



Department of Procurement Services

160 S Hollywood St · Room 126 · Memphis, TN 38112 · (901) 416-5376

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

RFP 12225LB Student Transportation Services

1. With such a short turnaround time, it is difficult for bidders to provide competitive quotes for an August 1, 2026 contract start. Would the Board consider reissuing the RFP within a month or two, for a 2027 school start to allow for ample time to review?

Answer: The solicitation and the start date will stand as is.

2. Would the board consider providing a firm award date in early to mid-January?

Answer: The solicitation will be awarded no later than January 31, 2026 and will additionally require the Board's approval.

3. Would the board consider extending the due date to early January?

Answer: Please see the posted Addendum I

4. Would you confirm if Type C would be acceptable instead of Type D buses?

Answer: No, we need type D buses to support the District's needs.

5. Can you provide a timeline regarding a decision on the walk zone reduction. Adding 100 +/- routes with notice in the winter would be hard to pull-off, especially finding 100 more drivers in the market would be a huge challenge.

Answer: This matter is TBD. We will provide additional info once received.

6. Tech ratio: RFP calls for 1:15 tech to bus ratio. Can we vary from this in our proposal?

Answer: 1:15 prefer, max is 1:25

7. Field Trip billing: Will the Contractor bill each school for trips and have schools pay the invoice, or can we send one invoice to the District?

Answer: Yes, each school must be billed for trips directly.

8. Specifications ask for a 4, 5.5, and 7 hour rate, but will pay over hours. Can you amend the rate sheet to allow spacing for an over-hour rate?

Answer: Yes, we will pay over hours. Request for cost will be added as addendum.

9. Specs are for a 4 year base term +1 extension. I do not see a mechanism or space to quote rate increases for years 2 through 4 on the pricing pages. Where should we state our annual rate increases? Should we add that to the rate sheets?

Answer: Rate increase for 2-4 years should not exceed 3% CPI for additional years.

10. Do the specification require an 8 year average fleet age or is it an 8 year max fleet age? If it's an average, is there a max age?

Answer: The entire fleet average max is 8 years (ref. per RFP 2.15.4)

11. Specs require disinfecting 2x/day like we did during COVID. Is this being done today or can this be limited based on any new incidents?

Answer: Disinfecting 2x/day will be based on new incidents and emergencies.

12. What format is used for the annual customer survey? What individuals should be sent the survey?

Answer: If you are referring to survey sent by contractors, it should be sent to the Director of Transportation & Executive Director of Business Operations.

13. In reference to page 1, please confirm that a respondent who does not currently operate in Shelby County is not required to submit a copy of a Shelby County Business License.

Answer: If you do not operate in Shelby County, you do not have to provide a Shelby County License. This is for the purpose of applying our Local Preference Purchasing Policy 2011.

14. In reference to RFP 4.0 Notice of Intent to Award (page 3), please specify when Memphis-Shelby County Schools (MSCS) intends to award the contract and where the award notification will be publicly posted.

Answer: The Intent to Award will be issued to all vendors who submit a proposal. We do not post Intents publicly.

15. In reference to RFP 4.0 Notice of Intent to Award (page 3), please disclose if MSCS intends to award one vendor or split the awarded contract amongst multiple vendors.

Answer: The contract will be awarded to one (1) vendor.

16. In reference to RFP 7.0 Contract Type (page 5), please provide a copy of the current contract and current rates for student transportation services.

Answer: Please reach to Procurement for the requested information.

17. In reference to RFP 14.0 Liquidated Damages (page 6), please disclose the total amount of liquidated damages levied to the student transportation services current contractor(s) for the past three years

Answer: N/A

18. In reference to RFP Tab E. Technical Response to Scope of Work (page 9), please identify the sections MSCS considers a “major requirement of Part V (Scope of Work).

Answer: All requirements are considered major.

19. In reference to Tab H. Electronic Media (page 10), please provide direction on what a respondent should provide MSCS in this proposal section.

Answer: Submit a USB drive with your completed proposal loaded onto the drive.

