

Austin Independent School District



Contract & Procurement Services

July 13, 2020

Questions and Answers RFP 21RFP013 for Mass Notification Service for Communication in the K-12 School District Environment

Question: With regards to interviews and/or presentations in Phase Two of the evaluation process, will these meetings be conducted virtually or in person?

Answer: All presentations/meetings will be held virtually until further notice.

Question: Could you please provide more details about the annual mandated reporting mentioned in question F.2 in the Scope of Work?
"Provide adequate reporting to demonstrate that usage of the notification system supports administrative standards for community outreach, safety plans, and other annual mandated reporting."

Answer: 'mandated' in the sentence above refers to Austin ISD's mandated annual reports. The information reported by the selected application should include the ability to report:

- total notices sent by all accounts for the year, number of telephone, email and SMS notices. Cumulative for the district, not each individual account.
- Delivery report for all notices, indexed by delivery status, for telephone, email and SMS. E.g. answered, not answered, machine, blocked, delivered, opened, not delivered, etc.
- Report of all blocked/unsubscribed for the year.

Regarding Requirement D. 4. Allow for secure and direct publishing to Facebook, Twitter or other social Media.

Question: Does AISD want individual schools to be able to post to their own social media accounts or is there only a district-wide account to where you want to post?

Answer: Each account should have the ability to post to individual social media accounts.

Question: Also, please describe precisely which services to which AISD desires to post.

Answer: At this time, we are currently using Facebook and Twitter. Some use of Instagram, but usually images only and not required for this RFP.

Regarding Requirement D. 10. Permit use of data fields within email, text to speech or SMS notices. Fields to include personalized contact information such as contact's name, school name, date, library balance, cafeteria balance, grades, periodic attendance or whatever customized "wildcard" content users need to deliver to recipients.

Question: Can you please define "wildcard" content and the source of the wildcard data? Are you uploading this data via XLS? Manual entry? The AISD Student Information Package?

Answer: 'wildcard' refers to any 'mapped' field not mentioned in the sentence. Upload method and protocol is up to the vendor.

Regarding Requirement D. 28. Allow the distribution of NOAA severe weather warnings to all available contacts or to specified groups of contacts.

Question: Does AISD wish to send out Weather alerts to employees, students, parents, or the public? Is there a benchmark for delivery times? Please describe, in detail, the desired use case and functionality so we may respond accordingly.

Answer: Yes, we wish to send out NOAA server weather alerts to staff. No benchmark delivery time has been set.

Regarding Requirement E. 1. Provide the capability to conduct telephone based surveys. Provide a report platform for surveys. Please describe fully.

Question: In order to answer this question, we first need to understand if you're requesting automated surveys or operator-assisted surveys, similar to polling? Please describe the desired use case in detail using examples of previous surveys conducted.

Answer: From your choices, we would select automated surveys.

Regarding Requirement E. 3. Provide confidential reporting functionality (anti-bullying, mental health, etc) via a two-way communication channel.

Question: What communication channels are acceptable to AISD, for example: SMS, Whatsapp, E-mail, Facebook Messenger, etc. Please be specific to ensure we understand the use case.

Answer: SMS and email only

Regarding Requirement E. 4. Provide two-way messaging tools to support the confidential reporting requirement that include send-receive functionality, incoming messages inbox rules, groups and address book tools, and reporting functionality.

Question: Please describe what is intended when you mention "incoming messages inbox rules", "groups and address book tools", and "reporting functionality".

Answer: Ability to allow parents, staff, students to communicate with Austin ISD in a confidential and secure manner from a web-page.

Regarding Requirement D. 3. The provider must allow external systems to integrate via APIs. Describe this functionality.

Question: Please describe when you say “integrate via external API”- what actions is AISD trying to perform? Can you please provide specific examples? Are you looking to publish data TO a service? If the user subscription data is coming from the SIS and user sign ups, what specific functionality is required?

Answer: e.g., ability to map notice delivery choices via a web page

Regarding Requirement D. 8. Allow the creation and use of user created Templates. Templates must be available via web browser and mobile devices.

