

Alabama State Department of Education



**Request for Proposal  
RFP ALSDE 2023-13  
DISPUTE RESOLUTION PRIORITIES  
Alabama State Department of Education  
Special Education Services**

**Note: FAXED OR E-MAILED PROPOSALS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**

Inquiries and response submissions related to this RFP are to be addressed to:

Cindy Gillespie  
Office of Operations  
Alabama State Department of Education  
50 North Ripley Street, Room P305  
Gordon Persons Building  
Montgomery, AL 36104  
Email: [cgillespie@alsde.edu](mailto:cgillespie@alsde.edu)

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**Deadline:**

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**Proposals must be received no later than 4:00 p.m. on July 31, 2023.**

**It is required that each vendor clearly mark the envelope **RFP ALSDE 2023-13** in the lower left corner of the envelope (Response packages that are not marked will be rejected).**

The proposal package must contain the following:

1. **Original proposal plus four copies** with original signatures (The proposal must be signed by an official authorized to legally bind the vendor to the information provided). **One (1) electronic copy** on a USB flash drive in MS Word format.
2. Must be currently registered with the Alabama Department of Finance, Division of Purchasing as a State Vendor and provide vendor number. <http://www.purchasing.alabama.gov>
3. The vendor must complete the affidavit for business entity/employer/vendor. Verification of enrollment in E-verify should be presented on the form found in Appendix A.

**Proposal Opening**

**August 1, 2023**

**9:00 am**

**Gordon Persons Building, Personnel Training Conference Room  
50 North Ripley Street  
Montgomery, AL 36104**

**Request for Proposal (RFP)**  
**RFP ALSDE 2023-13**  
**Alabama State Department of Education,**  
**Special Education Services**

**Table of Contents**

**Section 1.00 Administrative Overview**

- 1.1 Purpose and Background
- 1.2 Anticipated Timetable
- 1.3 Proposal Evaluation
- 1.4 Conditions and Terms

**Section 2.00 Scope**

- 2.1 Scope of Vendor's Work and Responsibilities
- 2.2 Scope of ALSDE Work and Responsibilities

**Section 3.00 General Requirements**

- 3.1 Requirements of Proposal

**Section 4.00 General Terms and Conditions**

- 4.1 Governance
- 4.2 Immigration
- 4.3 Conflict of Interest
- 4.4 Discrimination

**Request for Proposal (RFP)**  
**RFP ALSDE 2023-13**  
**Alabama State Department of Education,**  
**Special Education Services**

**Section 1.00 Administrative Overview**

**1.1 Purpose and Background**

**Purpose:**

The Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) is seeking proposals from eligible applicants to conduct training for special education dispute resolution under Part B of the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA).

**Background:**

The *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA) requires parents and local education agencies (LEAs) to work collaboratively, in the best interest of children with disabilities, to resolve disagreements that may occur when working to provide a positive educational experience for all children with disabilities.

**Those eligible to apply must:**

- Possess knowledge of and the ability to train others on the policies, practices, and procedures for the dispute resolution priority and relevant statutes.
- Not be a person having a personal or professional interest that would conflict with his or her objectivity.
- If licensed to practice law, be in good standing with the State Bar.
- If licensed to practice law, not be an attorney who has represented parties in any IDEA dispute, educational dispute, student discipline, and/or student activity in the three years preceding the proposal submission deadline and must not do so during performance of work and responsibilities under this RFP.

**Applicants who wish to address more than one priority listed below must submit a separate proposal for each priority.**

The ALSDE announces the availability of funds to support the following dispute resolution priorities:

<b>Priority 1: Basic Mediation Certificate Training &amp; Coaching</b>
Conduct a 20-hour mediation skills certificate course. At a minimum, the training must include mock mediation exercises and ethics education and must include two hours of Alabama mediator ethics (preference may be given to training programs approved by the Alabama Center for Dispute Resolution).

<b>Priority 2: IEP Meeting Facilitation Certificate Training &amp; Coaching</b>
Conduct an 18-hour individualized education program (IEP) meeting facilitation skills certificate course. At a minimum, the training must include mock IEP facilitation exercises, consensus building, and conflict resolution.

**Request for Proposal (RFP)**  
**RFP ALSDE 2023-13**  
**Alabama State Department of Education,**  
**Special Education Services**

**Priority 3: Local Education Agency (LEA) Dispute Resolution Training & Coaching**

Develop and implement a train-the-trainer professional development program that will assist individuals in LEAs (e.g., school staff, students, and parents) in gaining a core understanding of the principles associated with conflict management, so that they may apply knowledge to real-world situations and master skills and abilities to solve complex conflicts.

