

RFP Questions and Clarifications Memorandum

To: Vendors Responding to RFP Number 3737 for the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE)

From: Craig P. Orgeron, Ph.D.

Date: May 1, 2014

Subject: Responses to Questions Submitted and Clarifications to Specifications

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RFP Number 3737 is hereby amended as follows:

1. **Section VII Technical Specifications, Item 5.3 is being deleted.**
2. **Section VII Technical Specifications, Item 7.2.3.1 is being modified to read as follows:**

	Technical Skill Set	Requirement
7.2.3.1	Food service system implementation experience Implementation experience with projects of similar scope. It is preferred that the experience include food service systems.	Documented experience required; no minimum length of time is specified

3. **Section VII Technical Specifications, add the following as new Item 9.2.9:**

 "9.2.9 The Vendor must furnish: (1) Minimum system and browser technical specifications necessary to support the system as proposed; and (2) Recommended system and browser technical specifications to support the system."
4. **Section VII Technical Specifications, add the following as new Item 9.4.4:**

“9.4.4 The current system includes a 3-digit item number for each item. The proposed system must allow a 4-digit item number to be entered for each item.”

5. Section VII Technical Specifications, add the following as new Item 9.4.5:

“9.4.5 All data on all orders must be archived for future usage reports and other report requirements.”

6. Section VII Technical Specifications, add the following new items:

“9.6.5 The system must allow Bidders to submit bids online. The system must include appropriate security measures to allow bid to not be accessible to only OCN staff. Vendor must provide details on how this will be handled by the proposed solution.

9.6.6 The current system generates a page for the bid. The proposed solution must allow the bid to be entered into a spreadsheet.

9.6.7 The Vendor must provide details on how the same pricing would be entered for different regions.

9.6.8 The system must enter the actual bid opening time when a bid is opened.

9.6.9 The Vendor must describe how draft bids would be generated, ranging from how items are entered to how changes are made when going from one stage to another stage in the award process

9.6.10 The system must allow draft bids that are accidentally entered, or for such purposes as testing to be deleted.

9.6.11 The system must allow information from the selected bid to be updated in the file maintenance, order entry, and distributor modules of the system.”

7. Section VII Technical Specifications, add the following as new Item 9.7.3.3:

“9.7.3.3 The system must allow a school district to run a usage report on a selected item or all items for a selected period of time.”

8. Section VII Technical Specifications, add the following as new Item 9.7.10:

“9.7.10 The system must allow a school district to run an inventory report on a selected item, or all items that have been purchased for a selected period of time.”

9. Section VII Technical Specifications, add the following as new Item 9.10:

“9.10 It is desirable that the system allow reports generated by Crystal reports to be exported into Microsoft Word or Excel.

10. Section VII Technical Specifications, Item 10.8 is being modified to read:

- “10.8 Passwords should be set to expire every 90 days with notifications to change using at least 8 characters with one upper case alphabet and one number. Vendor must provide the password rules and standards provided in the proposed solution. At a minimum, Vendor must describe how many and what type characters are required for the creation of a valid password, password aging, and password lockout.”

Vendor must include in their proposal a response to each amended requirement as listed above. Vendor must respond using the same terminology as provided in the original requirements.

The following questions were submitted to ITS and are being presented as they were submitted, except to remove any reference to a specific vendor. This information should assist you in formulating your response.

Question 1: In the Mandatory Bid Conference, MDE mentioned that a portion of the existing application has been migrated to SQL 2008. Please detail the specific technology stacks (including version) used for each of the 4 application modules (File Maintenance, Contract, Bid Module, Order Entry).

Response: **The current MSSQL is Version 2008 r2 as well as Windows 2008 r2 Server 64.**

Question 2: General Overview and Background (Section VII.2) - Will ITS/MDE be implementing new VMWare environments for the new system (development, test, and production) or will it co-exist with the existing system?

Response: **The VMWare environment will remain the same but new Windows 2008 r2 virtual machines will be set up in current environment for new rollout.**

Question 3: General Overview and Background (Section VII.2) - Please provide an inventory of all documentation for existing application functionality and workflow, including the date of last update.

