ASCENT CLASSICAL ACADEMIES
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ("IT") SERVICES

PROJECT SUMMARY

Ascent Classical Academies (”ACA”), a network of K-12 charter schools, is accepting proposals from qualified vendors to provide comprehensive IT services including infrastructure support, managed security support, endpoint security, and help desk services for its campuses in South Carolina and corporate systems. In South Carolina, ACA-affiliated schools are working with the Charter Institute at Erskine. ACA has two affiliated campuses opening in the FALL of 2024 and two more per year after that.

The selected vendor will be responsible for ensuring the smooth operation of its IT infrastructure and providing timely and effective technical support to end-users.

IT INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Ascent Classical Academies operates in a cloud-based, hybrid work environment with multi-site locations. ACA currently uses a mixed platform with Google Workspace and Microsoft.

Starting in July 2024, there will be approximately 60 full-time and 20 part-time team members.

Email accounts: 1 per staff member
Computers: 1 per full-time staff member and 60-90 Chrome books per campus for student assessments. Corporate staff use Microsoft or Apple computers.
Software: Microsoft Office suite, Powerschool, Microsoft Teams
Phones System: Voice over IP ("VOIP") through existing vendor

SCOPE OF WORK

The scope of work for this project includes, but is not limited to, the following:

a) IT Infrastructure Management

- Management and monitoring of the organization's network infrastructure, ensuring connectivity, security, and stability. This includes managing user emails accounts and workstation configurations.
- Maintain the organizational unit structure and groups in Google and Microsoft to push out policies to devices and for user accounts.
- Maintain configurations for student facing devices for required assessments, to include NWEA MAPS and the Classical Learning Test.

- Regular data backups and disaster recovery planning to safeguard critical data and ensure business continuity of applicable systems.
- Security updates, vulnerability assessments, and implementation of necessary security measures.
- Routinely monitor and respond to cyber incidents that could impact the organization's data / system security, including loss of data confidentiality, integrity, and/or availability.
- Establish and maintain a central logging system for event /incident management to proactively respond to anomalies in the organization's environment (inclusive of on-premises systems and cloud services).
- PowerSchool Support as directed by ACA. ACA currently has Powerschool administrators for most needs.

b) Help Desk Services
- Establishment of a responsive and user-friendly help desk system for end-users to report technical issues and seek assistance and where the organization's management has easy access to the data.
- Timely response and resolution of help desk tickets based on predefined service level agreements (SLAs).
- Provide on-site office hours for support 4 hours per week at campus locations in Rock Hill and Irmo, SC.

c) Budgeting and Planning: Hardware Inventory Tracking and Replacement Schedule:
- Provide a transparent and detailed budget breakdown that includes all costs associated with the proposed services.
- Specify any additional charges, such as projects or hardware upgrades, that may be applicable.
- Provide a recommended hardware replacement schedule based on the age, performance, and usage of hardware devices to ensure optimal functionality and user productivity.
- Make recommendations for future technology changes/upgrades to optimize organizational productivity.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Interested vendors are requested to submit a detailed proposal addressing the following:

a) Company Overview and Contact Information:
- Company/Individual name, mailing address, email address, and telephone number.
- Provide an overview of your company, including its history, experience, and expertise in providing IT services and support.

b) Technical Expertise:
- Describe your team's technical qualifications and certifications relevant to the services outlined in the scope of work.
- Provide evidence of relevant certifications. Additionally, include a list of additional training (continued education) required for roles that support the organization.

c) Approach and Methodology:

- Outline your proposed approach to delivering the required IT services, software and hardware support, and help desk services.
- Describe your methodology for handling software installations, updates, and troubleshooting, as well as hardware maintenance and support.

d) Service Level Agreements (SLAs):
- Specify the SLAs you can commit to for response times, issue resolution, and other critical performance indicators.

e) Pricing:
- Fee schedule that includes the total fees on an annual basis, and hourly rates for proposed services.
- Describe how services are priced and any specific pricing.
- Define any additional costs (e.g., travel).
- Describe the extent, limits, and deductibles of your business insurance and any additional warranties you will provide.

f) Conflict of Interest:
- Provide your organization's policy and/or procedures for avoiding and disclosing ethical violations and/or actual or potential conflicts of interest to clients.
- If selected, your organization will be asked to disclose any actual or potential conflict of interest for your organization or any individual within your organization in the performance of services.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:
- Experience
- Understanding of services to be provided
- Technical expertise and relevant certifications
- Proposed approach and methodology
- Demonstrated experience with similar projects
- Suitability of SLAs
- Compatibility and customer service approach with team members
- Cost-effectiveness and clarity of pricing

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Proposals must be submitted in electronic format by 5:00 PM, June 7, 2024
Please send your proposals to corp.rfp@ascentclassical.org with the Subject Line - IT Services Proposal

IT Request for Proposal Response. Proposals will not be accepted via other methods. Late submissions may not be considered.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For any inquiries related to this RFP, please contact: Derec Shuler at
derec.shuler@ascentclassical.org

DISCLAIMER

This RFP does not constitute a contractual offer. The organization reserves the right to accept or reject any proposal, negotiate with selected vendors, or cancel the RFP process at any time without incurring any liabilities.

MISCELLANEOUS
This is a confidential request for a proposal. Discussion of this project should be limited to The necessary team members within your organization. Discussion of this project beyond these identified parties immediately excludes your organization from consideration.

The organization reserves the right to reject any proposals for failure to meet the requirements contained herein, to waive any technicalities, and to select the proposal which in the organization's sole judgment best meets the requirements of the project.

The Request for Proposal creates no obligation on the part of the organization to award a contract or to compensate the RFP respondent for any costs incurred during proposal presentation, response, submission, or oral interviews (if applicable). The organization reserves the right to award a contract based on proposals received without further discussion or negotiation. RFP respondents should not rely upon the opportunity to alter their qualifications. during discussions.

The organization reserves the right to make such investigations as it deems necessary to determine the ability of potential vendors to furnish the required services and RFP respondents. shall furnish all such information for this purpose as the organization may request.