



NISKAYUNA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

**Request for Proposals NCSD-26-012
Information Technology Services**

Addendum #1: Questions & Answers

By issuing this document as Addendum #1 to the Request for Proposals (RFP) NCSD-26-012, all the questions and corresponding answers contained herein are formally incorporated into and become a binding part of RFP.

Role Requirements and Staffing

1. Are we required to submit candidates for the three roles identified (Director of IT, Network Administrator, HelpDesk Technicians)?

Candidates and/or resumes are not required as part of the initial proposal. However, if your firm is invited to interview, we expect participation from at least one individual who is representative of director-level candidates. The District reserves the right to review and approve all assigned personnel before they start, and if a staff member isn't the right fit at any point, we may request a replacement to be provided within a reasonable timeframe to ensure continuity of service.

2. What experience level (entry, mid-level, or expert) is required for each of the four job roles?

The district is seeking expert level in the role of IT Director and mid-level to expert in the Network Administrator position. It is understood that Help Desk technicians may be more entry level, but it would be expected that any entry level position would be provided with strong support and training from the firm.

3. Can the District confirm the required FTE for each role: Director of IT: 1.0 FTE, Network Administrator: 1.0 FTE, HelpDesk Technicians: 2.0 FTE?

These are the four positions that are required to be addressed by RFP responses. Each proposal must provide assurance that these roles will be filled. Proposals must identify itemized costs for each position proposed or aspect of the proposal.

4. What is the Place of Performance of the requested services? Are the resources outlined in the RFP required to be onsite? Can any of them be remote? Will they need to travel to other sites?

The place of performance for the requested service is the Niskayuna Central School District located in the town of Niskayuna, Schenectady County, New York.

While the district and individuals in these positions may receive some support and coordination from the awarded firm in an off-site capacity, the positions themselves are on-site positions. We are a 100% in-person school district.

The district has eight schools, a bus garage and maintenance center and a central administrative office building. All buildings are within approximately six miles of each other, with most buildings far less than that distance from each other. The IT Office is located at Niskayuna High School.

In the course of work activities, the director will travel to all locations at various times. The other positions will primarily work out of the office, but may need to provide support and troubleshooting at district locations.

5. What are the expected standard working hours for assigned resources?

The expected working hours for assigned personnel are standard business hours. These could be Monday through Friday, 8 to 4, or similar to that timeframe based on mutual understanding with the supervisor (contracted director).

6. Could the District clarify what is meant by “24/7 support when required”? Does this refer to on-call availability, remote support, or on-site response within a defined timeframe? Regarding the 24/7 support reference, what level of after-hours coverage or cybersecurity monitoring is expected under the contract?

This simply means the ability to provide support in urgent, critical and/or time-sensitive situations regardless of the time of day. Outside of regular business hours, it is anticipated that this type of support would be remote or remote initially with on-site as needed and feasible. There is no specific “on call” schedule, after-hours coverage or dedicated cybersecurity monitoring needed.

7. Should Help Desk Technicians be assigned to specific buildings or rotate District-wide?

The Help Desk Technicians are districtwide roles.

8. On page 3 under Staffing Structure, the title IT Support Specialist is listed. This should not be listed as a role that needs to be filled under this RFP, correct?

The listing of this role is an error. Correct, an IT Support Specialist role does not

need to be filled under this RFP.

9. Will the Director of IT participate in cabinet-level planning, strategic planning sessions, or Board updates?

Yes. The director is a member of the district's Senior Leadership Team (similar to Cabinet) and is involved in weekly meetings of this team as well as the district's Strategic Plan development, update, review and implementation.

10. How much autonomy will the Director have in managing the \$4 million annual IT budget?

The director of IT has a significant amount of autonomy in deploying staff resources and solutions to meet the day-to-day needs. As a member of the district's Senior Leadership Team (Cabinet) the director works closely with the Superintendent of Schools and instructional, operations, student support and human resource leaders. Decisions are made based on the District's Strategic Plan and instructional and operational needs and priorities. The director has an important role in these conversations and advises with regard to the best technical tool or solution to address the challenge or need at hand.

Scope of Work and Services

1. The RFP speaks to consultant services in the four areas outlined. There is NO request for hardware nor anything else aside from the consultant services – correct?