20. In reference to 1.0 The Services (page 13), RFP #122225LB identifies 339 AM & PM routes per day, plus the need for 10% spares, which totals approximately 374 buses. The solicitation also requires a contractor to provide two (2) facilities that can accommodate 80 Buses each (160 total). MSCS has two (2) facilities that house 142 and 113 buses. This would represent a total of 415 buses across all four facilities. Please explain the discrepancy between the number of routes and the number of buses.

Answer: The accommodation is up to the number identified for each terminal. The total is 374 and the number of buses may vary at each terminal based on route assignments.

21. In reference to 1.0 The Services (page 13), please identify the number of single-tier vs multi-tier routes that exist today or will be expected for next year.

Answer: We currently have 6 single tier Sped routes and 10 single tier GenEd routes. All others are multi-tier. This is subject to change per new school year routing configurations.

22. In reference to 1.0 The Services (page 13), please provide a breakdown of the 339 routes by vehicle type (as shown in Appendix I: Compensation/Pricing Schedule) to ensure respondents capture MSCS's estimated spend correctly. The accuracy of this split will greatly impact pricing.

Answer: We currently have 78 71/72 packs and 138 84pks. Buses are utilized per routing needs and are subject to change per routing assignments and location of students.

23. In reference to 1.0 The Services (page 13), please share the bell schedules for all grade levels, including any special programs, to help respondents assess route length.

Answer: We currently have 3 bell times. 7:15am 8:15am & 9:15am. The dismissal times are 2:15pm, 3:15pm and 4:15pm. Specialized programs including CBI, Career Technology/Early College, and CLUE are based on program needs.

24. In reference to 1.0 The Services (page 13), of the 23,000 students transported, please identify the number of Please provide the number of Special Needs and Specialized and Exceptional Children.

Answer: 23,000 GenEd, 1638 Sped. All are subject to change.

25. In reference to 1.0 The Services (page 13), please identify the number of car seats, harnesses, and special equipment that is used for the transportation of Special Needs/Specialized and Exception students.

Answer: Car seats 126/ Harnesses 125/ Wheelchairs 169, all are subject to change according to student's needs,

26. In reference to 1.0 The Services (page 13), please identify the service days for regular school year and extended school year.

Answer: Number regular school days is 177 days. Extended school year is currently 20 days. Both are subject change.

27. In reference to 1.0 The Services (page 13), please identify how many Supplemental Transportation trips were scheduled last year by trip type (e.g. field trips, excursions, athletic activities, etc.) and what are the projections for next year.

Answer: Schools book their own trips. N/A

28. In reference to 1.0 The Services (page 13), please provide the average mileage and time duration of Supplemental Transportation trips based on historical data.

Answer: Times varies.

29. In reference to 1.0 The Services (page 13), please disclose or detail any service issues MSCS has experienced with the current student transportation provider(s).

Answer: N/A

30. In reference to 2.2 Minimum Run Lengths (page 14), please identify the average deadhead hours from the North Lot and East Lot.

Answer: N/A

31. In reference to 2.2 Minimum Run Lengths (page 14), please provide average run time for home-to-school services, special needs home-to-school services, and specialized and exceptional children services separately.

Answer: Run times vary according to routing configurations.

32. In reference to 2.2 Minimum Run Lengths (page 14), please share the current route sheet in excel or google sheets.

Answer: N/A

33. In reference to 2.6 Proposal Bond (page 15), please consider waiving the bid bond and performance bond and evaluate historical performance instead, as bonds can substantially drive up cost and increase the overall pricing.

Answer: Please reach out to Procurement.

34. In reference to 2.11 Contract Payments (page 17), please share the past three months' invoices from the current transportation contractor(s), including a breakdown by service category (e.g., monitors, home-to-school transportation, midday routes, field trips, etc.).

Answer: N/A

35. In reference to 2.14 Personnel Matters (page 17), please disclose whether bus drivers and monitors are unionized. If yes, please share a copy of the current collective bargaining agreement. The CBA will help ensure a well-informed and strategic approach to pricing.

Answer: Yes, some bus drivers and monitors are unionized. CBA is N/A.