**Priority 4: State Education Agency (SEA) Dispute Resolution Training & Coaching**

Develop and implement training and coaching for SEA staff on managing conflict and improving communication targeting program director/coordinator, education administrators, education specialists, and clerical staff, with a focus on intra-agency relationships and principles of community.

There is no requirement to address all priorities. Applicants may address one or more priorities and must submit a separate proposal for each priority he or she chooses to address.

**1.2 Anticipated Time Table**

July 31, 2023	Proposal Submission Deadline
August 1, 2023	Bid Opening

**1.3 Proposal Evaluation**

An Evaluation Team will review the proposals and make a recommendation. The criteria listed below will be used to evaluate the proposals for the purpose of ranking them in relative position based on how fully each proposal meets the requirements of this RFP.

Each member of the evaluation team will review and score each proposal, using the following evaluation criteria:

Evaluation Criteria:

Executive Summary	5 points
Vendor Qualifications and Experience	25 points
Management Plan	55 points
Cost Proposal	15 points

**Best and Final Offers:**

The ALSDE may either accept a vendor's initial proposal by award of a contract or enter into discussions with vendors whose proposals are deemed to be reasonably acceptable consideration for award. After discussions are concluded, a vendor may be allowed to submit a "Best and Final Offer" for consideration in a manner and method prescribed by the ALSDE. By submitting a proposal each vendor accepts and agrees to all conditions and requirements herein.

**Request for Proposal (RFP)**  
**RFP ALSDE 2023-13**  
**Alabama State Department of Education,**  
**Special Education Services**

The ALSDE will make all decisions regarding evaluation of the proposal. The ALSDE reserves the right to judge and determine whether a request is compliant with and has satisfactorily met the requirements of the RFP. The ALSDE reserves the right to waive technical and other defects if, in its judgment, the interest of the ALSDE so requires. Any further information disclosed about the RFP during this process will be provided to all vendors in a manner and method prescribed by the ALSDE.

**Rejection of Proposal:**

The ALSDE reserves the right to reject any or all proposals which are deemed to be non-responsive, late in submission, or unsatisfactory in any way. The ALSDE shall have no obligation to award a contract for work, goods and/or services as a result of this RFP.

**Qualified bidders aggrieved in connection with the with the solicitation of a contract may protest to the Chief Procurement Officer. See generally State of Alabama Department of Finance Administrative Code Regulations at <https://finance.alabama.gov/media/rnii4ga1/administrative-code-355-4-1-01-thru-06.pdf>.**

**Confidentiality:**

All information contained in the RFP is considered to be the exclusive property of the ALSDE. Recipients of this RFP are not to disclose any information contained within the RFP unless such information is publicly available. This RFP is provided for the sole purpose of allowing Vendors to respond to these specifications.

**Selection Process:**

**The number of grants awarded depends on the number of proposals submitted and the quality of the proposed projects, funding availability and the best interests of the Agency.**

The ALSDE will select the vendor(s) that provides the most technically sound and cost-effective proposal that best fits the needs of the ALSDE. Final selection of the successful vendor(s) will not be based solely on cost. The vendor product will be evaluated primarily on the scope of the activities linked to associated costs as detailed in the RFP. RFPs will be reviewed to ascertain that minimum requirements have been met. The ALSDE reserves the right to conduct discussions with potential vendors in order to clarify information contained in their proposals, but the ALSDE has no obligation to do so. The vendor will provide notice to the ALSDE any partnership with another firm to provide parts of the solution; however, the vendor must provide management of the partner and is responsible for all project performance. Any subcontractor or partner will be subject to the same vetting process as the vendor, and the vendor is responsible for ensuring that each subcontractor acknowledges and is contractually bound by the staffing plan and other commitments listed in this RFP.

Unless provided by law, nothing in this RFP shall be construed to create any legal obligation on the part of the ALSDE or any respondents. The ALSDE reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to amend, suspend, terminate, or reissue the RFP in whole or in part, at any stage. In no event shall the ALSDE be liable to respondents for any cost or damages incurred in connection with the RFP process, including, but not limited to, any and all costs of preparing a response to this RFP or any other costs incurred in reliance on this RFP. No respondent shall be entitled to repayment from the ALSDE for any costs, expenses, or fees related to the RFP. All supporting documentation submitted in response to the RFP will become the property of the ALSDE. Respondents may also withdraw their interest in the RFP, in writing, at any point in time, as more information becomes known. If, within the confines of this RFP, the vendor provides intellectual property be it understood that all RFP contents are subject to *Open Records Act* laws and thus are subsequently in the public domain.

