



Request for Proposals ("RFP")

Evaluation- Mental Health Survey Support

RFP Release: October 18, 2024

Proposal Due Date: November 18, 2024, at 12:00 p.m.

1. Overview and Scope

Ohio students are not immune to the [nation's rising youth mental health needs](#). In the Ohio, [1 in 3 students report challenges with anxiety](#), and [1 in 3 students report feeling sad or hopeless](#).

The State of Ohio is committed to educator preparation that supports student wellness in their future work. As a part of this effort, the Chancellor of the Ohio Department of Higher Education is seeking proposals from qualified vendor(s) to provide the following services:

- 1) Conduct a survey of each undergraduate and graduate educator preparation program for teachers and administrators that is offered at an institution of higher education to determine what instruction the programs are providing to these future teachers and administrators in mental and behavioral health, behavior management, and classroom management, including how they are incorporating education on adverse childhood experiences and trauma.
- 2) Use the survey results to develop a summary of the instructional strategies, practices, and content of surveyed preparation programs, including institution-level summaries.
- 3) Develop a report that analyzes the survey's findings to make recommendations for evidence-based and evidence-informed strategies, practices, and content to address identified needs and equip educators to support student academic success and well-being from early childhood education through the twelfth grade.

Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE) staff and an appointed review team will review and evaluate RFP responses based on predetermined criteria described herein. The award of this RFP will result in a contract with the Chancellor.

The Chancellor's actions and this RFP are specific to Section 3333.0419 as enacted by Senate Bill 94 of the 135th General Assembly.

2. Program Process

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| • RFP release date | October 18, 2024 |
| • Questions due by 12 p.m. | October 25, 2024 |
| • Responses to questions received by deadline | November 1, 2024 |
| • Proposals Due by 12 p.m. | November 18, 2024 |
| • Review, score, and select vendor(s) | November 19 - December 16, 2024 |

a) ODHE will release the RFP on October 18, 2024 via the ODHE RFP Portal, which can be found online at rfp.ohiohighered.org.

b) ODHE will provide an opportunity for interested parties to seek assistance by responding to their questions. Interested parties' questions are to be submitted in writing via e-mail to Krista Maxson at kmaxson@highered.ohio.gov by 12:00 p.m. on October 25, 2024.

Responses to the questions received by the above deadline will be posted in the ODHE RFP Portal at rfp.ohiohighered.org on November 1, 2024.

c) Parties interested in submitting a proposal must create an account in the ODHE RFP Portal at rfp.ohiohighered.org. Once they have logged into the portal, parties can view the RFP and all related documentation including the questions and their responses related to the RFP. Additionally, interested parties will submit their proposals through the RFP Portal, as described herein.

3. Proposal Criteria

Respondents should demonstrate their experience and expertise in the following:

- Providing instruction to students in mental and behavioral health, behavior management, and classroom management;
- The creation, dissemination, collection, and analysis of surveys;
- Developing comprehensive reports based on survey analysis;

Please see Exhibits I & II, attached hereto, for more information.

The cost of preparation and submission of the proposal are solely the responsibility of the respondent. RFP response may consist of two or more parties with shared capabilities and capacity partnering to provide the requested services. This RFP indicates the respondent as “vendor.” The vendor may identify as a for-profit or non-profit organization. The Chancellor may make one award to a lead party on behalf of a consortium or partnership.

4. Project Term

The project term will commence upon execution of a contract with the Chancellor. A final report will be due from the vendor 30 days after the end of the project period. Services must be completed by June 13, 2025.

5. Evaluation & Proposal Scoring Criteria

The Chancellor’s staff and appointed review team will evaluate RFP responses based on predetermined criteria. The Chancellor reserves the right to contact any reference to assist in the evaluation of the proposal, to independently verify information contained in the proposal, and to discuss the vendor’s qualifications with any person or entity not affiliated with the Chancellor’s office. Finalists may be required to make a presentation of the proposal, which would occur in person or virtually. The presentation cannot materially change the information contained in the proposal. The Chancellor shall evaluate the candidates and exercise independent judgment in making the final decision.

