

Alabama State Department of Education



Request for Proposal

RFP ALSDE 2024-12A

Dyslexia Therapist Certification

Alabama State Department of Education

Alabama Reading Initiative

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

Email: cgillespie@alsde.edu

Deadline:

Proposals must be received no later than 4:00 p.m. on September 16, 2024.

It is required that each vendor clearly mark the envelope RFP ALSDE 2024-12A 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 five 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 Procurement 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.

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Section 1.00 Administrative Overview

1.1 Purpose

This RFP seeks the submission of proposals from interested vendors who have evidence-based documentation of success utilizing dyslexia specific curriculum for improving reading outcomes for students with dyslexia and other struggling readers employing face-to-face and/or virtual educator training for a minimum of ten years. Additionally, successful completion of this professional learning program shall lead to adequately preparing participants as candidates to take the Academic Language Therapy Association (ALTA), Multisensory Structured Language Education (MSLE) competency exam. Meeting these minimum criteria may form the basis for negotiation of a contract. Vendors chosen through this RFP process may be included on an Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE)-approved professional learning and reading intervention list to be published. Vendors may be required to sign an agreement with the ALSDE establishing a per-student cost structure and other assurances.

Specific terms and requirements in this RFP may be waived or modified by the State of Alabama as it deems necessary and appropriate. The state has no liability for any costs incurred by a vendor for the preparation and production of a proposal or for any work performed prior to the issuance of a contract. The ALSDE reserves the right to reject all proposals if that is determined to be in the best interest of the State of Alabama.

Background

The *Alabama Literacy Act* (ALA) is a law that was passed in Alabama in 2019 to meet the needs of all struggling readers. Part of the requirements of the law include the review and approval of what is described as “Dyslexia-Specific Intervention Programs” by the Alabama Literacy Task Force. This vetting for intervention programming has already taken place and five intervention programs (see page 4 of [linked document](#)) were reviewed for usage in Alabama. The person awarded this RFP **must** meet the requirements of the ALA, including the usage of one or more of the Alabama approved intervention programs with their training program for use with students. Other dyslexia-specific intervention programs are not approved for usage in Alabama currently.

According to the ALA, each K-3 student who exhibits a reading deficiency, or the characteristics of dyslexia, shall be provided an appropriate reading intervention program to address his or her specific deficiencies that has been vetted and approved by the Literacy Task Force. These reading intervention programs shall do all the following:

- Provide explicit, direct instruction that is systematic, sequential, and cumulative in language development, phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.
- Provide daily targeted small group reading interventions based on student need in phonological awareness, phonics including decoding and encoding, sight words, vocabulary, or comprehension.

Additionally, the ALA clearly states that students with reading deficiencies who attend summer reading camps or who are retained in third grade shall be taught by highly effective teachers of reading as demonstrated by student reading performance data, completion of multisensory structured language education (MSLE), and teacher performance evaluations. A student who is promoted to fourth grade with a good cause exemption shall continue to receive intensive reading intervention that includes specific reading strategies prescribed in the individual reading improvement plan of the student until the deficiency is improved.

The ALA also states that the State Superintendent of Education shall develop, and the State Board of Education shall approve, a dyslexia therapist certification endorsement for K-12 and Early Childhood teachers who have completed an [International Multisensory Structured Language Education Council endorsed training course](#) and have received a passing score on the [Academic Language Therapy Association's Certified Academic Language Therapy](#) assessment, or the [International Dyslexia Association's Knowledge and Practice Examination of Effective Reading Instruction](#), and who hold a valid Professional Educator Certificate shall be eligible for a [dyslexia therapist endorsement](#).

Finally, The *Alabama Administrative Code* requires the ALSDE to make available a dyslexia-specific training accredited by the International Dyslexia Association (IDA) to prepare individuals to implement multisensory structured language teaching techniques and strategies. Professional development regarding dyslexia and implications for classroom teachers will be provided. This professional development should target dyslexia awareness training, dyslexia screening, dyslexia-specific classroom strategies, academic accommodations, and the use of assistive technology.

1.2 Anticipated Timetable

September 3, 2024	Question Submission Deadline
September 4, 2024	Question Responses Due
September 16, 2024	Proposal Submission Deadline

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.

Evaluation Criteria:

Vendor Qualifications and Experience	40 points
Data and Evidence of Efficacy	25 points
Facilitated by Qualified Instructor	10 points
Detailed Description and Delivery of Training Materials, Presentations, and/or Modules	10 points
Detailed Budget Proposal	15 points

Automatic disqualification for any vendor that cannot meet the minimum requirements of the ALA as outlined in the background above including, but not limited to utilization of an Alabama Literacy Task Force-approved intervention program, IMSLEC and IDA accredited, and can lead to an Academic Language Therapy Association's Certified Academic Language Therapy assessment.

Best and Final Offers:

The ALSDE may either accept a vendor's initial proposal by award of a contract or enter 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.

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 the manner and method prescribed by the ALSDE.

Rejection of Proposal:

The ALSDE reserves the right to reject any or all proposals that are deemed to be non-responsive, late in submission, or unsatisfactory in any way. This includes proposals that are unable to meet the qualifications outlined in the ALA including the usage of approved intervention programs. 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/rni4ga1/administrative-code-355-4-1-01-thru-06.pdf>.

Confidentiality:

All information contained in the RFP is 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 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 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 to clarify information contained in their proposals, but the ALSDE has no obligation to do so. This may include requesting a presentation of top finalists for final scoring. 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 ALSDE be liable to respondents for any cost or damages incurred in connection with the RFP process, including, but not limited to, 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.

Intent to Award

Division of Procurement will send out an intent to award to participating suppliers, defining the protest period. The Chief Procurement Officer (CPO) is the awarding authority and as such is a signatory on the agreement/contract.