36. In reference to 2.14 Personnel Matters (page 17), please specify if any MSCS-funded benefits exist that the awarded contractor must uphold.

Answer: N/A

37. In reference to 2.14.26 (page 21), if a respondent is offering to supply a brand-new fleet, please allow the reduction of the trained mechanic ration to “not fewer than a 1:30 ratio.” The current “1:15 ratio” is high, and, with a brand new fleet the need for that level of mechanics seems unnecessary. It would save the MSCS money while maintaining proper inspection frequency & vehicle safety standards.

Answer: Max is 1:25

38. In reference to 2.15.5 (page 22), please allow for cellular radio systems in place of traditional two-way UHF/VHF radios, as cellular systems have better coverage and perform identically to their two-way counterparts which should help in areas of poor coverage and for routes travel outside of the radio coverage area

Answer: More discussion is needed regarding this item.

39. In reference to 2.15.6 (page 22), please confirm MSCS intends all vehicles to be diesel fueled and what would be required of a respondent to be granted an exception to diesel fuel.

Answer: Yes, all vehicles must be diesel fuel unless agreed upon to incorporate some electric buses.

40. In reference to 2.16 Facilities (page 23) please provide more information on the North Lot and East Lot (e.g., size of site, office and parking space, photos, number of offices, number of restrooms, space for a training room, employee break lounge, driver/monitor room, etc.).

Answer: You can schedule a time to visit site if needed.

41. In reference to 2.16 Facilities (page 23) please identify the size of the maintenance areas of the North Lot and East Lot and equipment details (e.g., number of service bays, air compressor(s), airlines, lubricant hoses, etc.).

Answer: You can schedule a time to visit site if needed.

42. In reference to 2.16 Facilities (page 23) please specify if the North Lot and East Lot has fuel tanks on-site and properly approved for use. If so, identify the size of the tanks and fuel types that can be accommodated.

Answer: Fuel is provided by the District and tanks are properly approved for use. 10,000-gallon tanks are available at each site for diesel fuel.

43. In reference to 2.16 Facilities (page 23) please disclose if MSCS would like or allow the awarded vendor to invest in cosmetic upgrades to the North Lot and East Lot.

Answer: Yes, we can discuss investments in cosmetic upgrades by vendors

44. In reference to 2.17 Fuel (page 23), please specify if MSCS intends to furnish the fuel via we those mechanisms or are fuel tank(s) required at the transportation facilities.

Answer: Yes, MSCS will furnish diesel fuel at each terminal location.

45. In reference to Appendix I: Compensation/Pricing Schedule (page 52), please share the estimated SY25-26 budget, the estimated SY26-27 estimated budget, and the SY24-25 actual spend for student transportation services.

Answer: N/A

46. In reference to Appendix I: Compensation/Pricing Schedule (page 52), please the current driver and bus monitor/aide/assistant wages to ensure fair and equitable compensation.

Answer: Driver current pay starts at \$20 up to \$27. Monitor pay is currently \$15 up to \$15.70

47. In reference to Appendix I: Compensation/Pricing Schedule (page 52), please provide the current driver and bus monitor/aide/assistant guaranteed hours to ensure fair and equitable compensation.

Answer: N/A

48. In reference to Appendix I: Compensation/Pricing Schedule (page 52), please identify any driver and bus monitor/aide/assistant shortage MSCS has experienced.

Answer: Driver shortages have been experienced but not consistently. We have not experienced any monitor shortages

49. In reference to Appendix I: Compensation/Pricing Schedule (page 52), please allow respondents to propose minimum hours for bus monitor/aide/assistants.

Answer: N/A

50. In reference to Appendix I: Compensation/Pricing Schedule (page 52), please share the current and historical pricing from the prior 5 years to ensure competitive pricing.

Answer: N/A

51. In reference to Appendix I: Compensation/Pricing Schedule (page 52), please allow respondents to submit alternate proposals for base & excess rates.