**Request for Proposal (RFP)**  
**RFP ALSDE 2023-13**  
**Alabama State Department of Education,**  
**Special Education Services**

Only the final results of the ALSDE Evaluation Committee may be considered public. Any work papers, individual evaluator or consultant comments, notes, or score will not be considered public. The final results of the ALSDE Evaluation Committee will not be publicly available until a final contract has received all necessary approvals.

*Open Records Act* requests can be made at the following website:

[https://alsde.mycusthelp.com/WEBAPP/rs/\(S\(f5sv2dmcmpb2aknppsajshwn\)\)/supporthome.aspx](https://alsde.mycusthelp.com/WEBAPP/rs/(S(f5sv2dmcmpb2aknppsajshwn))/supporthome.aspx)

**Disclaimer Notice:**

The ALSDE shall not be liable for any costs associated with the preparation of proposals or negotiations of a contract incurred by any party.

**Availability of Funds:**

It is expressly understood and agreed that the obligations of the ALSDE to proceed is conditioned upon the continued availability of funds that may be expended for these purposes.

**1.4 Conditions and Terms**

**Contract Terms:**

The contract resulting from this RFP may be renewable for four (4) additional years pending written agreement of the vendor and the ALSDE, dependent upon required state approvals, availability of funds, performance evaluations of the project, at the full discretion of the ALSDE. The contract will commence pending Legislative Review Committee approval and Governor's signature.

The vendor shall be fully prepared to commence work after full execution of the contract by parties and the receipt of required governmental approvals.

Proposals should reference each element in the RFP by number on the cover of each copy and be arranged in the same sequence. All fees and costs are to be stated in United States currency. Vendors must reply to each element of the RFP.

**Section 2.00 Scope**

**2.1 Scope of Vendor's Work and Responsibilities**

The proposed projects should include:

- Specialized training and development.
- Specialized professional services such as coaching or consultation.
- Deliverables to include materials tailored to meet the outlined goals and objectives.

The successful applicants should be able to network with the ALSDE to address goals and objectives for the identified priority area(s). Each applicant shall provide services in compliance with, but not limited to, 20 U. S. C. 1400, et. seq., (IDEA, P. L. 108-446) CFDA 84.027A, 34 *Code of Federal Regulations* (C.F.R.) Part 300 and *Alabama Administrative Code* (AAC) 290-8-9.08.

**Request for Proposal (RFP)**  
**RFP ALSDE 2023-13**  
**Alabama State Department of Education,**  
**Special Education Services**

**2.2 Scope of Alabama State Department of Education's Work and Responsibilities**

Leadership is critical in the development, implementation, and sustainability of successful programs for students with disabilities. The ALSDE provides guidance and technical assistance throughout the year regarding policies and procedures, as well as on strategies to improve outcomes for students with disabilities. The ALSDE will work collaboratively with the selected vendors to organize trainings, distribute materials/information, and provide technical assistance to LEAs and service providers as needed. The ALSDE is responsible for initiating contracts, processing and paying invoices, articulating deadlines, communicating with the LEAs, and evaluating projects.

**Section 3.00 General Requirements**

**3.1 Requirements of Proposal**

The vendor must provide the following mandatory information. **Failure to provide this information may be cause for the proposal to be rejected.** Qualifications, experience, and cost will be evaluated for contract award. The proposal may be submitted under the same cover with Vendor Requirements and Cost Proposal in two distinct sections. E-verify information is required to be submitted for all employees to include contractors of the vendors if necessary and applicable.

**Part I**

**Signed Cover Letter:**

The cover letter shall serve as the first page of the vendor's proposal. The vendor shall complete the cover letter and attach it to the proposal in response to the RFP. The cover letter must be signed by an official authorized to legally bind the vendor. It will state that the vendor is a legal entity that will meet the specifications. The cover letter must accompany the submitted proposal. The letter accompanying the proposal must have original signatures and must include contact numbers and e-mail addresses for the authorized official signing the letters.

**Part II**

**Vendor Qualification and Experience:**

Vendor shall provide satisfactory evidence of the vendor's capability to coordinate the types of activities and to provide the services described in the RFP in a timely manner. Special attention should be given to the discussion of qualifications. The discussion shall include a description of the vendor's background and relevant experience as related to the required activities in the RFP.