Response: **MDE is currently unable to locate the documentation. A user manual is available and can be provided upon request. Workflow processes are included in Attachment A.**

Question 4: General Overview and Background (Section VII.2) - What are the required/minimum workflow changes that must be implemented?

Response: **Minimum workflow changes will consist of enhancements to all current workflows. Screen shot .pdf files are included in Attachment B. New requirements have also been added. See Amendments #4 through 9 above.**

Question 5: General Overview and Background (Section VII.2) - What are the required/minimum user interface changes that must be implemented?

Response: **Minimum requirements consist of enhancements to all current user interfaces.**

Question 6: General Overview and Background (Section VII.2) - What are the required/minimum back end changes that must be implemented?

Response: **Minimum backend changes consist of enhancements to the current backend.**

Question 7: General Overview and Background (Section VII.2) - Assuming requirements match, will a non-food service e-procurement COTS product be considered as a suitable replacement system alternative to upgrading the current system?

Response: **In the interest of time and associated learning curves, MDE's preference is to upgrade the existing system. However, a COTS solution will be considered.**

Question 8: Section VII.5 - Regarding the mandatory requirement stated in VII.5.3, Will State of MS consider vendors with strong application migration / modernization experience but no or limited Automated Food Processing System experience?

Response: **This requirement is being deleted. See Amendment # 1 above.**

Question 9: Section VII.7, Section VII.8, Section VII.13 - What are the on-site staffing requirements?

Response: **On-site staffing will be expected during the planning, testing and implementation phases of the project.**

Question 10: Section VII.7, Section VII.8, Section VII.13 - What are the restrictions/limitations for vendor use of offshore resources in execution / implementation of the project?

Response: **It is preferred that resources not be off-shore.**

Question 11: Section VII.7, Section VII.8, Section VII.13 - What are the restrictions/limitations for vendor use of domestic offsite resources working within the United States but remote from Jackson, MS?

Response: **Off-Site work during the development phase is allowed as long it fits with the timeframe, requirements and capabilities of MDE staff to work with the off-site vendor staff to achieve the results required, provided the Vendor is able interface with the MDE remotely. During the period described in Question #9, Vendor staff will be expected to be on site.**

Question 12: Section VII.7, Section VII.8, Section VII.13 - Will State of MS provide all required hardware, software and environments to implement the new application?

- a. Visual Studio 2012 or Visual Studio 2013
- b. SQL Server 2012
- c. 3rd Party Software
- d. Licenses for Accessibility, Security and Performance Testing
- e. Development and QA environments

Response: Items a, b, d, and e, will be provided.

Question 13: Section VII.7 - Will staff experience in related areas such as Order Entry, Order Fulfillment, Inventory Control, Bidding, e-Procurement be adequate even if the experience is not directly in a Food Service environment?

Response: Section VII, Item 7.2.3.1 is being revised. See Amendment #2 above.

Question 14: Section VII.9 - Are there any multi-lingual requirements? If yes, what are the languages need to be supported and in which modules do these requirements exist?

Response: No.

Question 15: Section VII.9 - Please provide details on current application size to enable us to estimate the level of effort in an application upgrade:

- a. Total number of lines of code in the application.
- b. Total number of User Interface Screens.
- c. Total number of Database Entities.
- d. Total number of Stored Procedures / SQL Scripts.
- e. Total number of records in database.
- f. Reports (canned / custom / adhoc).
 - i. Total number of reports.
 - ii. Number of reports by complexity.
 1. High
 2. Medium
 3. Low
- g. Total number of I/O Files.
- h. Total number of batch transactions.
- i. Total number of Integration Points with other external system

Response:

- a. **DB (4432) plus application (unknown)**
- b. **Unknown**
- c. **230**
- d. **155**
- e. **Unknown**
- f. **10,694,593 total reports – Complexity information is not available.**
- g. **None**
- h. **None**
- i. **None**

Question 16: Section VII.9 - Please describe all external interfaces including destination agency/entity, security, interface description, hardware and software required, language, trigger event, and frequency.

Response: Other than uploading and downloading of orders and distributor text files MDE is not aware of any external interfaces.