Answer: N/A

52. In reference to Appendix I: Compensation/Pricing Schedule (page 52), please amend “HOME-TO-SCHOOL SERVICES” to include a higher number of Type Cs (71/72 capacity buses) than the maximum of 10%, as production timelines allow for speedier builds for Type Cs than Type Ds (84 capacity buses). High capacity Type Cs nearly have the same capacity as Type Ds and are more inexpensive; allowing further savings to the District as well. Please consider revising this requirement to “*84 capacity should be no more than 10% of fleet.”

Answer: No amendment allowed for need.

53. In reference to Appendix I: Compensation/Pricing Schedule (page 52), please specify the number of wheelchair positions MSCS prefers on the WC buses.

Answer: 1 up to 4 max

54. In reference to Appendix I: Compensation/Pricing Schedule (page 52), please identify the number of route buses of each of the following capacities are currently utilized:

84

71-72

37/38

47/48

37/38 w/WC

47/48 w/WC

71/72 w/WC

84 Pax

Answer: Routes assignments are adjusted according to need.

55. Please clarify the intended contract term. Section 2.1 states that the term is four years plus a one-year extension, or longer if mutually agreed. Would the District consider an extension beyond one year?

Answer: This will need to be determined by our legal department.

56. Please clarify the pricing structure for Years 2 and forward. Section 2.1 refers to a 3 percent or CPI adjustment after the initial four-year period, while Section 2.30.1 states that the contractor “has earned or forfeited 1 percent of the contractor’s annual cost increase.” Is there an annual cost increase each year, or only after the initial four-year period?

Answer: There is a 3% CPI increase after first year and remaining years of contract.

57. At the pre-bid meeting it was mentioned that the district will need to operate at least 135 Type-D, 84 pax buses. As long as we keep this level of large buses or more, is it approved to provide the remaining fleet as full size Type-C buses?

Answer: We are currently operating with 138 84pks. However, 71/72 packs and 54 pks will be needed to accommodate our GenEd and Sped population.

58. Can buses equipped with undercarriage storage be used on regular routes as long as they are available when needed for trips requiring undercarriage storage? Or is the requirement for 30 additional undercarriage-equipped buses separate from the home-to-school fleet and spare requirement?

Answer: Yes, they can be utilized on regular routes when needed.

59. Is the 10 percent spare-vehicle ratio applied to the contract as a whole, or is it calculated separately for each location? As long as we are available to move fleet between locations as needed, applying the ratio to the contract as a whole would save additional fleet and cost.

Answer: Applying as a whole will suffice but all terminals must be accommodated according to route assignments.

60. Does the District have a preferred placement for the six required cameras? If available, may forward facing cameras with dual eyes (one on the road and one on the driver) be counted as two of the six cameras? Must all six cameras, including the stop-arm camera, be infrared-capable?

Answer: Yes, cameras must be placed near driver, one at door, middle of vehicles, back of vehicle, near stop arm and on the road. Yes, dual is excepted as long as both angles are captured at all times. Infrared-capability is preferred.

61. For the required 15:1 maintenance staffing ratio, are all maintenance personnel included in the ratio (e.g., Shop leaders, Service Technicians, and other positions assigned to the shop), or does the ratio apply only to technicians?

Answer: Yes, all maintenance personnel can be included in the required 15:1

62. Training is specifically highlighted as an important component of the contract. Beyond basic mandated training, are there particular courses—such as stress-management training—that the District would view favorably?

Answer: Yes, additional training will be required and is encouraged.

63. Does the District have a target number of annual training hours that it considers ideal?

Answer: The District does not have a specific number of hours. However, training will be requested and required as needed.

