

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Elementary Core Reading Program for Grades K-6

RFP: Elementary Reading

A. Purpose

The Susquehanna Community School District is requesting written proposals from potential sources to provide a core reading program with print and digital access for grades K-6 that would ensure our students receive a strong foundation in reading and writing and, therefore, become fluent readers who are able to master the PA Core Standards in English Language Arts. The purpose of the RFP is to solicit complete proposals in accordance with the Proposal Response format listed in the RFP, from agencies with expertise in providing high-quality, standards-aligned, research-based elementary curricular resources for a rural public school with about 460 students and 3 general education teachers plus additional learning support teachers for each grade. This RFP is designed to provide interested parties with sufficient basic information to submit proposals meeting minimum requirements, but is not intended to limit a proposal's content or exclude any relevant or essential information. Respondents are at liberty and are encouraged to expand upon the specifications as to provide further evidence of service capability under any proposed agreement. Bids will be evaluated. The District reserves the right to reject any and all proposals or waive any non-statutory informality. The District further reserves the right to make the contract award deemed by the Susquehanna Community School District Board of Education to be in the best interest of the District regardless of the selection committee's evaluation. The Board's decision to accept or reject the contract will be final. Upon completion of the purchase process and selection, Susquehanna Community School District will assume ownership of all materials provided as part of the proposal. The Elementary Reading Curriculum Adoption Committee is composed of highly-qualified teachers, district content specialists, and school administrators. To maintain a fair and independent evaluation process, all committee members serve on a volunteer, non-stipend basis. Each member will personally review all materials submitted for approval. The Coordinator of Curriculum, Assessment, and Instruction will review all Committee evaluations and submit the final recommendation directly to the Susquehanna Community School District Board of Education. This multi-level evaluation process, involving numerous people, guarantees to each publisher equity and fairness in the bidding, evaluation, and selection process. Respondents are strongly encouraged to carefully read the entire request for proposals.

B. Background

Susquehanna Community School District is a rural district located in Pennsylvania. The district has one elementary school with a four-year-old- kindergarten through sixth grade enrollment of approximately 460 students.

The district's mailing address is:
Susquehanna Community School District
3192 Turnpike Street
Susquehanna, PA 18847

We are seeking a program that provides print materials and digital subscriptions for teachers and students for 6 years. For the 2022-23 School Year, our projected enrollment including general education and special education students and teachers is as follows, so please provide a quote based on these numbers:

- Five-Year-Old Kindergarten 58 students with 5 teachers
- First Grade 72 students with 6 teachers
- Second Grade 70 students with 6 teachers
- Third Grade 70 students with 5 teachers
- Fourth Grade 60 students with 5 teachers
- Fifth Grade 60 students with 2 teachers
- Sixth Grade 60 students with 2 teachers

C. Scope of Services

The desired outcome for this adoption cycle is to provide up-to-date, research-based, relevant, and appropriate materials that will effectively support teaching and learning practices in our five-year-old Kindergarten through sixth-grade English Language Arts classrooms through both print and digital formats.

The following list of requirements, although extensive, is not exhaustive and is intended to provide interested parties with sufficient basic information to submit proposals meeting minimum requirements, but is not intended to limit a proposal's content or exclude any relevant or essential information. Moreover, the committee members will be expected to introduce their knowledge of Susquehanna Community School District's learning communities' needs and classroom requirements as they evaluate the curricular resources in relation to the selection criteria.

Curricular/Design Requirements

1. Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts, as adapted by the Pennsylvania Department of Education

- Instructional materials align with the PA Core ELA Standards.
- Curriculum materials must have a clear and documented scientific research base.
- Curricular materials must have an online component that allows for continued education when the district requires virtual instruction.
- Curricular materials support accelerated learning for those who have experienced learning loss.

2. ELA and Literacy Curricula

- **Key Criteria for Reading Program**
 - The program addresses teaching the whole child by focusing on reading, writing, speaking, listening, and critical thinking.
 - Materials allow for flexibility in meeting the needs of a wide range of students, including students with learning disabilities, English language learners, and those experiencing learning loss.