Question 17: Section VII.9 - Please describe the documents and spreadsheets that are required to be generated in MS Office. An example would be helpful.

Response: **The report functions (Usage Reports, Promotional Allowance Reports, Distributor fill rates and Inventory Reports) use Crystal Reports to allow the reports to be exported in Microsoft Office.**

Question 18: Section VII.9 - What rules/workflow middleware is used?

Response: **The languages used are ASP (classic) and SQL. Crystal Reports is also used.**

Question 19: Section VII.9 - What payment gateway is currently used by the application?

Response: **There are no payment functions in this system. Distributors invoice schools districts separately at delivery and schools pay directly to the distributors. MDE contracts with distributors and manufacturers are 0-based.**

Question 20: Section VII.9 - Can State of MS provide current system architecture diagram?

Response: **This diagram is currently not available.**

Question 21: Section VII.9 - Can State of MS provide current Database ER Diagram?

Response: **This diagram is currently not available.**

Question 22: Section VII.9 - Does State of MS have all source code related to current application?

Response: **Yes.**

Question 23: Section VII.9 - Which detail requirements listed in VII.9 represent new requirements of the upgraded system that are currently not available in the existing system?

Response: **Most of the requirements listed currently exist in the current system but all are not functional. The current APS System does not fully satisfy all the needs of the users, especially in file maintenance and solicitation modules. Some additional requirements are being added as Amendments to the RFP. See Amendments #4 through 9.**

Question 24: Section VII.9.1 - What is the expectation of the following requirement: "9.1.4 The system must allow users to create custom forms"?

Response: **Requirements for forms are listed in Items 9.1.5 through 9.1.14. Additional functionality may be proposed at the Vendor's discretion.**

Question 25: Section VII.9.1 - What is the expectation of the following requirement: "9.1.15: The system must allow users to develop and customize workflow.

Response: MDE does not have a specific expectation. The proposed solution is at the Vendor's discretion.

Question 26: Section VII.9.1 - Does the current application use any 3rd party open source / software / controls / plugins?

Response: MDE is not aware of any 3rd party open source software/controls/plugins that are being used.

Question 27: Section VII.9.4 - During the mandatory bid conference, it was mentioned that the current application is supported by SQL Server 2008. Is our understanding correct?

Response: The current application was originally supported by SQL 2000. It is currently supported by SQL 2008 r2.

Question 28: Section VII.9.4 - Is the current application running against SQL Server 2008?

Response: Yes.

Question 29: Section VII.9.4 - Are there any archiving requirements for the new application?

Response: This is being added as a new requirement. See Amendment # 5 above.

Question 30: Section VII.9.4 - Are there any data warehouse or data analytics requirements?

Response: MDE is not aware of any data warehouse or data analytics requirements.

Question 31: Section VII.9.4 - Any are there any specific Disaster Recovery or failover requirements?

Response: No.

Question 32: Section VII.10 - Please provide a copy of the MDE security policy that the upgraded application must comply with, including password rules and standards.

Response: The MDE security policy is not available. Item 10.8 is being revised. See Amendment #10 above. A copy of the State of Mississippi Enterprise Security Policy may be obtained by following the instructions in Section IV, Item 32 of this RFP.

Question 33: Section VII.10 - What are the security (application, data and infrastructure) requirements for the new application?

- a. Authentication: Active Directory or LDAP
- b. Authorization: Role based implementation in database

Response: Active directory can be used to store users as well as roles. The current system is accessible with a user name and password for users (schools), distributors, and MDE staff. The users' URL access only allows access to the portion of the system that is available for them (Order Entry).

Distributors' user ID and password only allows access to the viewing, pulling, and uploading of orders. Distributors and users access is further restricted based on contracts (distributors) and regional location (Users).

Question 34: Section VII.10 - Is Active Directory or LDAP used or required for creation and maintenance of the user profiles?

Response: **Active directory can be used but is not required.**

Question 35: Section VII.10 - Does current system have any encryption?

- a. Is Data encrypted in the database
- b. Are Message transmissions encrypted

Response: **The site currently uses SSL. Message transmissions and data are not encrypted.**

Question 36: Section VII.10 - Does the system require single sign-on based authentication?