6. Proposal Contents & Page Limits, Format & Submission Instructions

This RFP is designed to furnish detailed information regarding the vendor’s ability, expertise, and capacity to provide technical assistance in setting up, disseminating, and collecting survey responses, and developing a comprehensive report. Additional information may be requested. All information submitted in response to this RFP is public information unless a statutory exception exists that exempts it from public release. Responses that are poorly formatted or submitted, incomplete or otherwise determined to not meet the format and submission guidelines may be removed from consideration.

Contents should be arranged in the following order and be at or less than the noted length:

1. **Cover Page (optional)**
2. **Abstract** – One page or less
3. **Proposal Questions** – Respondent should respond to the questions/statements set forth in Exhibits I & II – not to exceed 10 pages.
 - a. Resumés and other supporting material are not included in the page length.

- 4. Budget & Budget Narrative (3 pages maximum)** – In a narrative and summarized in an Excel spreadsheet, the budget and budget narrative will document:
- a. Costs for each step of the process.
 - b. The underlying assumption for each cost (i.e., base cost for item or service, number served, etc.)

Submission Instructions: One PDF in 11 pt. Arial font with normal margins, single line spaced on 8.5 x 11-inch paper. In the footer all pages must be numbered consecutively using the format page x of y' (e.g., page 3 of 30) with the respondent's name. Consecutive page numbering applies to all pages of the proposal including any appendices.

All proposal materials must be submitted online through ODHE's RFP Portal at rfp.ohiohighered.org. Documents may be uploaded and submitted through the RFP Portal in *PDF format*. No other file formats will be accepted through the portal. No hard copies of applications or proposal materials will be accepted.

The cost of preparation and submission of the proposal are solely the responsibility of the respondent.

7. Legal Notice & Disclaimers; Obligations to Local, State & Federal Governments

All information submitted in response to this RFP becomes property of the Chancellor and is public information unless a statutory exception exists that exempts it from public release under the Ohio Public Records Act, as defined in Section 149.43 of the Ohio Revised Code.

The Chancellor reserves the right to request or use additional information to assist in the review process, to require new proposals from interested parties, to reject any or all proposals responding to this RFP, or to re-issue, modify or cancel the RFP if it is determined that it is in the best interests of the institutions and/or the state. Issuing this RFP does not bind the Chancellor to issuing a contract. The Chancellor administers the process and reserves the right to adjust the dates for this process for whatever reasons are deemed appropriate. All costs incurred in the preparation of a proposal shall be borne by the respondents and are not recoverable under the award. The decisions of the Chancellor are final. Respondents will be notified of the outcome of their proposal at the conclusion of the review process.

The respondents understand that the information provided in this RFP is intended solely to assist in the proposal submission process. To the best of the Chancellor's knowledge, the information provided is accurate; however, the Chancellor does not warrant such accuracy, and any errors or omissions subsequently determined will not be construed as a basis for invalidating this RFP. Interested parties bear the sole responsibility of obtaining the necessary information to submit a qualifying proposal. By submitting a proposal, respondents expressly agree to these terms.

- a. **Obligations to Local, State & Federal Governments:** The contract between the Chancellor and the chosen respondent ("vendor") will require the vendor to comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws in the performance of the project. Vendor(s) must accept full responsibility for payments of all unemployment compensation, insurance premiums, workers' compensation premiums, income tax deductions, social security deductions and any and all other payroll deductions required for all employees engaged on the performance of the work authorized by the contract.

Vendor(s) will be required to certify in the contract, among other things, that they do not owe any delinquent taxes or money to the state or a political subdivision of the state whether the amounts owed are being contested in a court of law or not.

- b. Trade Secret Language:** All information submitted in response to this RFP become property of the Chancellor and is public information unless a statutory exception exists that exempts it from public release under the Ohio Public Records Act, as defined in Section 149.43 of the Ohio Revised Code:

All respondents are strongly discouraged from including in a proposal any information that the respondent considers to be a “trade secret,” as that term is defined in Section 1333.61(D) of the Ohio Revised Code. The respondent asserting trade secrets bears the responsibility to take formal action if necessary and defend such assertion. Otherwise, public records laws may require disclosure.

