SYRACUSE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Anthony Q. Davis, Interim Superintendent of Schools

Office of Finance   **Suzanne Slack, Chief Financial Officer**

Request for Information
RFI # SCSD2023-001
Cloud Enterprise Resource Planning ("ERP") Solution
and Implementation Services

RFI Release Date:	October 20, 2022
Submissions Due:	December 1, 2022 by or before 3:30pm local time
Submission Instructions:	The original response with ten (10) copies of the response, AND one electronic PDF copy of the response on USB/DVD/CD must be submitted all together in a sealed package to:
	Syracuse City School District
	Attn: Deanne Dwyer
	1025 Erie Boulevard West
	Syracuse, NY 13204
Submission Questions:	Submit any questions by 3:30pm EST on November 3, 2022 via email to RFP@scsd.us

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THIS IS A REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ONLY. This RFI is issued solely for informational and planning purposes – it does not constitute a Request for Proposal (RFP) or a promise to issue an RFP in the future. This request for information does not commit the District to contract for any supply or service whatsoever. Responders are advised that the District will not pay for any information or administrative costs incurred in response to this RFI; all costs associated with responding to this RFI will be solely at the interested party's expense. All materials submitted in response to this RFI become the property of the Syracuse City School District, and all information contained in the response is subject to New York State Freedom of Information Law (FOIL). If a Respondent claims that any information or documentation is exempt from public disclosure, the Respondent should clearly identify the specific item(s) it claims to be exempt and state the basis for exemption including citation of the relevant section of law.

INTRODUCTION

The Syracuse City School District ("SCSD" or "District") is issuing this Request for Information ("RFI") to gather current market information on Cloud Enterprise Resource Planning ("ERP") solutions for Finance, Human Resources, Payroll, and related services. This RFI also requests information on planning the implementation of an ERP solution along with integration both within the ERP and with existing systems. SCSD seeks to review information for comprehensive, fully integrated, public-sector ERPs and supporting services to streamline business processes, standardize data collection and reporting, and support decision-making that leads to improvements in operational effectiveness and student achievement.

Any proposed cloud solution would need to meet **ALL** the following minimum requirements:
- Cloud-based ERP solution
- K-12 compatible with the ability to meet required local, state, and federal reporting requirements

- Accommodates financial reporting in accordance with GASB (fund accounting, records maintained on modified accrual and full accrual basis of accounting)
- Accommodates multiple business units
- Accommodates a seven (7) segment chart of accounts (Fund, Function, Operating Unit, Account, Department, Program, Project/Grant) – District WILL NOT be changing its chartfields
- Audit trail for transactions
- Automated, multi-level approval workflows for at least the procurement, journal entry, budget transfer, timesheet approval, and leave request processes
- Inventory management
- Fixed asset management
- Recruitment and onboarding
- Time and attendance (accommodate FLSA <u>and</u> individual labor contract requirements)
- Able to track employee's probationary periods, seniority, and certification status per NYSED and NYS Civil Service Law
- Able to apply complex pay and benefit rules based on individual labor contracts

<u>The District respectfully requests that vendors whose solution does not meet **ALL** minimum requirements do **not** submit responses.</u>

PROJECT GOALS

Change to be Achieved by this Project

Optimize accuracy, efficiency, completeness, timeliness and transparency of HR and Financial Processes, reporting for all decision makers, and quality of service to staff.

High Level Deliverables for this Project

HR and Financial Processes
- System of record for HR and financial records/transactions (either as system of entry (preferred) or through timely, accurate data integration with add-on/legacy systems)
- Integrated internal control structures within the system including preventative controls (segregation of duties, access rights, duplication avoidance, standardized documentation, approval workflows) and detective controls (monitoring, reconciliation)
- Streamlined, automated, integrated paperless operations. Eliminate manual processes and duplicate entries

Quality of Service
- Intuitive, efficient electronic approval workflows for supervisors
- Easily customizable staffing and financial information dashboards for decision makers with all information readily available, and layout able to be saved
- Easily accessible and understandable, interactive employee self-service functionality

Reporting
- Standardized, Excel data reports that are accurate, complete, and can be easily modified for recurring inquiry, analysis, reporting and compliance requirements
- Flexible ad-hoc reporting capability for non-recurring needs