Response: **No. See the response to question # 33 above.**

Question 37: Section VII.10 - Describe the current application implementation and support for multi-level and control level (field level) security. Is this a new requirement?

Response: **Currently there is a log through the "Delete Order" Functionality (separate application) that keeps the purchased orders and items associated that were deleted.**

Question 38: Section VII.10 - Is audit log already in place?

Response: **No.**

Question 39: Section VII.11- Please provide details on current infrastructure (Servers) in which the application is running?

Response: **Windows Server 2008 r2 VMWare virtual machine with 4 GB RAM and 200 GB hard drive.**

Question 40: Section VII.11- Will the new application be load balanced?

Response: **Infrastructure load balancing is not being used on current system.**

Question 41: Section VII.12 - Describe the availability and currency of documentation, test scripting, and test data that is currently used for regression and acceptance testing?

Response: **MDE cannot provide this information at this time.**

Question 42: Section VII.12 - What are the security and vulnerability testing requirements?

Response: **MDE has not defined testing requirements.**

Question 43: Section VII.12 - What are the performance testing requirements?

Response: **MDE has not defined testing requirements.**

Question 44: Section VII.12 - Will State of MS provide required licenses for executing required accessibility, security and performance testing?

Response: **MDE will acquire licenses as applicable, but the Vendor is expected to provide detail in the proposal on what external licensing is needed for the proposed solution. See Section VII, Item 17 in the RFP.**

Question 45: Section VII.12 - What are the performance and load requirements for the new application?

Response: **MDE has not defined specific requirements, but expects a reasonable response time to all commands. See Amendment #3 concerning hardware specifications.**

Question 46: Section VII.12 - What is the current user base / user load for the application?

Response: **Schools, distributors, bidders and MDE Office of Child Nutrition staff.**

Question 47: Section VII.12 - How many users are expected to use the new system?

Response: **Currently there are approximately 185 organizations and six distributors. This is subject to very limited growth based on the number of public schools and Head Start Centers. There could conceivably be 30 additional distributors should there be a different distributor for each region and each distributor group. There is also 5 OCN staff.**

Question 48: Section VII.12 - What is the maximum number of concurrent users that the application is expected to handle at any point of time?

Response: **MDE expects that all system users would be able be on the system concurrently. See the response to #47 above.**

Question 49: Section VII.12 - What are the current transaction volumes by type for "normal" versus "peak load" scenarios?

Response: **MDE is unable to determine volumes at this time.**

Question 50: Section VII.13 - Please describe any parallel operation requirement for the current system and upgraded/replacement system.

Response: **It is expected that there will be some parallel operation of systems. MDE has not determined the exact amount of time.**

Question 51: Section VII.14 - Please provide sizing information for the database to be migrated:

- a. Total number of tables:
- b. Total number of rows by table:
- c. Number of columns by table:

Response: There are 75 tables and 2 system tables. MDE cannot determine the total number of row and columns.

Question 52: Section VII.16 - What is the minimum required warranty period by the State of MS?

Response: The minimum warranty is one year. See page 66, Article 9.3 of the Standard Contract.

Question 53: Section VII.16 - Can Product Maintenance and Software Support be provided remotely or does it need to be onsite based?

Response: Depending on the nature of the problem, maintenance and support could be provided remotely.

Question 54: Section VII.9.1.1 - What internet browser versions (e.g. version numbers) are we required to support?

Response: Should support Internet Explorer Versions 8 through 11, and the latest versions of Mozilla Firefox, Apple Safari, and Google Chrome.

Question 55: Section VII.9.1.4 - Please clarify the term "custom forms" in the context of this requirement. In this case is "form" used to mean a UI screen or page?

Response: See the response to question #24 above.

Question 56: Section VII.9 1.4 - If a UI screen or page can be customized by users, these could potentially add or modify application data. What are the requirements for controlling potential form modifications impacting application data?

Response: Requirements have not been determined. The Vendor is expected to provide detail concerning this option.

