

Notice of Intent to Certify Sole Source

To: Interested Parties
From: Craig P. Orgeron, Ph.D. *cro*
CC: ITS Project Number 42071
Date: November 10, 2015
Re: Sole Source Certification Number 3817 for the Mississippi Community College Board (MCCB) Proctored Test Management System
Contact Name: Paula Conn
Contact Phone Number: 601-432-8046
Contact E-mail Address: Paula.Conn@its.ms.gov

Sole Source Certification Award Details

Regarding Information Technology Services (ITS) Sole Source Certification Number 3817 for SmarterServices™ LLC to provide the Proctored Process Management System for the Mississippi Community College Board's (MCCB) Mississippi Virtual Community College (MVCC), please be advised that ITS intends to award the Proctored Test Management System to SmarterServices™ LLC as the sole source provider of the SmarterProctoring™ Proctoring Process Management System through March 31, 2017, in an amount not to exceed \$74,250.00. For an explanation regarding Mississippi state law, policy, and procedures for sole source procurements, refer to Attachment C: Sole Source Procurement Overview.

Sole Source Criteria

1. The product or services being purchased must perform a function for which no other product or source of services exist:

SmarterProctoring™ Proctoring Process Management System provides a holistic, multi-modal proctoring system that facilitates the proctoring workflow for each modality for multiple institutions with varying processes. It is the only Proctoring Process Management System on the market.

The customer's sole source certification request is included as Attachment A.

2. The purchaser must be able to show specific business objectives that can be met only through the unique product or services:

The SmarterProctoring™ Proctoring Process Management System (PPMS) manages the proctoring workflow for each proctoring modalities including:

- **Instructor as proctor**
- **MSVCC testing centers**
- **Testing centers at other institutions**
- **Approved human proctors**
- **Virtual proctoring**

The SmarterProctoring™ has the capacity to facilitate test center registration for cross-enrolled students (students taking courses at multiple institutions within the MSVCC) taking into consideration the process rules for both institutions.

SmarterProctoring™:

- **Integrates with the MSVCC's LMS (which at the time is Canvas).**
- **Provides single sign on from the LMS**
- **Allows for scheduling reminders to be sent to students.**
- **Provides a variety of roles and functions (administrator, proctor, instructor, student)**
- **Provides robust reporting capabilities to include passwords, allowed materials, scheduling information, seats available, seats remaining, etc.**
- **Allows electronic check-in and check-out at testing centers**
- **Allows for scheduling of special events**

The customer's sole source certification request is included as Attachment A.

3. **The product or services must be available only from the manufacturer and not through resellers who could submit competitive pricing for products or services:**

SmarterProctoring™ is the only Proctoring Process Management System on the market at this time. SmarterServices, LLC has certified that they are the Sole Source provider of the SmarterProctoring™ system.

The vendor's sole source certification letter is included as Attachment B.

Schedule

Task	Date
First Advertisement Date	November 10, 2015
Second Advertisement Date	November 17, 2015
Response Deadline From Objectors	November 25, 2015, at 3:00 P.M. Central Time
Notice of Award/No Award Posted	Not before November 30, 2015

Project Details

In April of 2007, the Mississippi Community College Board (then the Board for Community and Junior Colleges), began the roll-out of the Readiness for Education at a Distance Indicator (READI) to assess a learner's likelihood for succeeding in an online learning program. The product and services were deemed as a single source product, sold and distributed only by DECADE Consulting, LLC.

In April of 2010, the company changed its name to SmarterServices™, LLC and the product name to SmarterMeasure.

The Mississippi Virtual Community College (MSVCC) is a consortium of Mississippi's 15 community colleges that makes it possible for these colleges to leverage their distance learning resources, including faculty, course, support services, and technology. Through MSVCC, students may take courses from community colleges anywhere in Mississippi while getting support services from a local college. All MSVCC courses require a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 3 proctored exams per semester. This requirement results in approximately 250,000 proctored exams per year. There are currently 52 proctoring facilities within the state that must schedule these exams. There is no fee to take a proctored exam and a student can select any site in which to take the exam.