If any information in the proposal is to be treated as a trade secret, the proposal must:

- a. Identify each and every occurrence of the information within the proposal with an asterisk before and after each line containing trade secret information and underline the trade secret information itself;
- b. Identify that the proposal contains trade secret information in the cover letter; and
- c. Include a summary page immediately after the cover letter that lists each page in the proposal that includes trade secret information and the number of occurrences of trade secret information on that page.
- d. To determine what qualifies as trade secret information, refer to the definition of “trade secret” in the Ohio Revised Code at 1333.61(D), which is reproduced below for reference:

(D) “Trade Secret” means information, including the whole or any portion or phase of any scientific or technical information, design, process, procedure, formula, pattern, compilation, program, device, method, technique or improvement, or any business information or plans, financial information, or listing of names, addresses, or telephone numbers that satisfies both of the following:

(1) It derives independent economic value, actual or potential, from not being generally known to, and not being readily ascertainable by proper means by, other persons who can obtain economic value from its disclosure or use.

(2) It is the subject of efforts that are reasonable under the circumstances to maintain its secrecy.

- e. ODHE requires non-disclosure agreements from all non-Department of Higher Education persons who may have had access to proposals containing trade secret information, including evaluators.
- f. If the respondent claims that a record is not subject to disclosure under the Ohio Public Records law based on trade secret, it will bear costs of defending this claim.

If you questions regarding the RFP process or if you need further assistance, please contact Krista Maxson via email at kmaxson@highered.ohio.gov with the subject ‘Evaluation – Mental Health Survey Support RFP’.

EXHIBIT I

A. The Chancellor is seeking vendors with the appropriate qualifications to complete this initiative. It includes conducting a survey to determine what instruction in mental and behavioral health, behavior management, and classroom management, including how they are incorporating education on adverse childhood experiences and trauma with Ohio's (53) undergraduate and graduate educator preparation programs for teachers and administrators. It also includes developing a report that analyzes the survey's findings, making recommendations for evidence-based and evidence-informed strategies, practices, and content to address identified needs and equip educators to support student academic success and well-being from early childhood education through the twelfth grade. The vendor must provide evidence of:

1. Demonstrated ability to create a survey to determine how educator preparation programs are providing instruction in all of the following:
 - a. Processes for establishing a positive school and classroom climate;
 - b. Knowledge of the reasons for disruptive behaviors and how teacher and administrator actions impact the classroom and school climate;
 - c. Evidence-based techniques for preventing, managing, and responding to mild, moderate, and more disruptive student behaviors;
 - d. Processes for fostering and maintaining positive teacher and student relationships;
 - e. Procedures for designing and using trauma-informed instructional approaches;
 - f. Processes for using restorative practices in response to disruptive behaviors including developing civil discourse in the classroom; and
 - g. Techniques provided to teachers and administrators to manage their own stress and foster their own well-being.
2. Demonstrated ability to use survey results to develop a comprehensive summary of the instructional strategies, practices, and content of surveyed preparation programs, including institution-level summaries.
3. Demonstrated ability to develop a report that analyzes the survey's findings to make recommendations for evidence-based and evidence-informed strategies, practices, and content to address identified needs and equip educators to support student academic success and well-being from early childhood education through the twelfth grade.

The recommendations shall address the following:

- a. Classroom management;
- b. Behavior management;
- c. Mental health education;
- d. The impact of adverse childhood experiences and trauma on students

B. Costs and Timeline

1. Respondents are to provide detailed cost estimates related to the implementation of this initiative with a total cost of not more than \$150,000 for the proposed program.
 - a. Please note indirect costs are prohibited for this solicitation.
2. Timelines are to be submitted in bar chart form such as the GANTT format.

C. Deliverables

1. Create and submit draft survey to ODHE by January 24, 2025.
2. Disseminate, collect, and analyze surveys of Ohio's (53) educator preparation programs by March 1, 2025.
3. Submit an initial report to ODHE that analyzes the survey's findings and makes recommendations for educator preparation programs by April 1, 2025.
4. Complete institutional reports and comprehensive state report with recommendations incorporating as appropriate feedback from ODHE and the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce by June 13, 2025.

The vendor should have experience or expertise with qualitative survey analysis and reporting.