Question 57: Section VII.9.1.5 - Is the intent of this requirement to allow administrators access to modify drop-down lists as needed? If so, since configuration files are usually used to set system level configuration parameters that change infrequently, are other options to meet this requirement acceptable as long as authorized users can easily modify and maintain-drop down lists?

Response: Yes. Currently, there are existing screens that will allow users to enter new vendors, organizations, distributors, etc., that will in turn be saved to the database and then viewed or retrieved using the drop down boxes.

Question 58: Section VII.9.1.6 - What aspects of the form are configured solely by user preference? If a form can be configured by user preference, and an individual

user can specify and save preferences, what are the boundaries for form modification to keep a consistent look and feel in the application?

Response: Aspects are dependent on form design. The State expects that some items will be available to users, and some reserved for only administrators.

Question 59: Section VII.9.1.7 - Does this mean some fields on forms will have default values that can be set and changed by MDE? Are their additional requirements for control and integrity of the database fields associated with these forms?

Response: Yes, most of the forms in the current system have default values that can be set and changed by MDE. Additional requirements for control and integrity have not been determined.

Question 60: Section VII.9.1.15 - What workflow controls will be required to enable customized workflows but not adversely impact existing automated processes or the application look and feel? What user roles will be allowed workflow creation and management access?

Response: See the response to question #25 above.

Question 61: Section VII.9.3.5 - What is the meaning of “programming” in the context of this requirement? Without more information on the intent of this requirement, it is difficult to determine how new MDE processes or rules may or may not impact the purchasing system.

Response: The intent is to have processes available by changing parameters, etc. without having to develop/write new code.

RFP responses are due May 22, 2014, at 3:00 p.m. (Central Time).

If you have any questions concerning the information above, or if we can be of further assistance, please contact Debra Spell at 601-432-8132 or by e-mail at debra.spell@its.ms.gov.

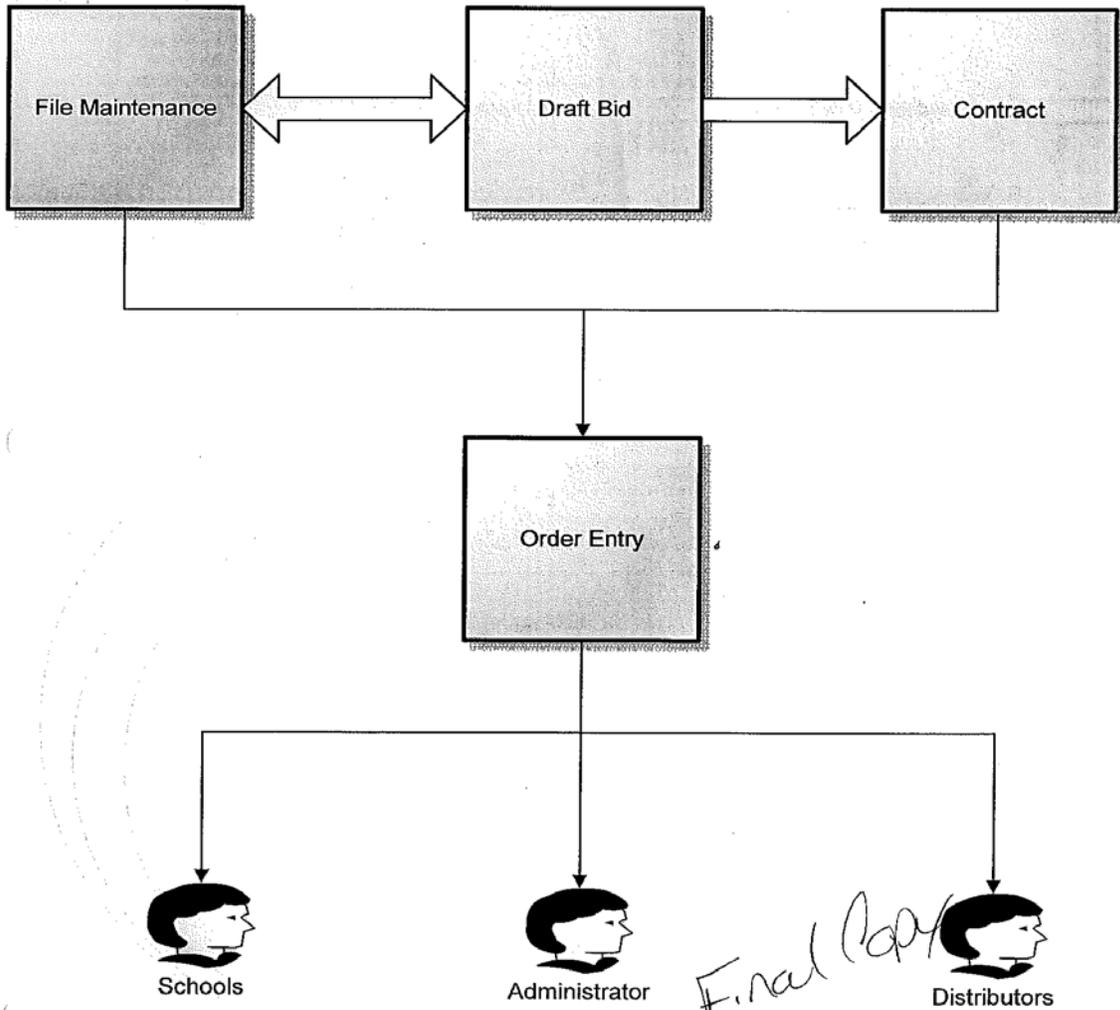
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Attachments: Attachment A – Work Flow Processes
Attachment B – ASP Screen Shots