MSVCC is in need of a system to manage the proctoring process across all testing centers. The system must integrate with MSVCC's LMS and should manage all aspects of the proctoring process including instructor, proctor, and student functions.

From researching proctoring process management systems, no other systems were found. As an existing SmarterServices™, LLC customer, MCCB and MSVCC are able to obtain consortium discount pricing for the PPMS.

Submission Instruction and Format of Response from Objecting Parties

Interested parties who have reason to believe that the Proctored Process Management System should not be certified as a sole source should provide information in the following format for the state to use in determining whether or not to proceed with awarding the Sole Source contract to SmarterServices™, LLC.

1.1 Interested Party Information

1.1.1 Contact Name, Phone Number and email address

1.1.2 Company Website URL, if applicable

1.2 Objection to Sole Source Certification

1.2.1 Interested parties must present specific objections to the Sole Source certification using the criteria listed above.

1.2.2 A statement regarding the Interested Party's capabilities as related to this Sole Source Certification Request.

1.3 Comments will be accepted at any time prior to Wednesday, November 25, 2015, at 3:00 p.m. (Central Time) to Paula Conn at Paula.Conn@its.ms.gov or at the Mississippi Department of Information Technology Services, 3771 Eastwood Drive, Jackson, Mississippi 39211. Responses may be delivered by hand, via regular mail, overnight delivery, e-mail, or by fax. Fax number is (601) 713-6380. ITS WILL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR DELAYS IN THE DELIVERY OF RESPONSES. It is solely the responsibility of the Interested Parties that responses reach ITS on time. Interested Parties may contact Paula Conn to

verify the receipt of their Responses. Responses received after the deadline will be rejected.

1.4 Interested Party responses should include the following information:

**SUBMITTED IN RESPONSE TO
Sole Source Certification No. 3817-42071
Accepted until November 25, 2015 @ 3:00 p.m.,
ATTENTION: Paula Conn**

If you have any questions concerning the information above or if we can be of further assistance, please contact Paula Conn at 601-432-8046 or via email at Paula.Conn@its.ms.gov.

Attachment A: Customer Sole Source Certification Request
Attachment B: Vendor Correspondence
Attachment C: Sole Source Procurement Overview