**Part III**

**Management Plan:**

Vendor shall provide a detailed plan describing how the services will be performed to meet the requirements of the RFP. The description shall encompass the requirements of this RFP. The response must be prepared and organized in a clear and concise manner that is easily understandable.

**Request for Proposal (RFP)**  
**RFP ALSDE 2023-13**  
**Alabama State Department of Education,**  
**Special Education Services**

The detailed management plan must include:

1. Project Goal  
Identify the overall project goal and briefly explain how the project's scope of work will be achieved.
2. Objectives  
Identify the project objectives that are specific and measurable and will achieve the selected outcomes.
3. Activities  
For each project objective, include: a list of all activities (specific tasks, including any project deliverables and products) that will be accomplished; realistic start and end dates for accomplishing each activity; and the primary personnel who will carry out each activity. Any project products should include dissemination plans for potential project replication.
4. Outcomes  
For each activity, state the expected outcomes.
5. Evaluation  
Describe how the project objectives will be assessed. The evaluation plan should describe the method(s) planned for assessing project activities and products. In this section, also provide a description of the method(s) that will be used to collect participant satisfaction data, if applicable.

**Vendor Organization:**

Describe your organizational structure and explain how your organization qualifies to be responsive to the requirements of this RFP.

**References:**

The vendor shall provide a minimum of three (3) references that can support and validate training and/or projects and outcomes, including names or persons who may be contacted, position of person, addresses, and phone numbers where similar training and/or projects to that described in this RFP have been conducted.

**Executive Summary:**

An executive summary is required. This summary will condense and highlight the contents of the vendor's proposal. The executive summary should succinctly state the goal, objective(s), and activities contained in the project along with specific outcomes the project is expected to achieve.

**Part IV**

**Cost Proposal:**

Vendor shall include the fee structure and pricing for the training sessions/program. The vendor shall submit a cost proposal in addition to other required information.

Flat rates for half- and/or whole-day training sessions should be inclusive of travel and/or supplies and materials costs and identify if the training is in person or virtual, and the proposed number of participants. Flat rates for consulting, coaching, and/or professional services should stipulate the cost per hour and the proposed number of hours. Project costs must include all proposed necessary charges to be made by the grantee in accomplishing the objectives of the grant during the specified grant period (initial grants are generally for a one-year period unless otherwise noted).

**Request for Proposal (RFP)**  
**RFP ALSDE 2023-13**  
**Alabama State Department of Education,**  
**Special Education Services**

**Subcontractor Disclosure:**

If the execution of work to be performed requires the hiring of subcontractors, **you must clearly state this in the bid proposal and provide qualification for such individuals.** Subcontractors must be identified and the services they will provide or work they will perform must be clearly defined. The ALSDE will not refuse a proposal based upon use of a subcontractor; however, the ALSDE reserves the right to refuse the subcontractor you have selected. The Contractor and associated personnel shall remain solely responsible for the performance of all work, including work that may be subcontracted.

Describe your rationale for utilizing subcontractors including relevant past experience partnering with stated subcontractor(s). Documents for E-verification of subcontractors are the sole responsibility of the contractor and must be available upon request to ensure compliance.

**Section 4.00 General Terms and Conditions**

**4.1 Governance**

This RFP and its terms shall be governed and construed according to the laws of the state of Alabama. Any dispute arising out of this RFP shall be brought in the state of Alabama, with venue in Montgomery County, Alabama. Vendors agree to comply with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations.

**4.2 Immigration**

The proposal must contain a statement that the firm is aware of and in compliance with the requirements of the *Beason-Hammon Alabama Taxpayer and Citizen Protection Act*; a statement that the vendor is enrolled in the E-Verify as required by Section 31-13-9 (b), *Code of Alabama 1975*, as amended.

**BEASON-HAMMON ALABAMA TAXPAYER AND CITIZEN PROTECTION ACT**

**COMPLIANCE**

**The *Beason-Hammon Alabama Taxpayer and Citizen Protection Act* (31-13-1 et seq, *Code of Alabama, 1975* as amended by Act 2012-491) regulates illegal immigration in the state of Alabama. All contracts with the state or political subdivision thereof must fully comply with each provision as provided by law.**

A proposal must include a statement that the vendor has knowledge of this law and is in compliance. Before a contract is signed, the vendor awarded the contract must submit a Certificate of Compliance using the form at Appendix A. E-Verify enrollment can be accomplished at the website of the United States Department of Homeland Security at <http://www.uscis.gov>.