Overall
- Timely updates, maintenance and technical support, as well as administration and granting/termination of access rights, with little to no downtime or disruption to business functions
- Less reliance on our in-house IT staff to maintain this system and provide technical support
- Zero downtime for critical operations in the event of a disruption

CURRENT STATE

District Overview

SCSD is a dependent district and component unit of the City of Syracuse ("City") that provides quality educational services to over 20,000 students in grades Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 12, in approximately forty (40) buildings. The District is designated by New York State as a Large City School District (cities having a population in excess of 125,000) a/k/a/ a "Big 5" School District and is fiscally dependent on the City of Syracuse.

The District's fiscal year begins on July 1 and ends on June 30. The accounting and financial reporting function of the District are centralized. The District operates and maintains its own transportation, food service and maintenance programs. The District has one blended component unit – Joint Schools Construction Board ("JSCB") – which is a joint venture between the District and the City to account for transactions associated with the construction, reconstruction and financing of school buildings in the City. The District also has student-run Extraclassroom Activity ("ECA") Funds. The District issues 3 separate financial statements:
1) JSCB (full and modified accrual accounting)
2) ECA Funds (cash basis)
3) District (JSCB and ECA activity is then incorporated into the District's consolidated statements)

The District has a seven (7) member Board of Education elected by seat, an annual general fund budget of approximately $500 million and annual expenditures of federal awards of approximately $100 million with approximately 150 active grants at any one time.

The District has eleven (11) bargaining units that cover approximately 5,000 full- and part-time employees working 10-month, 11-month or 12-month schedules. Total annual payroll, excluding related benefits costs, is approximately $275 million.

Current ERP System Overview

The District uses PeopleSoft Financials and HCM on-premise version 9.2 as its core ERP system. The system was implemented in 2009. In addition to PeopleSoft, the District also currently uses ASBWorks to record ECA Fund transactions and several systems from separate software companies, completes various processes in Excel (grant/project budgeting, cash flow, reporting, etc.) and utilizes paper timecards/timesheets.
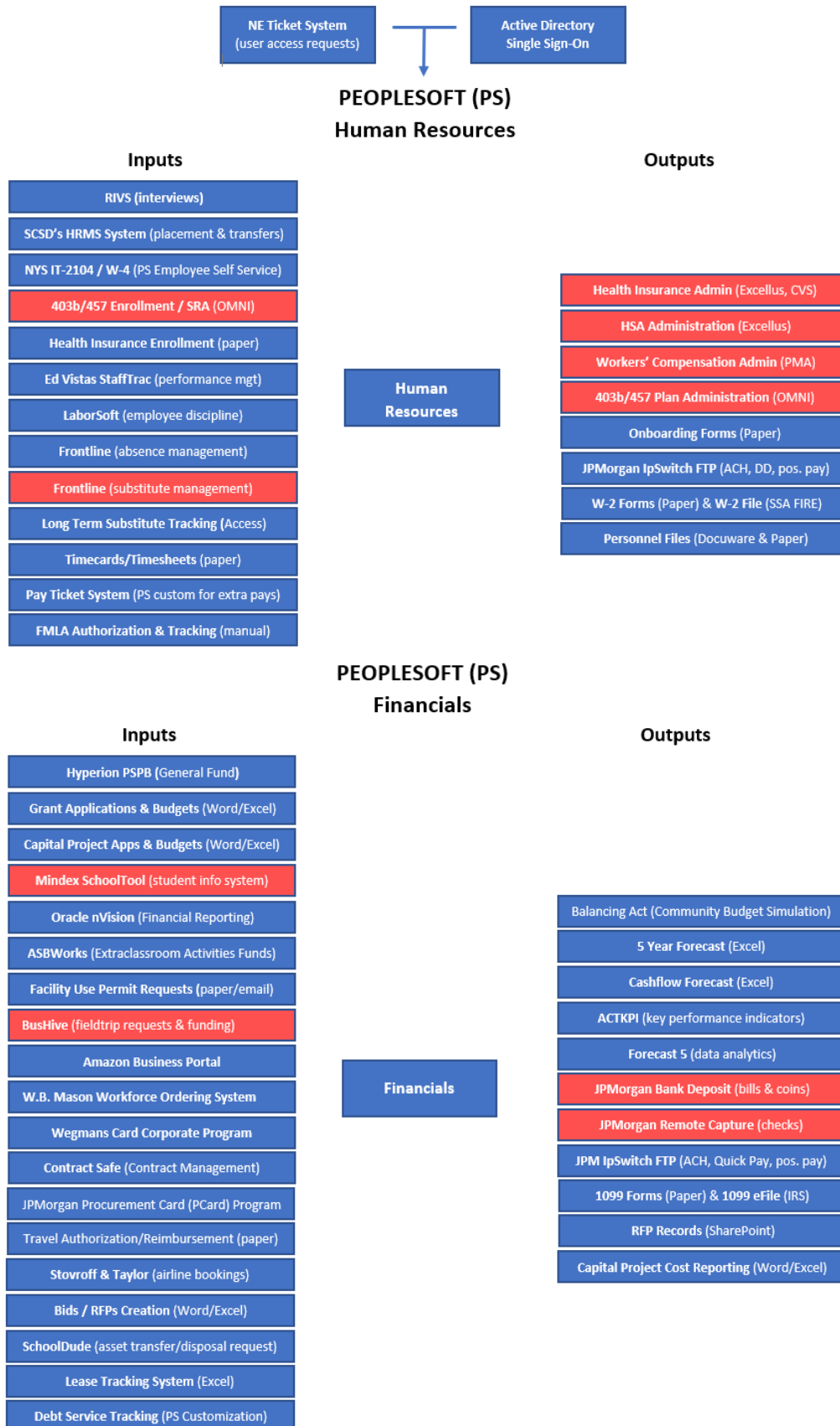
The District is looking for a unified solution that can be implemented based on best practices for that solution with minimal changes as needed to comply with federal, state and local laws, regulation, policies or internal control requirements so that the District can fully utilize all available features of the solution both now and in the future as the solution implements new or enhanced functionality.

