



Department of Procurement Services

160 South Hollywood Street · Room 126 · Memphis, TN 38112 · (901) 416-5376

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

RFP 020526SB Interpretation and Translation Services

1. To ensure we provide a competitive bid, could you please confirm if any incumbent rates are available for review?
Answer: There are incumbent rates; however, an open records through the legal department would be required to obtain those rates.
2. In regard to the above-mentioned RFP, are vendors required to perform both interpretation and translation services, or can they perform one?
Answer: Yes, vendors must perform both interpretation and translation services
3. Can you please confirm whether there is a current or recently expired incumbent contract for interpretation and translation services and, if so, share the name(s) of the incumbent vendor(s)?
Answer: Yes, there is a current incumbent contract for interpretation services and another for translation and ASL services. You may submit an open records request through the legal department for any additional information.
4. If available, it would be helpful to understand high-level historical usage, such as estimated annual interpretation minutes and/or translation volume, so we can align our staffing and pricing appropriately.
Answer: Estimated usage would be about 64,000 minutes annually. Translation volume is roughly 25 – 30 projects a year.
5. While we understand the requirement to support 200+ languages, any insight into the most frequently requested languages, as well as how often rare-language requests typically occur?
Answer: Some of the most frequently requested languages are the following: Spanish, Arabic, Kinyarwanda, Swahili, and Haitian Creole. Rare language request would most likely come around the times that there are district-wide parent/teacher conferences (i.e., September and January/February); however, they can come at any time of the year depending on the need of the school for an IEP meeting, a parent visit to the school, or when a need arises to contact the family.
6. Will there be a requirement for In-Person Interpretation Services?
Answer: Yes, there is a requirement that In-Person Interpretation Services is an option.
7. What are the most common languages for Memphis-Shelby County Schools?
Answer: The most common languages outside of English are the following: Spanish, Arabic, Vietnamese, French, Swahili, Fulah, and Kinyarwanda.
8. Will this bid be awarded to multiple vendors?
Answer: No, this solicitation will only be awarded to one vendor.

9. Can we apply for partial services?

Answer: No, the application is to provide interpretation, translation, and ASL services.

10. I would also like to know how we can submit our pricing for translation services?

Answer: Please see Appendix I page 39

11. What are the licensing requirements for ASL interpreters? Would waivers be accepted for educational interpreters, if needed?

Answer: The individual must have graduated from an accredited college or university with an associate degree or a degree in education, special education, sign language/interpretation and 4 years of related work experience or equivalent combination of education, training, or experience; requires a minimum 3.5 certification on the Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment. Waivers will not be accepted.

12. What is the expected mix between prescheduled remote and onsite assignments for all languages and specifically ASL?

Answer: We are currently in need of on-demand online ASL services and translation services for the Department of Exceptional Education.

13. Would ASL services be provided for day schools only or for residential schools as well?

Answer: Currently, we do not have students assigned to residential schools.

14. Is SCBE able to provide historical usage data for the past 2–3 years, broken down by service type (telephonic, remote, on-site, ASL, translation) and by language?

Answer: Average usage over the past years is as follows:

- **Telephonic = 127,776 minutes**
- **Video = 922 minutes (Spanish)**
- **On-site = 0 minutes**
- **ASL = 219 minutes**
- **Translation = 46 projects**
 - **English to**
 - **Japanese, Vietnamese, French (Canada, France, and West Africa), Russian, Spanish (US), Akateko, Chinese (Traditional and Simplified), Kinyarwanda, Tigre, Bosnian (Cyrillic and Latin), Twi, Portuguese (Brazil), Fula, Turkish, Farsi, Somali, Swahili, Dari, and Pulaar**
 - **Dari to English**
 - **Spanish (Colombia, Latin America, and US) to English**
 - **Vietnamese to English**
 - **Hebrew to English**
 - **Chinese (Simplified) to English**
 - **Urdu to English**

15. Will partial bids be accepted (e.g., translation only or interpreting only), and if multiple awards are made, how will work be distributed among awarded vendors?

Answer: No, partial responses will not be accepted.

16. May proposers designate portions of their proposals as confidential, and if so, could a redacted copy be submitted?

Answer: Submitted proposals cannot have portions redacted and deemed as confidential.

17. Is there a budget or not-to-exceed amount allocated for this contract?

Answer: The budget will not be published. Please provide your best pricing solution.

18. Could SCBE please provide a list of the specific languages most frequently requested for interpretation and translation services?

Answer: Some of the most frequently requested languages are the following: Spanish, Arabic, Kinyarwanda, Swahili, and Haitian Creole.

19. Would SCBE consider accepting electronically submitted proposals in lieu of hard-copy submissions? Electronic submissions would reduce printing and mailing time, improve efficiency, and ensure timely receipt. If security is a concern, we would be pleased to submit the proposal via a secure file-sharing platform and provide a protected access link.