Question: Are you describing messaging templates? Can you please describe exactly what you mean, and what functionality is desired with templating?

Answer: Yes, Messaging and or others, e.g. newsletters

Regarding Requirement D. 14. Provide ability to create, store and share lists and message templates.

Question: Please provide an example of what AISD would like to accomplish for the ability to create, store and share lists and message templates and how this differs from Question #8.

Answer: One message (not stored as a template) and or list shared between accounts.

Regarding Requirement D. 17. Provide the ability for users to create multiple custom Caller ID profiles that can be selected during the message creation process, allowing for multiple messages to be sent simultaneously, each with its own Caller ID.

Question: Caller ID capacity is available, but it’s difficult to answer the question without knowing what is the intended use case for AISD? Can you provide an example of a scenario using Caller ID profiles and its specific use case?

Answer: The ability to redirect responses to telephone number other than the sending telephone in the sending profile.

Regarding Requirement D. 18. Provide the ability for users to create multiple custom Email ID profiles that can be selected during the message creation process, allowing for multiple messages to be sent simultaneously, each with its own Email ID.

Question: Please provide an example of the intended use case for this - is AISD intending to have email replies go to a different person in the district depending on the type of message? Please provide an example.

Answer: use of 'Reply To:' field as opposed only the 'Sent From:' field in email notices.

Regarding Requirement D. 23. Provide a zero retry option.

Question: Can you please define what you mean with “zero retry option”?

Answer: At times, we will only send a message one time with no retry. This usually applies to late night/early morning telephone/SMS notices.

Regarding Requirement D. 26. Provide the ability for parents and staff members to establish preferences about what categories of messages (as described in E12) they receive and by which means they prefer to receive them. They should not be able to opt out of “Emergency” calls. They must be able to access the system using a web browser and login credentials/authentication established in D3 to modify these preferences. Please describe fully. Describe any other methods provided (mobile apps, etc.) that parents and other users can use to receive messages or update preferences.

Question: Can you please clarify the “categories of messages” since E12 does not exist?

Answer: Examples of messages include: Emergency, District, Campus, Transportation, Lunch Balance, Attendance, and other as needed.

Regarding Requirement 4. The provider must have system redundancies to ensure call delivery, such as multiple telecommunications providers. Please describe.

Question: Are there specific benchmarks for delivery or a specific Service Level Agreement (SLA) metric that AISD wishes to accomplish with system redundancies? For instance, delivery to the carrier of 99% of sendable messages within X seconds?

Answer: Please refer to Scope of Services, II. Requirements, A. System Delivery

AISD Stated (section VI, A System Delivery, 3.): The provider must meet the following Service Level with respect to Call Delivery

- a. Deliver 60,000 30-second messages within 30 minutes or less for Emergency Calls
- b. Deliver 60,000 30-second messages within 1 hour for Normal Calls.

Question: Does the AISD have the project number of potential SMS Text and Voice Calls that it may send out in the next service year? (or any historical numbers of messages and calls made from the previous year)

Answer: For School Year 2019-2020 Austin ISD delivered @ 3,400,000 telephone messages. We do not currently have SMS history, but expect to send @ the same number of SMS as telephone messages this coming school year.

AISD Stated (section VI, A System Delivery, 10): The selected application must be able to integrate directly with Austin ISD's Transportation software (Tripspark). Data is imported from Tripspark regarding bus routes, riders and riders assigned to a bus for a specific route. Notices will be sent from the mass communication software when needed to inform staff and parents of any Transportation route delays.

And

AISD Stated (section VI, C Data Integration, 1): The provider must be able to facilitate unattended, automated and secured contact data upload and update from the institution's existing SIS (Frontline TEAMS) and HR System (Infor Landmark, Talent Management) or other database system.

Question: Does the AISD have APIs for all software stated? Will AISD request the vendor to do the API integration work or will the AISD do it

Answer: Austin ISD anticipates a partnership with the vendor for API and data upload integration.

Question: Who is the incumbent and what was last years budget for this service?

Answer: Austin ISD's current contract is with Intrado, formerly West Interactive Services. The annual fee \$91,535.40