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 initial contract resulting from this RFP will be at a 12-month term and 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 the CPO signature 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

A successful vendor must address each of the following sections (A, B, C, D, E) of the evaluation criteria by responding to each component on a separate sheet of paper (example A1, A2...). Please reference the RFP number at the top left of each page. Six copies of each proposal should be included in the packet. Please do not use binders to submit your information. One complete copy of materials used during the training program is required. If virtual materials are required, those must be submitted as well.

A. Detailed description and delivery of training materials, presentations, and/or modules

Automatic disqualification will occur for individuals who do not submit a completed **packet** with evidence outlining each component in a complete and concise manner **and each on a separate page (example A1, A2...)**. Additionally, automatic disqualification will occur for individuals whose proposals are unable to meet the qualifications outlined in the *Alabama Literacy Act* including the usage of approved intervention programs.

Each component should be addressed in a concise manner, on a separate page, and must only address information relevant to the component.

A. Overall Design of International Multisensory Structured Language Education Counsel (IMSLEC) and International Dyslexia Association (IDA) Accredited Professional Learning for Teachers, Inclusive of Dyslexia Specific Reading Intervention Programs

1. Provide evidence that the dyslexia specific intervention curriculum that educators are trained to implement with students while participating in the vendor's program is listed on the Literacy Task Force's List of "Approved Dyslexia-Specific Interventions."
2. Provide evidence that the professional learning program and curriculum prepares participants to take the Academic Language Therapy Association's Multisensory Language Education exam to become Certified Academic Language Therapist by requiring all necessary elements.
3. Provide a summary of how this program meets the IMSLEC and IDA professional learning requirements for educators charged with teaching students with dyslexia and other struggling readers (including English learners and those with specialized learning plans and/or special needs) while embedding the dyslexia specific curriculum that will be used to instruct students in an explicit, direct manner that is systematic, sequential, and cumulative in the areas of language development, phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, writing, and oral language.
4. Provide evidence that the student program the professional learning is focused on provides daily targeted small group dyslexia specific reading interventions based on student need in phonological awareness, phonics including decoding and encoding, sight words, vocabulary, comprehension, writing and/or oral language.
5. Provide evidence that vendor has been utilizing the proposed product in professional learning to prepare participants to take the ALTA MSLE exam to become a CALT for at least ten years.

B. Data and efficacy

1. Provide evidence of students' success utilizing the dyslexia specific reading curriculum including the total number of students in the effect and sample groups included in the study. Provide data and the diversity of the students included in the data. Include the source of the funding for the research. Discuss whether the research has been replicated with comparable results.

C. Facilitated by a Qualified Instructor (QI)

1. The course the vendor is proposing must be instructed by an Academic Language Therapy Association (ALTA) Qualified Instructor (QI).

D. Detailed Description and Delivery of Training Materials, Presentations, and/or Modules

1. Complete set of teachers' editions, student materials, teacher training materials
 - a. Include a complete set of teacher training materials for each level of professional learning that is to be reviewed in this submission (e.g., Teacher Level and Therapist Level).
 - b. Include a complete set of teacher's editions and student materials for each level of the curriculum to be reviewed in this submission (e.g., Level A, Level B, Book A, Book B).
2. Overview of timeline for the professional training including the number of days and hours
3. Scope and sequence of professional training
4. Detailed description of the program's overall structure and delivery methods, explain if the program can be delivered virtually

E. Provide a budget proposal outlining the total cost of the professional training the vendor is proposing, and all materials associated. Be sure each year is broken down separately as well as materials. Include the number of participants allowed in a cohort. Note whether the cost is per person or per cohort. Share your cost proposal with breakdown of services embedded in the cost structure.

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

- ALSDE/ARI will work closely with the vendor to facilitate professional communication with ARI regional staff members, LEA central office contacts, principals, and local reading specialists when information regarding their work is needed to enhance the support provided.
- ALSDE/ARI staff will have the opportunity to meet with vendor contacts monthly to receive updates on the status of the work, receive needed documentation of this work, and confer with vendor regarding perceived successes, struggles, and needed supporting data.
- ALSDE/ARI staff will review each element of the best practices in early literacy policy and implementation with the team to discuss ways to gather qualitative and quantitative data on these ongoing elements, as well as to share previous evaluation data that has been completed so that alignment to past evaluations can be made for like items. The ALSDE/ARI may wish to involve other personnel to best provide information.

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 email addresses for the authorized official signing the letters. *This is to be submitted in hard copy with your proposal and placed in the beginning of your packet. In this RFP, the signature will*

serve as your official authorization to the proposal and serve to provide your contact information.

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. *This is to be submitted in hard copy with your proposal and placed in the beginning of your packet.*

Part III

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. *This is to be submitted in hard copy with your proposal.*

Vendor Organization:

Describe your organizational structure and explain how your organization qualifies to be responsive to the requirements of this RFP. *This is to be submitted in hard copy with your proposal.*

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. *This is to be submitted in hard copy with your proposal and placed in the beginning of your packet.*

Executive Summary:

An executive summary is required. This summary will condense and highlight the contents of the vendor's proposal. *This is to be submitted in hard copy with your proposal and placed in the beginning of your packet.*

Part IV

Cost Proposal:

Vendor shall include the fee structure and pricing for any training sessions/program if applicable. The vendor shall submit a cost proposal in addition to other required information. *This is to be submitted in hard copy with your proposal.*

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 qualifications 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. Contractor and associated personnel shall remain solely responsible for the performance of all work, including work that may be sub-contracted.

Describe your rationale for utilizing subcontractors including relevant 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.
Rev. 5-24-13

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.

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.

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