline

Timeline of Project:	
Release of RFP	January 16
Proposal Deadline	January 30, 9 p.m.
Review of Proposals	February 1-4
Invitation to Present	February 4
On-site Oral Presentations	February 9
Final Selection	February 28
Project Start date	March 1

The chosen vendor will enter into a contract with the Ohio Appalachian Collaborative for services including, but not limited to a professional learning platform. Battelle for Kids, in our role as project manager for the OAC under this grant is facilitating the RFP and selection process.

This proposal must also contain financial information that will include the initial cost to build the system, training, hosting fees, and, ongoing annual maintenance fees.

This system must be sustainable to the 27 districts after the grant period ends. The districts must be able to establish a sustainable collaborative that increases student achievement, reduces cost, and establishes more resources focused on personalized learning. The agreement will be for a five-year term (with potential renewal after that time).

### Release of RFP

The RFP will be released to the public on Tuesday, January 20, 2015. It will be housed on the Ohio Appalachian Consortium (OAC) website. Copies of the initial Straight A grant will be provided upon request.

### Submittal of Proposals

All proposals will be submitted for review to Maria Boyarko [mboyarko@battelleforkids.org](mailto:mboyarko@battelleforkids.org) by no later than Friday, January 30 at 9 p.m. Proposals will be accepted via email. BFK retains the right to reject any incomplete proposals.

### Review of Proposals

All proposals will be reviewed by an internal team from Battelle for Kids. The top finalists will be asked to present to the OAC Steering Committee on February 9, 2015 in Columbus, Ohio.

### Final Selection and Approval

Once a final selection has been made by the OAC Steering Committee an agreement will be issued and a scope of work will be requested from the vendor and must be returned within 5 business days. The professional learning platform must be fully developed by May 1, 2015 and training is to begin by May 15, 2015.

**Revisions to the RFP**

If it becomes necessary to revise any part of this RFP, addenda will be provided to all who are known to have received the initial RFP. Acknowledgment of receipt of all amendments, addenda, and changes issued shall be required from all receiving the RFP, by returning a signed copy of the Addenda Cover Sheet (or the acknowledgement of receipt form provided with the Addenda) to the Issuing Office by the RFP proposal due date and time. Failure of an Offeror to acknowledge Addenda does not alleviate an Offeror from its obligations to any terms and conditions of such Addenda.

**Cancellation of the RFP**

The OAC Steering Committee may cancel this RFP, in whole or in part, or reject all proposals submitted if this action is determined to be fiscally advantageous or otherwise in the consortium's best interest.

**Proposal Acceptance, Discussions**

The OAC Steering Committee reserves the right to accept or reject any and all proposals, in whole or in part, received in response to this RFP, to waive or permit cure of minor irregularities, and to conduct discussions with qualified Offerors in any manner necessary to serve the best interest of the OAC. Qualified Offerors means Offerors that submit proposals initially judged to be reasonably susceptible of being selected for award. Any oral clarifications of substance of a proposal shall be confirmed in writing by the Offeror. The OAC Steering Committee also reserves the right to award the Contract based upon the evaluation of the received proposals without discussion.

**Oral Presentations**

Offerors who submit proposals will be required to make presentations to the OAC Steering Committee on February 9, 2015 in Columbus, OH.

**Incurred Expenses**

OAC Steering Committee will not be responsible for any costs incurred by any Offeror in preparing and submitting a proposal.

**Questions**

Offerors are urged to read the specifications very carefully and to submit their questions, in writing, as soon as possible. Misinterpretation of specifications shall not relieve the Offeror of responsibility to perform to the OAC Steering Committee's satisfaction.

**Summary of Terms of Contract**

The chosen vendor will agree to provide the product, implementation, and training and support necessary for OAC designated representatives to fully understand, utilize and manipulate the product as intended. After 2020, The OAC and chosen vendor will evaluate the need/desire to enter into any continuing agreements regarding maintenance of the platform.

While the OAC is flexible to different work processes, we would prefer that we are involved in the development process to ensure that our needs are fully met.

**Specifications**

Interested vendors should review the following professional learning and project-based learning platform specifications and respond with current abilities to meet requirements.