3771 Eastwood Drive
Jackson, Mississippi 39211
Phone 601-432-8000 Fax 601-713-6380

Sole Source Certification Request

Project Title: SmarterServices/SmarterProctoring		Stimulus (ARRA) Funds? Yes <u> </u> No <u>X</u>	
Customer Contact Information			
Agency/Public University: MS Community College Board Address: 3825 Ridgewood Road, Jackson, MS 39211		Contact Person: Audra Love Kimble Phone: 601-432-6391 Fax: Email Address: akimble@mccb.edu	
MAGIC Customer Number (only required from state agencies): 7000000104		Division/Dept: Handmail: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
<p>Project Summary Narrative Description of Project (include details of original acquisition if applicable): SmarterServices™, LLC is the company that currently provides software to the Mississippi Virtual Community College (MSVCC) in the form of the SmarterMeasure Learning Readiness Indicator which is an assessment that quantifies a student's level of readiness for studying online. It measures non-cognitive indicators of success such as motivation, procrastination, time management, technical competency, keyboarding skills, etc.</p> <p>It is the MCCC's desire to add an additional service provided by SmarterServices which is the SmarterProctoring™ Proctoring Process Management System (PPMS). This is a service that manages the work flow leading up to the proctoring event. It facilitates the use of multi-modal proctoring including testing at a school's testing center, using approved proctoring professionals, and/or virtual proctoring.</p> <p>The MSVCC has been a client of SmarterServices since March, 2008. There is already a 3 year contract in place for SmarterServices™ that expires 3/31/2017. It is the MCCC's desire to amend this contract to also include the SmarterProctoring™ services as well.</p>			
ITS Acquisition Approval (CP-1) should be effective through this date (Please allow time for all vendor invoices to be paid):			
Cost Estimates <i>Fiscal Year</i>	Initial Costs	Ongoing Costs	Time Constraints Item Needed by: Immediately, we are at the conclusion of a pilot of the SmarterProctoring services and do not want a discontinuation of the service Funds Expire: Anticipated Lifecycle of Products/System (i.e. estimated years of effective use): Services are negotiated for a three-year term.
FY16		\$59,400.00	Discuss Funding (e.g. how much of needed funding is definite; total project budget; any matching or other non-state funds)
FY17		\$14,850.00	
Total		\$74,250.00	All funding comes from student assessment fees that make up the MSVCC budget. Current contract runs from 04/01/2014 – 03/31/2017. Would like the amendment for the addition of the SmarterProctoring module to run concurrently.
Acquisition Details			
Items Requested	Quantity	Description	Building Location(s)
SmarterProctoring™		Proctoring Process Management System	online
<p>Describe platform & infrastructure (connectivity; software/hardware platforms; utilization of State Data Center resources: mainframe, eGovernment portal, payment engine, document management, hosting). For equipment or hosting outside the State Data Center, attach justification: Both SmarterMeasure and SmarterProctoring are hosted by SmarterServices and provided to MSVCC in a software as a service model. Both services are integrated into the learning management system utilized by the MSVCC.</p>			
<p>Progress to Date: What has been done related to this project, including any communication with ITS staff (data/voice/procurement/other)? The integration of both services into the LMS has been achieved and the services are currently operational for all 15 colleges.</p>			
Sole Source Certification Note: Certification must be renewed for each revision or continuation of previous Sole Source Approvals.			
<p>Specific business requirements to be met by the requested products or services: 1) Current Contract - MSVCC must have an assessment which measures the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of time to study • Availability of a dedicated place to study • Reason for continuing one's education • Support resources from family, friends and employers • Perception of academic skills • Procrastination • Time management • Persistence • Willingness to ask for help 			

Attachment A

- Academic attributes
- Locus of control
- Levels of the following learning styles:
 - Visual
 - Verbal
 - Social
 - Solitary
 - Physical
 - Aural
 - Logical
- Reading Rate
- On-screen reading recall
- Technology usage
- Technology in your life
- Technology vocabulary
- Personal computer/Internet specifications
- Computer competency
- Internet competency
- Typing rate
- Typing accuracy

The assessment must be provided via an assessment engine that gives detailed feedback to the student based on the student's scores, links to remedial resources, tracks utilization of remedial resources, computes and displays aggregate reporting, and integrates with the LMS.

2) Desire for amendment to include a Proctoring Process Management System which should manage the proctoring workflow for each of the following proctoring modalities:

- Instructor as proctor
- MSVCC testing centers
- Testing centers at other institutions
- Approved human proctors
- Virtual proctoring

The Proctoring Process Management System must have the capacity to facilitate test center registration for cross-enrolled students (students taking courses at multiple institutions within the MSVCC) taking into consideration the process rules for both institutions.

The PPMS must:

- Integrate with the MSVCC's LMS (which at the time is Canvas).
- Provide single sign on from the LMS
- Allow for scheduling reminders to be sent to students.
- Provide a variety of roles and functions (administrator, proctor, instructor, student)
- Provide robust reporting capabilities to include passwords, allowed materials, scheduling information, seats available, seats remaining, etc.
- Allow electronic check-in and check-out at testing centers
- Allow for scheduling of special events

Explain why these products or services are the only ones that can meet your needs (include unique features/special functionality):

1)MSVCC needs a comprehensive assessment that measures the full spectrum of non-cognitive traits, attributes and skills. As shown in the product comparison matrix below no other single assessment measures all of these criteria.