That is correct. This RFP is for IT staff services only.

2. Will the selected vendor be responsible for managing the complete scope of work, or is the vendor's role limited to providing qualified resumes and candidates for a specified duration?

The district is seeking a partner who manages the complete scope of work. This RFP is not limited to seeking candidates for a pre-defined period of time.

3. Beyond the four core roles, is the District open to alternative staffing configurations or value-added services (e.g., vCISO, strategic planning, device lifecycle management, data governance support) provided they remain within budget and improve outcomes? Beyond staffing support, is the District seeking additional technology solutions, advisory services, or strategic offerings from the selected vendor?

The district is seeking a partner who provides the best value and service. If a proposer believes that an alternative staffing arrangement would be most beneficial, they are welcome to submit that, along with any other value-added services. As noted in the RFP, it is essential that the district is assured that the

duties and responsibilities outlined in this RFP are addressed in the proposal, and and the district is able to identify itemized costs for each position proposed or aspect of the proposal.

4. Is the District seeking a fully managed IT services partnership with defined performance metrics, or primarily dedicated personnel operating within the District's existing structure? Is the District seeking a long-term strategic partner or primarily staffing coverage?

The district is seeking a long-term strategic partner who provides staffing coverage, including a director. This is a hybrid department that is led by the contracted director who provides the vision, direction and management for the district's IT services. While not fully managed, the district is looking to benefit from the overall technical and strategic experience and expertise of a firm that is providing personnel for the contracted positions.

Proposal Submission and Evaluation

1. Will awards be based solely on lowest price, or on a best-value determination?

The award will be based on best value. While the cost of the services will be a significant factor in the evaluation, the district is seeking a strong demonstration of the experience and qualifications of any proposer and the value that would be added to our organization by working with any potential partner

2. Is it the intent of the district to award all (4) positions (Director of Information Technology, Network Administrator, and two Help Desk Technicians) to the same vendor?

Yes.

3. Is not having direct past performance with K-12 school districts a deal breaker?

The district will evaluate all responses received. Whether or not the proposer has K-12 experience, the proposal must demonstrate that the vendor can and will be highly successful working in K-12 education in New York.

4. Are commercial references acceptable?

Yes.

5. Can we provide references from U.S.-based clients?

Yes.

6. Are digital signatures acceptable for the submission?

Yes.

7. Is a specific template required for the Proposal Cover Sheet, or will a standard cover letter suffice?

No, there is no specific template required. A standard cover sheet and/or cover letter will suffice.

8. Will our Certificate of Insurance be sufficient to provide as proof of insurance ability?

Yes. With RFP responses, proposers shall include proof of General Liability Insurance with a duly subscribed insurance carrier and proof of the other enumerated insurance coverages outlined in the RFP (Attachment E).

As noted in the RFP, with the execution of a contract between the district and the awarded firm:

1. The Vendor shall effectuate the naming of the District as an additional insured on the VENDOR's insurance policies, with the exception of workers' compensation, and furnish such Certificates of Insurance to the District.

2. Such policies shall state that the organization's coverage shall be primary coverage for the district, its Board, employees and volunteers

3. Vendor acknowledges that failure to obtain such insurance on behalf of the district constitutes a material breach of contract and subjects it to liability for damages, indemnification and all other legal remedies available to the District.

4. The Vendor is to provide the District with a certificate of insurance, evidencing the above requirements have been met, prior to the commencement of work or use of facilities.

9. Will Proposer interviews be conducted onsite, remote, or at the District's discretion?

A first round remote interview is possible. An in-person interview will be needed prior to any selection of an awarded vendor.

10. Please advise if California-based vendors are eligible to submit a proposal for the above-mentioned RFP.

All are eligible to submit a proposal. Proposers must demonstrate an ability to be successful working in K-12 education in New York.

11. Does the proposal submission require hard copy submission? If so, should the hard copies be mailed to: Michael DeSantis, Purchasing Agent, Niskayuna Central School District, 1430 Balltown Road, Niskayuna, New York 12309

Yes, the RFP states the following: Vendors must submit an original Proposal (identified as such) and five (5) copies in a sealed envelope and must indicate the following information on the outside of the package:

Vendor's Name and Address

RFP Number and Title (NCSD-26-012 Information Technology Services)

RFP Due Date (March 5, 2026).