- Materials include effective instruction for all aspects of foundational reading as well as, higher-level reading skills and strategies through print and digital formats.
 - Materials include differentiated lessons including Tier 2 lessons and supporting materials to target struggling students and materials to challenge above-grade level students.
 - Materials have a strong writing focus that allows students to write about what they read, as well as, participate in extended writing activities requiring students to follow the writing process. There is an option to complete the writing process online.
 - Materials allow time for student discussion, finding text evidence, and developing writing skills that allow students to provided text-dependent analysis of both informational and fictional texts.
- **Key Criteria for Text Selections**
 - All students (including those who have experienced learning loss) have extensive opportunities to encounter grade-level text.
 - Text selections are worth reading and re-reading through the Close Reading process.
 - Text selections include a wide variety of genres and many have a content area (Science and Social Studies) focus.
 - Additional materials aim to increase the regular independent reading of texts that appeal to students' interests while developing both their knowledge base and joy in reading.
 - Materials are free from bias in their portrayal of ethnic groups, gender, age, disabilities, cultures, religion, etc. and contain accommodations for multiple learning styles, students with exceptionalities, English Language Learners, and cultural differences.
 - Materials provided lend themselves to benchmarking students for growth.
 - Texts are available online for students to read and have the capability to be read-aloud for those students who require that accommodation.

3. English Language Learners

- Materials should be designed to provide thoughtful supports/scaffolds to assist all students in accessing the standards.
- Materials regularly provide all students, including those who read, write, speak, or listen below grade level, or whose first language is other than English, with extensive opportunities to work with and meet grade-level standards.
- Materials should offer the resources necessary for English Language Learners to be successful online.

Resources Requirements

- Teachers will have access to student and teacher materials through print and digital formats.
- Teachers will have the ability to access a variety of levels of resources in print and digital forms in order to differentiate instruction.
- All print and digital materials are user-friendly.
- Students will have access to digital materials that would allow them to continue in the program during virtual instruction.
- Assessments can be completed online or in paper format.

Professional/Service Requirements

1. Training, Service and Support

- Agency has knowledgeable and capable curriculum specialists who will guide our district employees through the implementation process via onsite and/or virtual trainings.
- Agency's customer support is available via phone, email, or an online support portal with a guaranteed response of one business day after receiving notice of issue.
- Agency has knowledgeable client support staff who are available to personally take calls and provide immediate assistance.
- Agency provides online resources that provided targeted professional development on utilizing the print and digital components.

2. Evidence of Performance

- Agency can provide documentation on the effectiveness of the program.
- Agency has a broad client base of districts of various sizes, with different requirements and unique needs.
- Agency exhibits a strong, steady client retention rate within the elementary public school market that proves its success in providing high levels of value and service to its clients.
- Service provider can present references from districts of similar size and requirements as the Susquehanna Community School District.

D. Proposal Response

Each respondent should set forth its most compelling case as to its ability to provide a comprehensive reading program for kindergarten through sixth grade based on the scope of services required.

All proposals must be organized and tabbed to comply with the following sections:

1. Transmittal Letter (2 pages Maximum)

- The letter of transmittal should include:
 - An introduction of the agency, including name, address, telephone number and email address of primary contact and others authorized to deal with this proposal response
 - A general statement of interest and what sets your agency apart from other potential respondents

2. Executive Summary (2 pages Maximum)

- The executive summary should briefly describe the agency's philosophical approach to a comprehensive core reading curriculum in public education classrooms and its summarized approach to completing the scope of services outlined. Clearly indicate any options or alternatives being proposed and clearly disclose any major requirements included in the scope of services the agency cannot address.

3. Detailed Discussion (5 pages Maximum)

- This section constitutes the major portion of the proposal and must contain at least the following information:
 - Provide a brief narrative of the print and digital resources.