See Section 10 for additional language required by Section 10(k) of the Act to be included in the contract.

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**Request for Proposal (RFP)**  
**RFP ALSDE 2023-13**  
**Alabama State Department of Education,**  
**Special Education Services**

**4.3 Conflict of Interest**

The vendor attests that no employee, officer, or agent of the vendor shall participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract if a real or apparent conflict of interest may be involved. A conflict would arise when the employee, officer, agent, any member of his or her immediate family, his or her partner, or an organization which employs or is about to employ any of the parties indicated herein has a financial or other interest in the organization selected for an award. The officers, employees, and agents of the vendor, if selected as the career planning system vendor, shall neither award nor offer gratuities, favors, nor anything of monetary value from vendors or subcontractors.

**4.4 Discrimination**

**Alabama Non-Discrimination Statement:**

No person shall be denied employment, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in any program or activity on the basis of disability, gender, race, religion, national origin, color, age, genetic information, or any other category protected under the law. Ref: Sec. 1983, Civil Rights Act, 42 U.S.C.; Title VI and VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964; Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Sec. 504; Age Discrimination in Employment Act; the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008; Equal Pay Act of 1963; Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972; Title II of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008. Title IX Coordinator, P.O. Box 302101, Montgomery, Alabama 36130-2101 or call (334) 694-4717.

**Request for Proposal (RFP)**  
**RFP ALSDE 2023-13**  
**Alabama State Department of Education,**  
**Special Education Services**

**APPENDIX "A"**

State of \_\_\_\_\_ )  
County of \_\_\_\_\_ )

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE WITH THE BEASON-HAMMON ALABAMA TAXPAYER AND CITIZEN PROTECTION ACT (ACT 2011-535, as amended by ACT 2012-491)

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

RE Contract/Grant/Incentive (describe by number or subject): \_\_\_\_\_  
by and between \_\_\_\_\_ (Contractor/Grantee) and  
\_\_\_\_\_ (State Agency, Department or Public Entity)

The undersigned hereby certifies to the State of Alabama as follows:

1. The undersigned holds the position of \_\_\_\_\_ with the Contractor/Grantee named above, and is authorized to provide representations set out in this Certificate as the official and binding act of that entity, and has knowledge of the provisions of THE BEASON-HAMMON ALABAMA TAXPAYER AND CITIZEN PROTECTION ACT (ACT 2011-535 of the Alabama Legislature, as amended by ACT 2012-491) which is described herein as "the Act."
2. Using the following definitions from Section 3 of the Act, select and initial either (a) or (b), below, to describe the Contractor/Grantee's business structure.

BUSINESS ENTITY. Any person or group of persons employing one or more persons performing or engaging in any activity, enterprise, profession, or occupation for gain, benefit, advantage, or livelihood, whether for profit or not for profit.

a. Self-employed individuals, business entities filing articles of incorporation, partnerships, limited partnerships, limited liability companies, foreign corporations, foreign limited partnerships, and foreign limited liability companies authorized to transact business in this state, business trusts, and any business entity that registers with the Secretary of State.

b. Any business entity that possesses a business license, permit, certificate, approval, registration, charter, or similar form of authorization issued by the state, any business entity that is exempt by law from obtaining such a business license, and any business entity that is operating unlawfully without a business license.

EMPLOYER. Any person, firm, corporation, partnership, joint stock association, agent, manager, representative, foreman, or other person having control or custody of any employment, place of employment, or of any employee, including any person or entity employing any person for hire within the State of Alabama, including a public employer. This term shall not include the occupant of a household contracting with another person to perform casual domestic labor within the household.

\_\_\_\_ (a) The Contractor/Grantee is a business entity or employer as those terms are defined in Section 3 of the Act.

\_\_\_\_ (b) The Contractor/Grantee is not a business entity or employer as those terms are defined in Section 3 of the Act.

3. As of the date of this Certificate, the Contractor/Grantee does not knowingly employ an unauthorized alien within the State of Alabama and hereafter it will not knowingly employ, hire for employment, or continue to employ an unauthorized alien within the State of Alabama;
4. The Contractor/Grantee is enrolled in E-Verify unless it is not eligible to enroll because of the rules of that program or other factors beyond its control.

Certified this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Contractor/Grantee/Recipient  
By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Its \_\_\_\_\_

The above Certification was signed in my presence by the person whose name appears above, on this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_\_\_\_.

WITNESS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name of Witness