64. How many routes are expected to be assigned to the local SBE service provider, and do they supply their own equipment, facility, and training for those routes assigned?
Answer: SBE is expected to be assigned 30 routes. They do not provide their own equipment or facility. They are currently housed in the Contractor's South location. They do provide their own training.
65. May more than one local SBE service provider be utilized?
Answer: For home to school transportation, we prefer one SBE.
66. Please provide additional detail on the contractor's obligations regarding expenditures with Small Business Enterprises or a targeted percentage of SBE participation.
Answer: A 5% target for SBE would be a great start.
67. How does the District define a Small Business Enterprise for purposes of this contract? Is it local SBE only?
Answer: The definition will have to come from our SBE department. Yes, it is local SBE only.
68. For minimum route times of 4.5, 5.5, and 7.0 hours, do these represent gate-to-gate times, or do they include pre-trip and post-trip inspections? Sections 2.2.1 and 2.2.3 appear to reference both.
Answer: Yes, the 4.5 ,5.5, and 7.0 hours represents gate to gate.
69. Are 60-watt two-way radios required, or would cellular-based radios with nationwide coverage be considered an acceptable alternative?
Answer: We prefer the two-way radios. However, we can have more discussion regarding a better alternative.
70. While the RFP states that the District provides fuel, will the District also provide reimbursement or utility-bill support for electric-vehicle charging?
Answer: No.
71. Does the restriction in 2.16.5 concerning not using the facilities for outside services apply to only the district owned facilities?
Answer: Yes, it applies to District owned buildings.
72. Does the district require all cameras to be dual-headed or only the camera that focuses on the driver?
Answer: The District prefer only on the driver.

73. Would the district be willing to provide a training facility and parking lot?
Answer: Yes, the District will provide a training facility for behind the wheel training at the Mt. Pisgah parking lot.
74. Does the district require fuel tanks on contractor property?
Answer: Yes
75. Per the RFP: *The electronic media must be a USB and shall bear a label on the outside containing the RFP number and name, as well as the name of the Vendor.* Will it be acceptable to label the envelope which contains the USB rather than the USB itself? A label on a small flash drive will likely be difficult to place and read.
Answer: Yes, that is acceptable.
76. In lieu of putting One (1) original (labeled), four (4) copies, and 1 (one) USB in a sealed envelope, is it acceptable to put the USB in a sealed envelope and the rest of these items in a large box labeled to your specifications? All of these materials will likely not fit in one envelope.
Answer: Yes, that is acceptable.
77. Per the RFP: *Each Vendor may attach a letter of explanation to the proposal, if so desired (or required), to provide an explanation of any detail(s) in the proposal. This letter may not be used to offer optional or alternative proposals or pricing.*
- a. Is the letter of explanation required? **Answer: This is not required.**
 - b. Please elaborate as to what kind of information is expected within this letter. What explanation are you interested in? **Answer: This is not required.**
78. Per the RFP: *h. SAMPLES: When indicated in the General Terms and Conditions, a properly tagged sample and descriptive data shall be submitted to the address specified no later than the date specified in the Schedule of Events included in the General Terms and Conditions. The tag on the sample shall indicate the item number, the name of the company submitting the sample, and the RFP number. SCBE will not be responsible for any samples not picked up within 30 days of the notification of Vendors to do so. Samples may be retained by SCBE until Vendors are notified to remove them. Vendors agree that SCBE will incur no liability for samples that are damaged, destroyed, lost, or consumed in testing processes. Failure to submit the above information when requested is sufficient grounds for rejection of the proposal.*
- i. SPECIAL SAMPLES WITH CERTIFIED APPROVAL: Some successful Vendors shall be required to submit two (2) samples of each product awarded with an affidavit stating that the chemical composition of the sample submitted is identical with the composition tested prior to the proposal and all remain unchanged during the period of the contract. This requirement shall be part of the specifications of the product or products requested.*

Failure to submit the above information when requested is sufficient grounds for rejection of the proposal.

There is no mention of samples in the General Terms and Conditions. Will the district please clarify its expectations in terms of samples? What kind of samples are required with the proposal submission?

Answer: This is boilerplate language and does not apply to this RFP.

79. The proposal format (RFP page 10) requires the pricing schedule to be submitted in both tabs F and G of the proposal. Does the district truly want this item in both spots? Can it be submitted under tab G only?

Answer: Yes – it can be submitted under tab G only.

80. The proposal format Tab E requires the vendor to address the requirements listed in the scope of work beginning on page 13. Some of the topics listed are already covered under Tab C. Experience & Capabilities (i.e. prior experience, # of years in business, etc.). Please confirm if we can exclude those items already addressed.

Answer: Yes, the information can be excluded if it was already provided.

Thank you,

Procurement Services