Answer: MSCS requires all vendors to submit hard copy submissions (original and copies) as well as provide their proposals on a USB.

20. If hard-copy submission remains a requirement, would SCBE consider extending the proposal submission deadline to account for printing, packaging, and mailing time?

Answer: Please see Addendum II, which was posted on January 28, 2026.

21. Can SCBE please elaborate on the scope and expectations for “certification training for bilingual staff in the district”?

a. What types of certifications are being referenced?

Answer: It is a certificate of completion for a training that would address interpreting protocols and procedures, as well as confidentiality, professionalism, and expectations. This is required by our Tennessee Department of Education.

b. Which staff groups are intended to participate (instructional staff, support personnel, administrators, or all bilingual employees)?

Answer: Bilingual support personnel who interact with families and interpret for meetings (e.g., IEP meetings, parent/teacher conferences, etc.) would participate.

c. Whether the District expects the vendor to deliver the training only, facilitate certification, or partner with an approved certifying body.

Answer: The District expects the vendor to oversee and manage the training process. The vendor may conduct the training directly or contract with an approved certifying body to meet this requirement. All communication regarding the training will occur exclusively between the District and the vendor.

d. If there are state, district, or preferred certification standards that proposers should align with.

Answer: There are no known certification standards; however, the state requires that interpreters and translators are trained in how to effectively perform their duties.

22. SCBE expects vendors to provide year-over-year cost reduction recommendations. Can the District clarify whether there is a preferred approach or expectation for how these reductions should be presented or achieved and whether maintaining flat pricing year over year would be considered an acceptable form of cost control in lieu of price reductions?

Answer: Please provide your best pricing solution to the RFP, whether it is a flat rate per year or year-over-year reductions.

23. Can you please provide some historical and/or projected volumes?

Answer: Average usage over the past years is as follows:

- **Telephonic = 127,776 minutes**
- **Video = 922 minutes (Spanish)**
- **On-site = 0 minutes**
- **ASL = 219 minutes**
- **Translation = 46 projects**

24. Who is the incumbent? Any contracts or rates you can share?

Answer: Please see question #3.

25. Any pain points with the current provider?

Answer: We have two providers. The only pain point would be that fact. We are seeking to award one vendor to address all three concerns (interpretation, translation, and ASL services) instead of two.

26. What is the profile of trainees for service “Training for use during initial roll out.”? If there are any mandatory sections of the training, what is the desired scope of the training? (page 13)

Answer: The trainees would be administrators, office staff, teachers, and possibly counselors, as all these individuals may use the service at some point to communicate with multilingual families.

27. What is the profile of trainees for service “Certification training for bilingual staff in district.”? If there are any mandatory sections of the training, what is the desired scope of the training? (page 13)

Answer: It is a certificate of completion for a training that would address interpreting protocols and procedures, as well as confidentiality, professionalism, and expectations. This is required by our Tennessee Department of Education. Bilingual support personnel who interact with families and interpret for meetings (e.g., IEP meetings, parent/teacher conferences, etc.) would participate.

28. What is the desired language scope for section “Video access for ASL; multiple languages for sign language and interpretation support” (page 13)

Answer: There may be a need for sign language for a family that does not speak English. We have encountered this with Spanish-speakers, but we would like to be able to have this possibility for at least our top five languages: English, Spanish, Arabic, Vietnamese, French.

29. Can you clarify if “Differentiation of user through using school codes” means to use the school ID or its part for identification of the user within translation platform or within reporting platform or does it represent something else? (page 13)

Answer: Yes, it is the way to identify the user within the reporting platform so that we can track usage.

30. For the interpretation certification of your team members, please confirm you are looking into a certification of interpreting skills but not a certification on language skills.

Answer: We are requesting a certification of interpreting skills to fulfill the state requirement; however, having a certification of language skills would be beneficial, as well.

31. What are the examples of three most used report types you envision?

Answer: Three of the report types that we would want to view would be the following:

- **Overview reports that give the number of languages and minutes used and which languages were requested over variable time periods determined by the user**
- **Detailed reports giving the overview information along with which school location requested the interpreter, as well as specific times, lengths of the calls, and cost of each call.**
- **Detailed reports outlining the amount of time it took for the requester to be connected to an interpreter for each language that was requested.**

32. How many users do you estimate as consumers of reports and data analysis dashboards?

Answer: There would be at least six (6) users that would review and download reports.

33. What is the SLA for an “On Demand” service? Hours? Days?

Answer: The District requires that the service can be accessed by phone and app 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

34. What is this specific SLA: (“Responsive”, “Quick”)

Answer: The District would expect responses within at least 24 hours to emails and phone calls.

Thank you,

Procurement Services