	ACT Engage	ETS Success Navigator	Wonderlic Admissions Risk Profile	LASSI	Connely Readiness Index	College Success	ACT Compass	Accuplacer	SmarterMeasure Learning Readiness Indicator
Individual Attributes	X	X	X	X	X				X
Life Factors									X
Learning Styles					X				X
Technical Skills			X					X	X
Reading Skills						X	X	X	X
Keyboarding Skills									X
Math Readiness					X	X		X	X
Writing Readiness					X	X	X	X	X
Custom Questions									X
Admin panel w/customizations									X
Exportable data		X		X				X	X
Remedial Support Resources provided	X	X					X		X

Attachment A

2) MSVCC needs a holistic, multi-modal proctoring system that facilitates the proctoring workflow for each modality for multiple institutions with varying processes. The table below demonstrates that SmarterProctoring is the only multi-modal approach to proctor management.

	<u>Examity</u>	<u>Software Secure</u>	<u>ProctorU</u>	<u>SmarterProctoring</u>	<u>Verificent</u>
Manage multiple modalities with predefined workflows				X	
Live, virtual proctoring (via B Virtual)	X		X	X	
Non-live virtual proctoring (via <u>Proctortrack</u>)	X	X		X	X
Test center proctoring (via Register Blast)				X	
Approved proctoring professional proctoring				X	
Domestic based proctors			X	X	
Bachelor degreed proctors				X	
LTI integration	X	X	X	X	X
4:1 student to proctor ratio or better	X		X	X	
100% recording of proctoring session	X			X	
Recording of proctor <u>and</u> student				X	
Service guarantee				X	
Finger stroke learner authentication (most accurate and requires no extra hardware or software)				X	
Database of proctoring professionals				X	

This data is based on our current knowledge of third party software.

Explain why the source is the only entity that can provide the products or services (Include other products/vendors researched or evaluated): SmarterServices is the sole source provider of the SmarterMeasure Learning Readiness Indicator. No other company provides an assessment which measures all seven scales and accompanying sub-scales which the MSVCC needs to have measured.

SmarterServices is also the sole source provider of the SmarterProctoring Proctoring Process Management System. In fact, SmarterProctoring is the only PPMS available on the market today.

Explain why the amount to be expended for the services is reasonable:
N/A

Explain what your agency did to obtain the best possible price for the services:
N/A

Vendor's Certification of Sole Source attached: Yes No

Vendor's proposal submitted: Yes No

MAGIC Vendor Code(s) Vendor must be in MAGIC before a CP-1 can be issued.

Place Order To

Vendor Name: SmarterServices

Remit To

Vendor Name: same

Vendor Address: PO Box 20111, Deatsville, AL 36022

Vendor Address:

By my signature, I certify that, to the best of my professional knowledge: the requested product or services are a sole source as outlined in the ITS Procurement Handbook, Rule 207.2:013-030 Procurement Types: Sole Source, and as outlined in Mississippi Code annotated Section 31-7-13. In addition, I acknowledge that there is a charge for ITS procurement services associated with this request which will be billed to the requestor by ITS and that my agency/public university is responsible for these charges/costs.

Deborah J. Gilbert, CPA / Mississippi Community College Board
Name (Agency Head or Public University CIO)/Title

 11/2/15
Signature Date



PO Box 220111 ~ Deatsville, AL ~ 36022 ~ 877.499.SMARTER (7627)

May 1, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

SmarterServices, LLC is the sole source provider of the SmarterProctoring™ Proctoring Process Management System™. SmarterProctoring is designed to be used for courses that require students to take at least one proctored exam. It is a system that allows an institution to manage and organize multiple modalities of proctoring (testing centers, proctoring professionals, instructor as proctor, virtual proctoring, etc.). It is made available within the Learning Management System using LTI integration. From within the LMS the instructor can access SmarterProctoring to set up their exams, see exception reports, see which students have scheduled, and more.

To date, SmarterProctoring is the only Proctoring Process Management System on the market. It is the only service that was specifically designed to help an institution manage their proctoring across multiple proctoring modalities instead of just providing a singular proctoring solution. It is also the only service on the market that allows an institution to use their own proctoring services (testing centers, proctoring professionals, and instructor as proctor).

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Mac Adkins'.