Attachment A
Work Flow Processes

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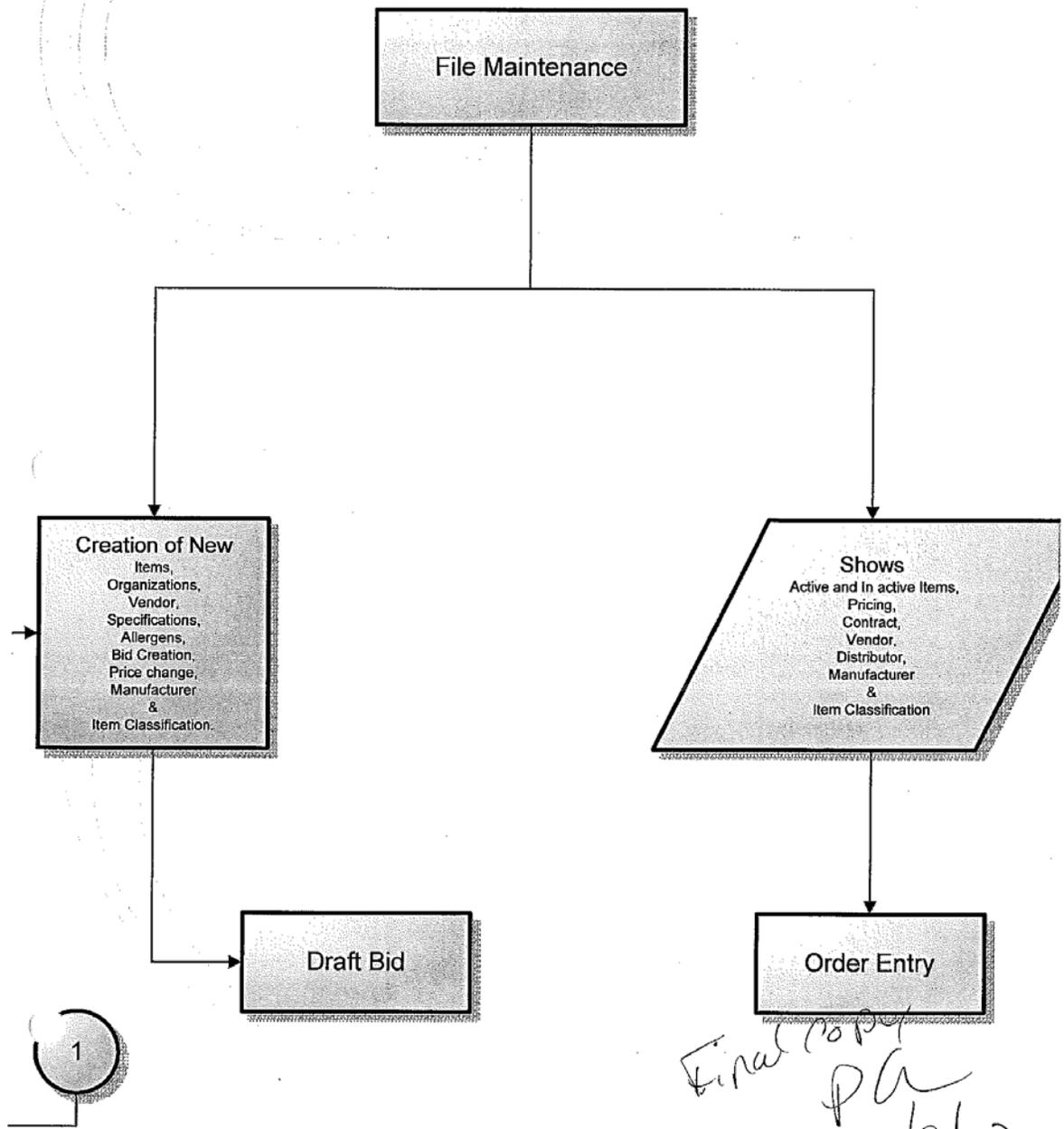
Business Flow Process