- Describe the agency organization and list of the agency's personnel available to the District.
- Briefly summarize your agency experience and overall qualifications as a elementary reading curriculum publisher.
- Provide three to five references of existing clients, preferably from Pennsylvania.
- Provide documentation of alignments to the PA ELA Core Standards. (Alignment documentation will not count toward page maximum).
- Provide a statement and timeline regarding your agency's ability to provide the scope of services and materials requested.

4. Samples of Instructional Materials

NOTE: SAMPLES SHOULD NOT BE SENT WITH YOUR PROPOSAL. SAMPLES SHOULD ONLY BE SENT UPON REQUEST BY THE DISTRICT.

- The District will request samples based on their initial review of the written proposals. After the initial review of proposals is completed, the District may request samples from any or all respondents.
- If samples are requested, the Respondent shall submit the following items free of charge. Items can be returned to the publisher with shipping at the publisher's expense.
 - One (1) print version set of every grade level of the proposed student materials and teacher editions
 - Textbooks and other printed material may be marked or stamped as a "sample".
 - Access to the online teacher and student components at each grade level.

5. Protected / Proprietary Information

- Protected information should be clearly identifiable and included in the Detailed Discussion section of the proposal. Do not incorporate protected information throughout the proposal. Rather, provide a reference in the proposal response directing readers to the specific area of this Protected Information Section.

6. Fee Proposal (5 page Maximum --- Separately Sealed)

- The District is interested in a Fee for Services arrangement under this agreement. All respondents must include a fee for services proposal.
 - Fee proposals should enumerate any costs the District can expect to be charged and specify the types of materials and services that would generate any additional charges; including ongoing costs, maintenance fees, technical support costs, and the number of recommended days of professional development costs.
 - Fee proposal should include longitudinal costs for a six-year period.
 - Respondents are welcome to submit alternative fee proposals for consideration.

E. Evaluation Process and Criteria

1. In review of proposals, two to five respondents will be brought before the committee for evaluation. The committee will then evaluate the curricular/design and professional/service sections.
2. Following the curricular/design and professional/service proposals, the committee will open and evaluate the fee proposals.
3. The committee will convene to discuss all aspects of the evaluation process, (including curricular/design requirements, professional/service requirements, fee proposals, and perception of agency's ability to accomplish scope of service) and select the primary curriculum to be presented for the Board's consideration. The District reserves the right to:
 - Accept or reject any proposal, and/or
 - Waive any formality or technicality if determined to be in the best interest of the school district, and/or
 - Select a high-quality open educational resource (no agency association) as the recommended elementary reading curriculum.

Award shall be made to the respondent deemed most capable of accomplishing the Scope of Services required, taking into account the proposals and evaluation factors here outlined.

- Instructional Design
- Professional Development Proposal
- Costs

F. Term of Agreement

The contract resulting from this RFP shall be renewable for up to 6 years. Tentative date for formal approval by the Board is April 20, 2022. Effective date of contract will be July 1, 2022. G. Due Date

To qualify as a responsive proposal, a hard copy of the proposals and one electronic copy must be sealed and received by Julie Gallo, Coordinator of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment, 3192 Turnpike Street, Susquehanna, PA 18847, no later than 2:00 PM on Thursday, March 31, 2022. Outside of submission must be marked RFP Elementary Reading. Electronic bids can be submitted to Mrs. Gallo at jgallo@scschools.org.

H. Tentative Timeline (Subject to modification)

RFP released:	February 14, 2022
Final Questions Due:	1:00 PM, Tuesday, March 1, 2022
Proposals Due:	2:00 PM, Thursday, March 31, 2022
Notice of Award: BOE Meeting	Wednesday, April 20, 2022

I. Questions and Contact Information

Questions, interpretations, clarifications or communication regarding RFP Elementary Reading must be submitted by March 1, 2022. Responses to any postings shall be the responsibility of: Julie Gallo, Coordinator of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment. Contact made with any other Susquehanna Community School District personnel may be considered grounds for disqualification.

It is the sole responsibility of all interested offerors to ensure submittals reflect all details of the solicitation in its entirety.