The District wishes to minimize or eliminate APIs and additional 3rd party systems by incorporating as many systems as practicable into the new ERP solution.

The District has approximately 80 staff members working in the Office of Finance and 65 staff members working in the Office of Human Resources. All finance staff members and 20 HR staff member are currently power-users of PeopleSoft. The number of HR power-users will increase if/when some of the 3rd party systems used by HR are integrated into the new ERP system. Approximately 5-10 IT staff members are also power-users for PeopleSoft in an IT support capacity.

On the following page is a picture of the District's current system structures. Systems that are NOT desired to be incorporated into the new ERP system are in RED. All other systems will be considered for incorporation.

System Mapping (District controlled or District selected systems only)

NE Ticket System (user access requests)		Active Directory Single Sign-On

PEOPLESOFT (PS)
Human Resources

Inputs		Outputs
RIVS (interviews)		
SCSD's HRMS System (placement & transfers)		
NYS IT-2104 / W-4 (PS Employee Self Service)		**Health Insurance Admin (Excellus, CVS)**
403b/457 Enrollment / SRA (OMNI)		**HSA Administration (Excellus)**
Health Insurance Enrollment (paper)		**Workers' Compensation Admin (PMA)**
Ed Vistas StaffTrac (performance mgt)	**Human Resources**	**403b/457 Plan Administration (OMNI)**
LaborSoft (employee discipline)		**Onboarding Forms (Paper)**
Frontline (absence management)		**JPMorgan IpSwitch FTP (ACH, DD, pos. pay)**
Frontline (substitute management)		**W-2 Forms (Paper) & W-2 File (SSA FIRE)**
Long Term Substitute Tracking (Access)		**Personnel Files (Docuware & Paper)**
Timecards/Timesheets (paper)		
Pay Ticket System (PS custom for extra pays)		
FMLA Authorization & Tracking (manual)		