Vendors are encouraged to submit an electronic copy of the Proposal in the sealed envelope.

12. Is Attachment G – Consultant Services Contract required to be submitted with the proposal, or is it provided for informational purposes only?

Submission of a signed Attachment G is required with the proposal. This signature serves as an agreement to the contract's primary terms. Any requested modifications can be submitted as redlines during the proposal phase. Following the selection process, a final execution copy will be prepared to include the refined scope of work and finalized pricing

13. Is it mandatory to submit at least two school/K-12 references?

The RFP states that, "if possible, references should include at least two clients who are similar in size and business to Niskayuna Central School District.

14. Is notarization required? If yes, will an online/electronic notary be acceptable?

Consistent with General Municipal Law GML §103, the Non-Collusion Bidding Certification should be notarized. Remote notarization is acceptable.

Contract Pricing, Duration, IT Budget and Infrastructure

1. Is this a new solicitation, or are there incumbent contractors currently providing these services? If applicable, can the District share historical or prior spending associated with this contract?

These services are currently provided through an existing contract that expires June 30, 2026. The school district issues RFPs periodically for professional services. The existing contract can be viewed at [https://go.boarddocs.com/ny/nisk/Board.nsf/files/DHZGCB432092/\\$file/Niskayuna%20CSD-NRI%20SOW%202025-26.pdf](https://go.boarddocs.com/ny/nisk/Board.nsf/files/DHZGCB432092/$file/Niskayuna%20CSD-NRI%20SOW%202025-26.pdf).

2. How is your IT budget typically allocated?

The district's IT budget is approximately \$4 million. Approximately 20% is staff salaries and another 20% is contractual expenses, including the current contract for IT staff services as well as software licensing. Just more than 50% of the IT budget is for expenditures with BOCES (Board of Cooperative Educational Service). This component of the budget includes hardware and equipment, through installment purchases, software licensing and subscription services, and additional IT support services. The remainder of the budget is made up of supplies and materials, as well as hardware and software procured outside of BOCES.

3. Can you describe your network infrastructure?

The District maintains a standardized Cisco network environment with no equipment that has been designated as end of life

4. Does the District prefer pricing based on hourly rates, or is fully burdened annual FTE pricing acceptable?

The cost should be presented as the annual amount per each FTE proposed, with each FTE "fully burdened" to include all salary, benefits, taxes and any indirect expenses.

5. What is the number of hours considered to be one FTE?

The district defines one FTE as 2,080 hours.

6. Can proposers submit hourly bill rates by position within the proposed fee structure?

The cost should be presented as the fully burdened annual price for each FTE (2,080 hours per FTE). If hourly rates are necessary to understand the proposal and fee structure, they may also be included.

7. Can proposers include additional IT roles in the proposed fee structure beyond those listed in the RFP?

Yes.

8. Is it mandatory to submit pricing for all listed roles, or may proposers bid on select roles

only?

The district anticipates that this will be a single award RFP. Proposers who only submit select roles may not be considered.

9. For Helpdesk Technicians, do we need to provide the hourly rate of 2 technicians? For example, if the hourly rate of a helpdesk technician is \$A, do we need to provide \$A (1 helpdesk technician) or \$2A (2 helpdesk technicians) under the column 2026-27 for Helpdesk Technicians?

The amount in that column should represent the cost to the district of two (2) full-time help desk technicians. Proposers may wish to make clear the per FTE cost of help desk technicians elsewhere in their proposal

Important Clarification: Figures on the Cost Proposal should represent annual - and not hourly - costs to the district of fully burdened FTE for 2,080 hours per year.

10. Is the District agreeable to a standard 3% labor cost escalation for all renewal periods?

For the 2027-28 Renewal on the Cost Proposal sheet, it is the vendor's decision as to what to propose in the RFP response. Additional renewals will be based on mutual agreement between the District and the awarded vendor.

11. What is the anticipated Start Date of the services requested? What is the duration of the engagement/contract?

The start date is July 1, 2026. The duration of the engagement will be an initial one-year term followed by the potential for multiple one-year renewals.