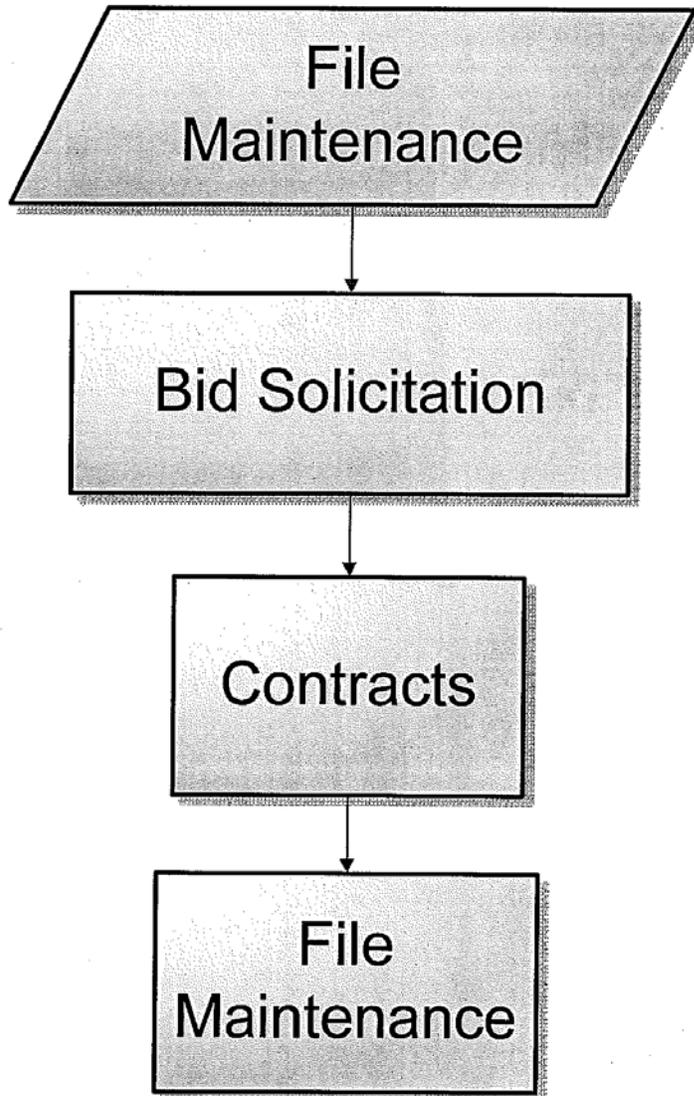
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*Priscilla Jim
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File Maintenance