PEOPLESOFT (PS)
Financials

Inputs		Outputs
Hyperion PSPB (General Fund)		
Grant Applications & Budgets (Word/Excel)		
Capital Project Apps & Budgets (Word/Excel)		**Balancing Act (Community Budget Simulation)**
Mindex SchoolTool (student info system)		**5 Year Forecast (Excel)**
Oracle nVision (Financial Reporting)		**Cashflow Forecast (Excel)**
ASBWorks (Extraclassroom Activities Funds)		**ACTKPI (key performance indicators)**
Facility Use Permit Requests (paper/email)		**Forecast 5 (data analytics)**
BusHive (fieldtrip requests & funding)		**JPMorgan Bank Deposit (bills & coins)**
Amazon Business Portal	**Financials**	**JPMorgan Remote Capture (checks)**
W.B. Mason Workforce Ordering System		**JPM IpSwitch FTP (ACH, Quick Pay, pos. pay)**
Wegmans Card Corporate Program		**1099 Forms (Paper) & 1099 eFile (IRS)**
Contract Safe (Contract Management)		**RFP Records (SharePoint)**
JPMorgan Procurement Card (PCard) Program		**Capital Project Cost Reporting (Word/Excel)**
Travel Authorization/Reimbursement (paper)		
Stovroff & Taylor (airline bookings)		
Bids / RFPs Creation (Word/Excel)		
SchoolDude (asset transfer/disposal request)		
Lease Tracking System (Excel)		
Debt Service Tracking (PS Customization)		

INFORMATION REQUESTED

Information Regarding the Software Solution

1. **Cybersecurity and Disaster Recovery.** Describe your organization's approach to cybersecurity and disaster recovery, systems in place for detecting and addressing security threats, controls around data encryption, access security, and other security and/or safeguard measures. Also, include any offline capabilities that would be available during an outage and data and process syncing when internet access is restored.

2. **Software Maintenance.** Describe how the software is to be maintained with respect to routine updates (e.g., patches and fixes), to more significant upgrades (e.g., new functionality and/or technical capabilities) and to whether the customer or the vendor will control these changes.

3. **Solution Overview.** Provide an overview of the recommended Cloud-based ERP Solution that will best meet the District's requirements. For those elements of functional scope that are not supported by the ERP solution, indicate what third-party products or alternative approaches are suggested to meet the functional scope. Refer to the System Mapping provided in the Current ERP System Overview Section above.

4. **Unique Requirements.** While the District wishes to adopt best practices whenever possible, SCSD may need configuration or customization of certain aspects of the solution to meet compliance requirements. With this understanding, describe your approach to addressing client-specific needs within your solution with regard to creating, configuring, and modifying process models and workflows for business transactions based on business requirements.

5. **Test Environment.** SCSD would like to have a test environment separate from the production environment for the purpose of testing and training. Is a test environment available and, if so, is there an additional cost?

6. **Specific Features of Interest to the District.** For each area, provide an overview of the functionality included in the solution focusing on features that are unique to your solution / best in class, features that optimize accuracy, efficiency, completeness, timeliness and/or transparency, features that simplify data analysis/reporting, automate and streamline processing, eliminate duplicate data entry, and allow for paperless processing, and/or features that optimize the user experience or enhance the quality of customer service to SCSD staff or outside parties. Respondents are welcome to include other similar features for any area if that exact feature is not specifically referenced.

   o Advanced ERP Intelligence - AI, machine learning, zero-touch automation, intelligent advisors, interactive assistants, etc.
   o Automated Content Management and Business Process Workflows
   o Employee Self Service features
   o Hiring and Onboarding features
   o Timekeeping and Leave Management features
   o Dashboards and KPIs
   o Procurement Self Service features (supplier portal, punchout/carting, etc.)
   o Ability to incorporate a City and their dependent School District into one solution where the City and School District have different charts of accounts and issue separate W-2s, 1095s and 1099s and School District issues standalone budget and financials, but the City's budget and financials incorporate both City's and District's operating results

7. **Planned Innovations.** Describe any key planned innovations, enhancements and/or future features and functions in development with anticipated timelines.

Information Regarding Implementation

8. **Implementation Success Rates.** Describe your history of successful on-time and within budget conversions from Peoplesoft v.9.2 to your solution and what implementation strategies were employed to achieve these results.

9. **Project Management Methodology.** Describe what project management methodologies are used by your company and why.

10. **Transferrable Experience.** Describe specific experience with K-12 implementations and presence in the K-12 sector. Describe specific experience with PeopleSoft v.9.2 conversions of this scope to this Cloud ERP solution.