**(Please note that vendor RFP responses will be included as an exhibit in the final contract.)**

Requirement	Vendor Response
<b>User Experience</b>	
User friendly interface	
List operating systems and internet browsers supported	
List of supported mobile devices and application type (web, native, hybrid)	
Support for section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act. Please describe your level of compliance and how it is implemented in your system (i.e. color, high contrast, text to speech, closed caption, etc.)	
Please describe personalization capabilities within the system (i.e. branding, application settings, etc.)	
<b>Collaboration</b>	
Resource Library browse and search capabilities	
Creation of resource library items (i.e. similar to a blog entry with ability to embed video, images and include attachments)	
Forums and discussion forums (must support a three-level security model: all, group or user permission)	
Blogging capabilities	
<b>Course Organization and Creation</b>	
Course creation capabilities including the ability to support multiple modules/lessons.	
Visual (WYSIWYG) user friendly editor	
Support for embedding multimedia content (audio, video, images, and documents) and web links.	

Direct import and HTML conversion of Office documents and PDFs into course content.	
Creation of Course templates	
Sequencing of courses into course groups or pathways.	
Support for import/export of SCORM courses	
Support for import of common cartridge courses	
Integration of courses hosted by third parties	
<b>Course Delivery</b>	
Support for open (available to everybody) and closed courses (requires enrollment)	
Course user analytics (user access, progress, duration, completion, etc.)	
Course completion dashboard (user progress by status, open courses, etc.)	
Course badging capabilities	
Course ratings by users	
Support for user feedback/comments by course	
<b>User Accounts and Security Model</b>	
Please describe how your system will support the creation of user accounts for teachers in 27 different school districts, each with multiple school buildings and teachers and staff associated to buildings and/or districts.	
Please describe the level of granularity of your security model to assign permissions to: individual users, groups of users, users in a particular school, users in a particular district and users across districts (to allow for collaboration across districts).	
<b>Technology</b>	
Support for Single Sign On (LDAP, SAML, AD, etc.) This solution will be used by 27 different school districts, hence the software must be able to support SSO integration of up to 27 different identify providers (one per school district).	
Integration to Google Apps? Please describe.	
Integration to Office 365? Please describe	
Integration to Student Information Systems (SIS)? Please describe.	

Self-hosted or vendor hosted? (If vendor desires to make both proposals, submit separately for clarity).	
<b>For Self-hosted Proposal:</b>	
Include hardware and software requirements needed to host product in a production environment supporting approximately 4,000 users (teachers and staff)	
Describe support policies	
How often are software updates released?	
Describe support procedures and SLAs.	
<b>For Vendor Hosted Proposal:</b>	
Describe the data center, including location and general security protocols.	
Can you guarantee that the data will be hosted within continental US?	
Describe throughput guarantees (server response times), bandwidth requirements (total and per user), uptime guarantees and maintenance schedule. (Provide a sample Level agreement as applies to proposal)	
Briefly describe optimal architecture for/or process for system redundancy, backup/recovery/archiving and disaster recovery.	
How often are the software updates deployed?	
Can you commit to a response time? If yes, please include it.	
Additional information	
<b>General Support</b>	
Do you provide materials with a general overview, including system navigation tips? If yes, please describe the availability of these materials.	
Describe the end user support plan to accompany purchase of your software, including documentation and routine support.	
Do you provide online support materials available for users including contextual help, feature tutorial, guides, and any other available forms of support? If yes, please	

briefly describe these online support materials.	
If hosted by vendor, will the helpdesk function be an extra cost? If yes, please include the cost.	
If self-hosted, describe response times, escalation path and support hours for IT help desk support.	
<b>Training</b>	
Describe training available for users including any additional cost involved.	
Describe any other training/support materials available (online and otherwise), including any additional fees.	

### Timeline of Project

Time is of the essence on this project, but just as important is the necessity to develop or choose effective and efficient technology to serve the needs of the teachers within the OAC. Our initial deadline for creation or adoption of a platform is May 1, 2015, however we understand that some vendors (especially those developing new technology) may require additional time to fulfill the requirements of this RFP.

What is your expected date of delivery?	
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### Budget

The OAC Steering Committee asks that you provide a line budget item for this project including development costs and staff time. If there are items in the RFP that cannot be met within this budget, please outline mitigation measures. Please remember that the OAC Steering Committee is a non-profit organization and is constrained by our funding dollars; as such, price will be a strong consideration in the bid process.

Item	Cost	Explanation
Initial Build Cost		
Training		
Hosting		
Annual maintenance		

### Please send all inquiries and submissions to:

Maria Boyarko  
 Battelle for Kids  
 Collaboration Specialist  
[mboyarko@battelleforkids.org](mailto:mboyarko@battelleforkids.org)