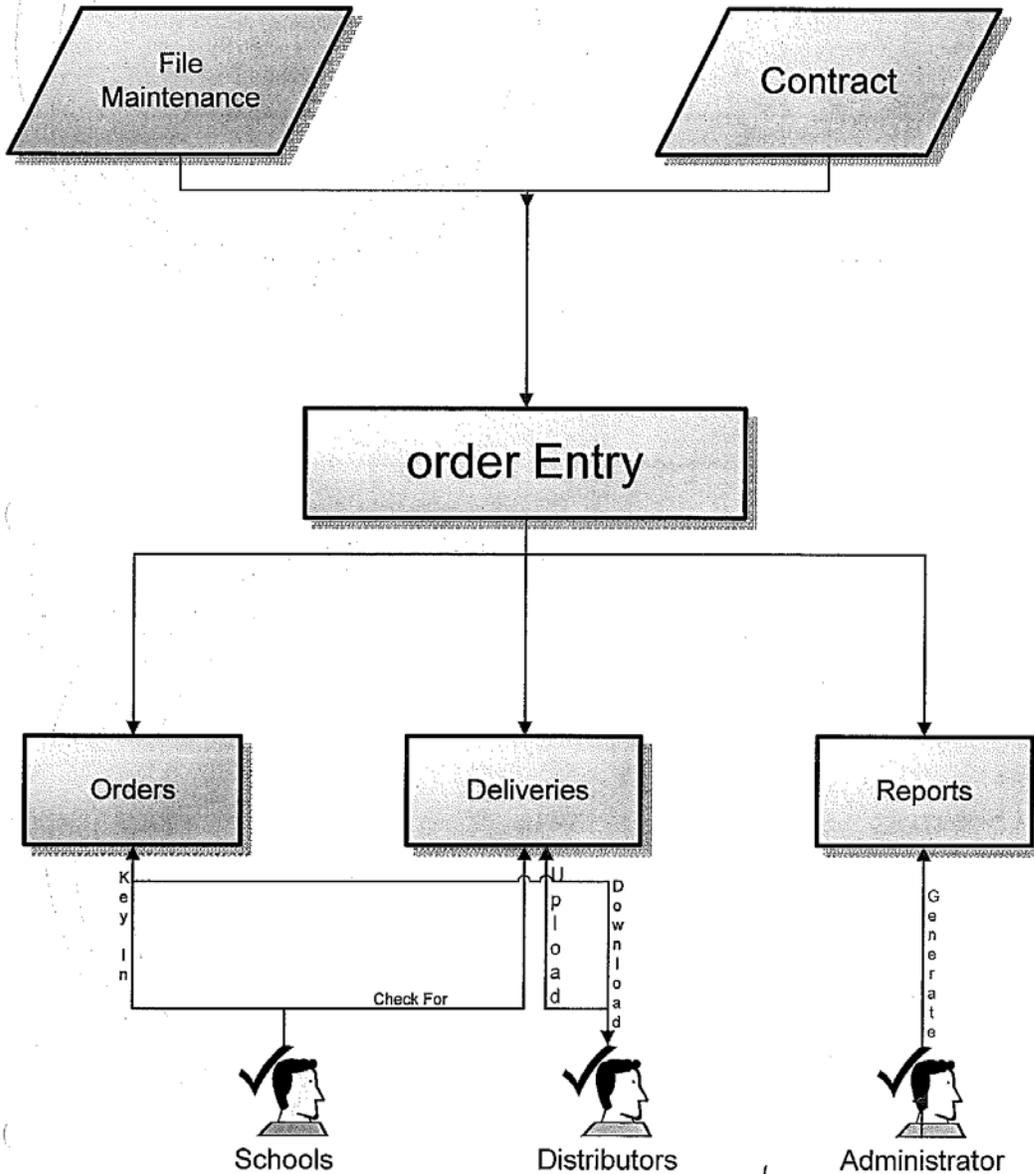
Bid Awarding Process



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OK
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Order Entry



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Attachment B
ASP Screen Shots*



APS_Draft_Bid_RFP.P
DF



APS_ORDER_ENTRY_
RFP.PDF



APS_Bid_Solicitation_
RFP.PDF



APS_Distributors_RFP
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APS_Contracts_RFP.P
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APS_Reports_RFP.PD
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APS_Purchasing_RFP.
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