12. Does the District anticipate exercising multiple one-year renewals beyond June 30, 2027, as allowed by the RFP?

Yes. The district's Purchasing Regulations state that, "Professional services agreements are mutually beneficial when the service periods span multiple years." The district understands the value of long-term partnerships. The initial one-year term may be followed by multiple one-year renewals pending mutual agreement of both parties.

13. Is subcontracting permitted under this contract?

The district's strong preference is to establish a partnership with the awarded vendor and work directly with this firm and not other parties.

Current Environment and Expectations

1. Are there any compliance, cybersecurity, or cyber-insurance requirements driving this initiative? Are there any regulatory or compliance requirements driving this initiative? (NIST, CIS, HIPAA, PCI, NYDFS, SOC, etc.)

No. This is driven by the district's practice of issuing RFPs for professional service procurement.

2. Do you carry cyber insurance? If yes, please describe any security requirements tied to your policy.

[Awaiting info from Cyber insurance carrier for this one.]

3. Do you currently have internal IT staff? If yes, please describe their roles and responsibilities.

Yes, in addition to the four contracted staff positions that are the subject of this RFP, the district has 17 full-time IT staff who are district employees. These positions are listed on page 3 of the RFP.

4. How does the District envision coordination between vendor staff and existing district IT employees (17 FTEs) to avoid overlap and ensure clear accountability?

The district has a well-established IT structure which can and does evolve based on priorities and needs. The director who will be contracted as a result of this RFP is the leader of the department and establishes the vision, priorities, and day-to-day activities within the department. As a member of the district's Senior Leadership Team (Cabinet) the director works closely with the Superintendent of Schools and instructional, operations, student support and human resource leaders and thus the work of the director and department is guided by close knowledge of the district's priorities and needs. The expectation is that regardless of having some positions contracted and some filled with district employees, the department operates as one cohesive unit.

5. What is your current IT infrastructure model? On-Premises, Cloud, Hybrid?

The district's IT infrastructure is a hybrid between on-premises and cloud-based.

6. What is your current change management process for implementing new technology or security tools?

As described previously, the contracted director is a member of the Senior Leadership Team and has close knowledge of needs and priorities. The director

and others in the IT department work closely with instructional and operational leaders to identify technical tools and solutions. An IT Committee structure is utilized on the instructional side to provide additional stakeholder engagement and feedback on key changes. Typically any change is accompanied by significant training and communication in multiple sessions and venues.

7. What is your preferred communication model? E-mail, Ticketing System, Scheduled Meetings, Executive Reviews/QBRs? How does the District expect communication and reporting to be structured with the awarded vendor?

Communication will take the form of all of the above. A ticketing system and some email are used for day-to-day problem resolution. The contracted Director of IT reports directly to the Superintendent of Schools. The district will expect periodic reports from the awarded vendor of work accomplished and project status, with the cadence and format to be determined by the selected firm and the district.

8. What AI tools (instructional or administrative) are currently in use within the District?

As a Google school district, Gemini is currently used by the district, as well as Magic School.

9. How closely should contracted IT staff coordinate with Instructional Technology staff and curriculum leadership?

The district prides itself as an innovative learning community that makes effective use of instructional technology. The IT staff, and IT Director specifically, will work very closely with curriculum leadership. IT staff members include an Instructional Technology Coach and school-based Computer Teaching Assistants, who are critical partners with teachers and curriculum leaders in the effective use of instructional technology. As noted in the RFP, the district is interested in a contract for IT services that provides knowledge and exercise in areas that include instructional technology, end-user support and customer service.

10. What expectations does the District have for the Data Privacy Officer role, referenced in the RFP? Could the District clarify whether it maintains a formal Data Privacy Governance framework (e.g., aligned with NY Education Law 2-D where applicable) and whether the selected vendor will be expected to support ongoing compliance activities such as reporting, documentation updates, and vendor privacy agreement reviews?

The contracted Director of Security will be the district's Data Privacy Officer. This means this individual will oversee cybersecurity governance and policy development and implementation to maintain strict alignment with New York State Education Law 2-D and FERPA. District practices are aligned with NY Education

Law 2-D and the awarded vendor will lead and support all ongoing compliance activities.