11. **Challenges and Risks.** Describe key challenges and risks you foresee with this implementation, and in general with PeopleSoft conversions to your solution. Please also include what strategies you would recommend employing to address these challenges and risks.

12. **Pre-Implementation Activities**. The District has created the Project Sponsor Group and Core Project Team, completed goal setting, system mapping and requirement analysis, stakeholder and risk identifications and is engaging a consulting firm to serve in the District's project manager and organizational change manager roles. Describe any other suggested key activities that SCSD should complete prior to the start of the implementation project that would accelerate or facilitate the implementation effort.

13. **Implementation Approach and Timeline.** Describe approach and timeline recommendations. SCSD would like to consider alternatives that may result in cost savings, risk reduction, improved likelihood of success, and other strategic benefits. Consider including two (2) timeline examples: an approach and timeline for a moderately paced system conversion with multiple Go Live phases and an approach and timeline for a slower paced system conversion with multiple Go Live phases. July 1, 2023 is under consideration for the start of initial implementation activities with the ERP vendor to reach an initial Go Live date for phase one of implementation on July 1, 2024.

14. **Vendor's Project Staffing.** Describe approaches to staffing for an ERP implementation project similar to SCSD (e.g., use of on-site vs. off-site and full-time vs. part-time resources and how those resources are coordinated to work effectively with the District's project team). Include description of each staffing role, number of staff in each role and qualifications/experience of staff in each role.

15. **Client's Project Roles.** Based upon the planned scope and timeline of the project, describe the roles that would typically be expected of the customer organization including the positions that would normally fill those roles and the time commitment expected for each role.

16. **Data Conversion and Migration.** Describe the process for successful conversion of historical data from existing systems and migration to new systems. Include percentage of data converted through automated tools versus manual data conversion for similar PeopleSoft v.9.2 engagements if available or if not available, for similar K-12 clients based on historical experience.

17. **Reporting.** Describe the built-in reporting functionality and the approach for creation of additional custom reports and the configuration of standard reports during the implementation process.

18. **Testing Tools.** Describe any tools and enablers included in your implementation approach that facilitate thorough and efficient functional testing of the ERP system.

19. **Organizational Change Management.** Describe your approach to organizational change management and communications for a Districtwide ERP project to prepare users for new system adoption.

20. **Training and Training Materials.** Describe your approach to training the SCSD project team and system end users. Include perspectives on train-the-trainer versus consultant led training delivery, and any successes or lessons learned from computer-based training approaches to effectively train off-site or large numbers of end users. Describe what training materials, user instructional guides, step-by-step business process manuals, etc. are generally provided and what is available for an additional cost.

21. **Client Support.** Describe post-deployment support and on-going Client Support provided after the initial Go Live and after completion of the final phase including available resources, accessibility, and response times.

Information on How this System Would Meet the District's Requirements

An early draft of requirements for a selection of process categories expected to be served by the ERP solution has been provided in **Excel format**. Respondents are requested to address each line item based on the **current** capabilities/features of the suggested solution as well as the general implementation process. These responses will be used to gauge the solution's capabilities and fit with the District's operations and to select solutions for further investigation and system demonstrations. The four completed Excel files (Attachments A – D) should be included on the USB/DVD/CD along with the PDF of the response submitted. Paper copies of the completed Excel files are not required to be included in the paper response packages.

22. **System Requirements**
    - **Attachment A – System Requirements**
    - List of main requirements needed by the District for system level features that impact multiple functional areas.
    - Respond with:
        - Whether or not the requirement is currently included in your solution ("Y"-Yes or "N"-No)
        - If included, is the feature included in system pricing ("S" – Standard) or not included in the system pricing and available for an additional fee ("C" – Custom)
        - If not included and requirement will be included in a future update, the timing of this future update can be included in the "Vendor Comments" section
        - If the requirement will be changing from an additional fee ("C" – Custom) to standard and included in the system price, the timing of this change can be included in the "Vendor Comments" section