Dr. Mac Adkins

President

SmarterServices.com

[334-543-4026](tel:334-543-4026)

Toll Free: 1-877-499-SMARTER (7627) Ext. 102

Fax: [646-365-5390](tel:646-365-5390)

mac@SmarterServices.com



Attachment C: Sole Source Procurement Overview

The acquisition of information technology for all state agencies and institutions of higher learning (IHLs) is within the scope of the ITS law, found in Mississippi Code Section 25-53-1, et seq., and the policies and procedures established in accordance with this statute, found in the ITS Procurement Handbook posted on the ITS website (www.its.ms.gov).

ITS enabling legislation requires that information technology hardware, software and services be acquired in a manner that insures the maximum of competition among all manufacturers and suppliers of such equipment and services. Accordingly, ITS promotes full and open competition through the issuance of open specifications and the objective evaluation of Interested Party proposals to determine the lowest and best offering to meet an agency's or public university's business requirements. True competition protects the integrity and credibility of purchasing in the public sector and is essential in providing best value and adequate contractual protection for the purchasing entity. In certain limited situations, information technology acquisitions may be sole-sourced.

ITS utilizes the provisions of Public Purchasing Law for Sole Source and Emergency procurements of information technology. Mississippi Public Purchasing Law (Mississippi Code Section 31-7-13) specifies that noncompetitive items available from one source only be exempted from bid requirements (sole-sourced). ITS statute, in Section 25-53-5 (p), permits ITS to utilize provisions in Public Purchasing Law or regulations, when applicable.

Per Public Purchasing law, acquisitions must meet the following criteria to be authorized as sole source:

1. The product or services being purchased must perform a function for which no other product or source of services exists,
2. The purchaser must be able to show specific business objectives that can be met only through the unique product or services, AND
3. The product or services must be available only from the manufacturer and NOT through resellers who could submit competitive pricing for the product or services. The vendor's correspondence regarding this criterion for this project is included as Attachment B.

By policy as documented in the ITS Procurement Handbook, acquisitions of IT services must include the following information to be authorized as sole source:

1. An explanation about why the amount to be expended is reasonable, and
2. An explanation regarding the efforts by the purchaser to obtain the best possible price.

For state agencies, approval of all technology purchases with a lifecycle cost of \$5,000 or less, including sole source purchases, has been delegated to the agency. The ITS Procurement Limits Policies for Agencies (a section in the ITS Procurement Handbook) require a minimum of two competitive written bids or proposals for technology purchases with a lifecycle cost over \$5,000 but not over \$50,000 (not over \$25,000 for projects funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act). Since, for single source items, the procuring agency will be unable to obtain two written bids, ITS must certify all sole source acquisitions of information technology with a lifecycle cost greater than \$5,000.

Institutions of Higher Learning (IHLs) or public universities have been delegated the authority to certify sole source procurements up to \$250,000 lifecycle cost under the ITS Procurement Limits Policies for IHLs (a section in the ITS Procurement Handbook). For the certification of sole source procurements delegated to the CIOs at public universities, the public university must follow ITS' Sole Source Procedure, including advertisement of the intent to award as sole source. Institutions certifying a sole source purchase must ensure the criteria listed above are met and documented in writing by the institution and the Interested Party prior to certifying a product or service as sole source. Sole source documentation must be reviewed and approved by the IHL's CIO for any sole-source certification above \$5,000. All sole source documentation should be retained in the public university's procurement file. Sole source requests above \$250,000 lifecycle cost require ITS approval.

Attachment C: Sole Source Procurement Overview

Other than the delegations outlined above, all sole source technology procurements must be certified by ITS. The customer's Sole Source Certification Request for this project is included as Attachment A.

ITS thoroughly reviews Sole Source Certification Requests, determining if competing products and/or services exist. If so, ITS conducts a competitive procurement. If ITS' review confirms the sole source, then a Sole Source advertisement is issued, giving other Interested Parties an opportunity to identify competing products and/or services. Based upon the results of the Sole Source advertisement, ITS will either certify the request as a sole source or conduct a competitive procurement.