EXHIBIT II

A. Respondent Information - The response needs to reference and address the proposal outline found in Exhibit I.

1. Describe the vendor and/or team. If your team is affiliated with two or more parties provide the following information:
 - Name(s);
 - Address(es);
 - Name and Contact (e-mail and phone) for this RFP.
2. Describe previous work done by team to create, disseminate, and analyze surveys.
3. Describe previous and current work by team which demonstrates relevant subject matter expertise related to mental health.
4. Describe the structure and composition of the team to provide the requested services.
5. Provide the history for each participating vendor.
6. Detail team experience with documentation in the targeted areas. Resumés and associated references may be included in the response.
 - Creating, distributing, and compiling survey responses.
 - Analyzing survey responses and completing comprehensive reports.
7. Identify and list any recognition from independent sources the vendor(s) received demonstrating the vendor's expertise and credibility.
8. Describe the vendor's relevant experience providing similar services.
9. Please list one reference client.
10. Describe the vendor's expertise. The information below must be provided for any individual who will be involved in the implementation of the grant.
 - Resumés demonstrating relevant experience and expertise.
11. Provide a detailed implementation plan and narrative highlighting roles and responsibilities of team members to complete the proposed work.
12. Provide a description of the costs listed in the budget narrative.

B. Service Structure

1. Describe your service model (staff, responsibilities, interactions with our plan, frequency of in-person meetings, frequency of conference calls, team dynamics).
2. List the primary contact for our relationship and address the following questions:
 - Overall experience with surveying institutions, compiling results and
 - Education, honors, designations and other credentials.
 - Regular activities to stay current on the science of reading research and implementation.
 - Areas of expertise;
 - Years with the group/organization/firm;
 - Role at the group/organization/firm;
 - Number of plans supported;
 - Average size of plans supported.

3. Will the primary contact be the only person with whom we will be working? Yes or No

If no, please list name(s), titles, contact information, and profile information for each person:

- Overall experience with surveying institutions.
- Education, honors, designations and other credentials;
- Areas of expertise;
- Years with the group/organization/firm;
- Role at the group/organization/firm;
- Number of clients;
- Average size of clients.

C. Conflicts of Interest

Do you foresee any conflicts of interest?

1. List potential conflicts of interest.

D. Vendor Certification Form

- a. The vendor is not currently subject to an “unresolved” finding for recovery under Revised Code Section 9.24, and the vendor will notify the procurement representative any time it becomes subject to such a finding before the award of a contract arising out of this RFP.
- b. The vendor certifies that its responses to the following statements are true and accurate. The vendor’s answers apply to the last seven years. Please indicate Yes or No in each column.
 - The vendor has had a contract terminated for default or cause.
 - The vendor has been assessed any penalties in excess of \$10,000.00, including liquidated damages, under any of its existing or past contracts with any organization (including any governmental entity).
 - The vendor was the subject of any governmental action limiting the right of the vendor to do business with that entity or any other governmental entity.
 - Trading in the stock of the company has ever been suspended with the date(s) and explanation(s).
 - The vendor, any officer of the vendor, or any owner of a 20% interest or greater in the vendor has filed for bankruptcy, reorganization, a debt arrangement, moratorium, or any proceeding under any bankruptcy or insolvency law, or any dissolution or liquidation proceeding.
 - The vendor, any officer of the vendor, or any owner with a 20% interest or greater in the vendor has been convicted of a felony or is currently under indictment on any felony charge.
- c. If the answer to any item above is affirmative, the vendor must provide complete details about the matter. While an affirmative answer to any of these items will not automatically disqualify a vendor from consideration, at the sole discretion of the State, such an answer and a review of the background details may result in a rejection of the proposal. The State will make this decision based on its determination of the seriousness of the matter, the matter’s possible impact on the vendor’s performance under the contract, and the best interest of the State.
- d. The vendor certifies that neither it nor any of its people that may work on or benefit from the Contract through the vendor has a possible conflict of interest (e.g., employed by the State of Ohio, etc.) other than the conflicts identified immediately below:
- e. The State may reject a proposal in which an actual or apparent conflict is disclosed. And the State may cancel or terminate the contract for cause if it discovers any actual or apparent conflict of interest that the vendor did not disclose in its proposal.