23. **Business Requirements**
    - **Attachment B – Business Requirements**
    - List of main requirements needed by the District for specific functional areas.
    - Respond with:
        - Whether or not the requirement is currently included in your solution ("Y"-Yes or "N"-No)
        - if included, is the feature included in system pricing ("S" – Standard) or not included in the system pricing and available for an additional fee ("C" – Custom)
        - If not included and requirement will be included in a future update, the timing of this future update can be included in the "Vendor Comments" section
        - If the requirement will be changing from an additional fee ("C" – Custom) to standard and included in the system price, the timing of this change can be included in the "Vendor Comments" section

24. **Data Conversion Requirements**
    - **Attachment C – Data Conversion Requirements**
    - List of main data/information elements that the District will need converted from PeopleSoft to the new solution.
    - Respond with:
        - Whether or not the data can be converted into your solution ("Y"-Yes or "N"-No)
        - If the data can be converted, is the data conversion included in the system implementation costs ("S" – Standard included in system pricing) or can be converted for an additional cost ("C" – Custom – converted for an additional fee)

25. **Report Conversion Requirements**
    - **Attachment D – Report Conversion Requirements**
    - List of main reports/queries/dashboards needed by the District.
    - List is divided into two (2) categories:
        - Reports that are formatted to print; have parameters that change infrequently; are used to report results after the fact; data accuracy, completeness and consistency is assured; data validation is not required because report generates the same way every time.
        - "Reports" that may be provided as reports, queries, or dashboards that are not intended to be printed, have flexible parameters, are intended for real-time, quickly accessible data/trends/action items
    - Respond with:
        - Whether or not the report is currently available in your solution ("Y"-Yes or "N"-No)
        - If available, whether the report is included in the standard system implementation pricing ("S" – Standard) or if the report could be included for an additional cost ("C" – Custom)
        - If report is not currently available but will be included in a future update, the timing of this future update can be included in the "Vendor Comments" section

Solution Demos

After reviewing the responses received, the District will contact Respondent(s) of interest to schedule demos of the Respondent's solution. The District is open to in-person or virtual demos and is planning to have one demo per week. The District will provide a list of features that the Respondent should include in each demo session with demo topics grouped based on the District staff that will be attending each demo session (e.g. Day 1 - HR topics (Hiring, Compensation, Position Management, Payroll, Reporting/Dashboards), Day 2 – Finance topics (Reporting/Dashboards, Ledger, AP, AR, Budget), Day 3 – Districtwide topics (Employee Self Service, Timekeeping and Leave Management, Procurement). The goal will be to keep each session short while still allowing staff to get a feel for the capabilities and interface of the solution and ask questions.

Information on Estimated Costs

26. **Procurement Vehicles.** Provide a list of procurement vehicle(s) currently available that the District could piggyback on to purchase both the solution <u>and</u> implementation services. Include procurement vehicle's contract end date, what module(s) and implementation services are included and excluded in the pricing or if all modules and all implementation services are included. Provide copies of any contracts or agreements that would need to be signed and a brief description with examples of what would be considered out of scope that would cost an additional fee under the terms of the contract.

27. **Solution Costs.** Describe the pricing model used in the procurement vehicle and the estimated costs for software, maintenance, etc. for an entity similar to the District. Discuss the typical payment terms and the method of determining future cost adjustments on a year over year basis (e.g., general price increases, changes in user counts). Provide the estimated future yearly costs by year for an entity similar to the District if pricing for future year(s) is included in the procurement vehicle.

28. **Implementation Costs.** Due to the significant cost of ERP implementation services and the anticipated project timeline spanning multiple fiscal years, SCSD would like to understand not only the total approximate cost of implementation services, but also the likely distribution of those costs. Provide estimated implementation costs by major project phase in accordance with the Respondent's general experience with projects of this type and implementation timelines proposed in #13 above. In addition to the cost schedules, describe the Respondent's approach to establishing a payment schedule and typical payment terms applied during an implementation project (e.g., monthly, milestones).

29. **Cost Assumptions.** List any other key assumptions used in the Respondent's estimated costs.

Thank you for your anticipated interest in responding to the District's Request for Information! The District is committed to providing Minority and Women-owned Businesses (M/WBE) with equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of the District's procurement program and to encouraging the participation of M/WBEs and contractors who have demonstrated a commitment to working with M/WBEs.